

Stat Report 2016/24

Barwon Health Pathology Contract Linked to Hospital Health Care Standards

The Medical Scientists Association of Victoria (MSAV) has warned that health care standards could be reduced under a new pathology services contract recently signed by Barwon Health.

As members would know St John of God recently sold its pathology business to Australian Clinical Labs, and as a result Barwon Health has entered into a short term contract with Australian Clinical Labs for it to deliver pathology services until around October 2017.

The sale agreement between St John of God and Australian Clinical Labs includes an arrangement for up to 200 jobs to be cut from pathology services, and by Australian Clinical Labs admission, for the sole reason of increasing business profits.

Australian Clinical Labs has flatly rejected the MSAV's demand that it make a commitment to not axe pathology jobs, which demonstrates a clear willingness to undermine healthcare standards when a very important quality pathology standard is test result turnaround times. The successful treatment of many diseases and conditions is time critical. The sooner a pathology test is completed the sooner treatment can commence, which directly impacts successful health care outcomes for all patients in this category.

The MSAV says that pathology turnaround times are as important in modern healthcare as ambulance waiting times.

Around 85% of Barwon Health patients have at least one pathology test performed on them when they are admitted to the hospital or treated in the Emergency Department. Pathology is a vital clinical service in any acute care public hospital which plays a central role in a patient's diagnosis and treatment.

That's why the MSAV has called on Barwon Health to closely monitor pathology services quality standards and ensure that Australian Clinical Labs is compliant with these and other contract specifications. The MSAV has also called on Barwon Health to release to the public pathology quality standards and Australian Clinical Labs reports on its quality performance to ensure that the hospital's community is fully informed about health care standards.

The Union will continue to strongly advocate that Barwon Health must not diminish any healthcare standards just to prop up the profits of a private provider not interested in maintaining the very highest quality standards in pathology. As the situation at Barwon Health continues to unfold, the Union will be sure to continue letting members know what is happening.

It Pays to Belong – Mildura pharmacists get their back pay

Finally pharmacists at Ramsay Healthcare in Mildura have been paid all their outstanding back pay.

Ramsay Health has been running the pharmacy at Mildura Base Hospital since 2013, on the basis that all pharmacists would still be employed under the public sector enterprise agreement.

The AHP was advised by members late last year that Ramsay Health Care had stopped applying this agreement, and immediately raised the issue with both Ramsay and the Mildura Base Hospital.

In November last year Ramsay Healthcare agreed that they should be paying members' entitlements as outlined in our enterprise agreement, and agreed to rectify all underpayments. This took the better part of 10 months, but late last week pharmacists at Ramsay Healthcare in Mildura were finally paid around \$50,000 in outstanding back pay.

While it might have taken longer than we hoped to secure this back pay, it's another very good example of why it pays to belong to the Union.

Professional Indemnity Insurance

MSAV and VPA membership fees include professional indemnity insurance (PI). PI cover includes representation in the coroner's court and representation if any allegations of and (for psychologists) for any complaints which are made to the Psychologists Board of Australia.

So to make sure you have a better idea about your professional indemnity insurance we've created this FAQ for you.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Have members needed to use their PI insurance to get legal advice and/or representation?

Yes, on a number of occasions. This has ranged from representation in the Coroner's Court in relation to suicide or homicide by a patient of a psychologist, to representation in relation to patient complaints or legal action being taken by patients or former patients of a health service or an individual member.

2. Have psychologists had to call on their PI insurance to get legal advice regarding complaints to the Psychologists Board of Australia?

Yes, and in all instances the individual psychologist has been successfully represented.

3. What happens if I retire or no longer practice as a psychologist and a claim is made against me in relation to the period of time I was employed in my profession?

As long as you continued as a financial member up to the time you ceased practicing, your cover extends for 7 years after you ceased to practice.

4. I do volunteer work in my profession. Does my MSAV PI insurance cover me for my volunteer work?

Yes, the policy covers volunteer work.

5. I am a psychologist. Does the Union policy cover my private practice?

No, the VPA policy only covers you for work that you do as an employee. You need to take out additional insurance for any private practice you may undertake.

6. Am I covered for incidents or claims that are made against me before I became a financial member?

Yes, you will be covered for a claim that is made while you are a financial member of the MSAV

or VPA as a result of an incident which occurred in the past except for any claim or circumstance which was known to the member at the time that they joined, or prior to the insurance being renewed annually.

It is important that members notify the Union of any incident which may give rise to a claim as soon as they are aware of such an incident, such as an error in a patient result (for example). This applies to all professions covered by the Union PI insurance including medical scientists, IVF scientists, IVF and Genetic counsellors, medical physicists, dietitians and psychologists.

To notify the Union of such incidents please use the Form which is available either by contacting the Union or [from our website](#).

Profiling your work and educating the public

For many people health care is defined by doctors and nurses because they are the professionals most visible to people who access health care. But as people inside the health industry, we know that it takes many people in many professions to deliver world-class health care.

It's important that more people have a better understanding of the many different professionals it takes to deliver world-class health care. That's why the Union is creating member profiles so we can better educate people about the many different professionals working in health care. And by telling your stories we're making it easier for people to connect with health professionals and better understand the vital work you do.

If you're interested in participating in this project please contact Alex on 9623 9623 or at alexs@msav.org.au

Support the Healthy Futures campaign



The Union strongly believes that climate change is union business. We know that climate change threatens our health by increasing the risks of heatwaves, bushfires, droughts and storms, displacing people and straining our health systems.

And right now HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas.

Join us in asking HESTA and FSS to divest from fossil fuels at www.healthyfutures.net.au/divest.

Worth Reading: A dietitian puts extreme 'clean eating' claims to the test – and the results aren't pretty

"Clean eating" is associated with the healthy lifestyle and body beautiful that is promoted by many online bloggers. While the term is heavily used in social media, there has never been any agreement on what it really means or any comprehensive studies examining the potential benefits of a clean eating lifestyle as a whole.

However, the core principles that the big names in this movement champion appear to be: eliminate processed food; reduce salt intake; eat more vegetables; choose whole grains; eliminate refined sugar; reduce alcohol. For some, you also need to be gluten, dairy, and soya free and to eat raw (depending on how militant you are, food has to be entirely uncooked or only mildly heated). And if you want to be completely "clean" you should probably be vegan, too. Quite a list, then."

Read the entire article by Sophie Medlin in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/a-dietitian-puts-extreme-clean-eating-claims-to-the-test-and-the-results-arent-pretty-63675>

Worth Reading: Australia's Health 2016 report card: experts respond

"Australians are living longer than ever but with higher rates of chronic disease, the latest national report card shows.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Australia's Health 2016 report, released today, Australian boys can now expect to live into their 80s (80.3), while the life expectancy for girls has reached the mid-80s (84.4)."

Read the entire article by Fran Baum and Stephen Duckett in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/australias-health-2016-report-card-experts-respond-65244>

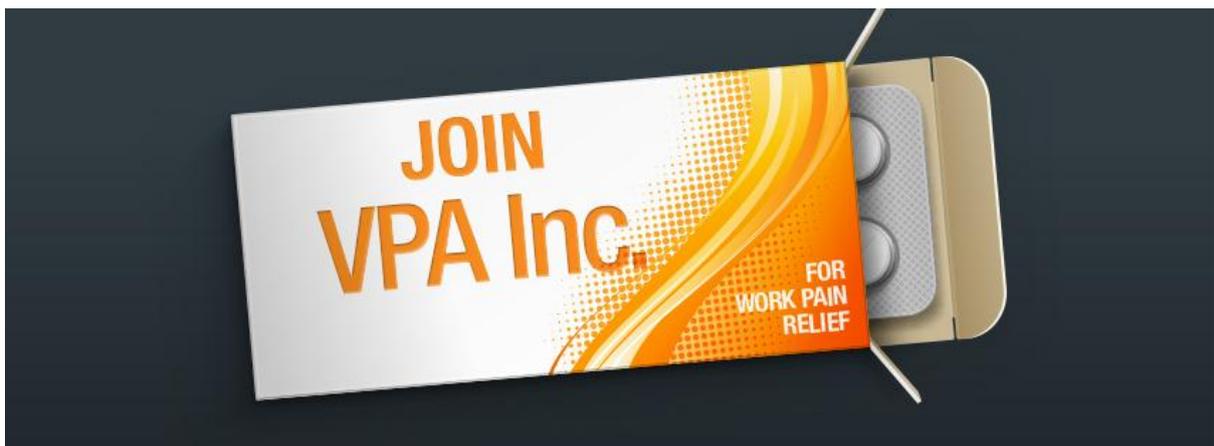
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Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Are you doing longer hours at work? Join the Union for work pain relief!

To protect our professions and stand up for our rights at work we must strengthen our collective voice and strengthen our bargaining position by increasing our membership. And you can help right now by sharing one of the images below through Facebook.



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Your Union is on Facebook

Keep up to date with what's happening by liking us on Facebook

[Medical Scientists Association of Victoria](#) | [Victorian Psychologists Association Inc](#) | [Association of Hospital Pharmacists](#)



Get the most out of the Union's website

The Union's website has a number of special features for members. These features, like the Members section and the Forums, require you to have a log-in and password.

But to ensure that your privacy is protected we have created the website in such a way that you will need a separate log-in and password for the Members section and the Forums section. It might seem to be inconvenient but it does better protect you and your private information. It also means that we can be more certain about the source of a hack if such an event is ever to arise.

Australian Unions Member Benefits app

Over the last month Australian Unions launched some new and exclusive Member Benefits - did you see our recent email telling you about this? If not, check your inbox! Search for "Lifestyle Rewards" for your login code.

Our program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards including major theme parks, zoos and aquariums.
- A discounted accommodation booking site.
- A new secure member only website and smart phone app.

All this is free to all members of affiliated unions. If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now.](#)



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