



# Stat Report 2016/27

## Public Sector Bargaining Update

After months of negotiations there has been no movement made towards reaching an agreement on the new enterprise bargaining agreement. Despite discussions beginning early, with a strong sense of readiness to bargain in good faith, employers have decided to waste time by refusing to declare their position on the claims we've lodged.

We commenced formal negotiations in July and have held more than 16 meetings, but to date not a single offer has been made on any of our key claims.

It's disappointing that employers and the Government are not acting with any sense of haste or urgency, given our current agreement reached its expiry date on Monday – 31 October. The union said from the outset that we wanted negotiations wrapped up as close as possible to this date.

There is no excuse for the Government's and health service's failure to make a significant offer to date. The fact we are four months into negotiations and still no offer says, very clearly, we are not being taken seriously.

Of course we have been in this position before, and we have learnt what our answer must be, which is to make ourselves heard. The way we do this is by taking protected industrial action which disrupts services and hospital incomes – there is no secret about what our options are.

Last week the Union's workplace representatives held a meeting at Trades Hall. The meeting was called to hear a report on the status of and decide our response to ensure bargaining isn't allowed to drag out as it did under the Baillieu Government.

At the meeting, it was clear that members were frustrated and disappointed with negotiations being dragged out and passed the following resolution:

*This meeting of MSAV/AHP/VPA members fully supports the claims that the Union has made and the priorities that have been set.*

*We are extremely frustrated that little progress towards a final agreement has been made, despite the number of meetings that have been held.*

*We have acted in good faith towards our employers and the Government and to date have tried to negotiate an agreement without disputation. We now fear our good faith is being abused.*

*We urge the Minister for Health to intervene to ensure that our health and welfare is protected through genuine workload/staffing reforms and ensure that clinical quality and healthcare standards can be maintained.*

*This meeting directs the Union to do the following:*

- 1. Continue to negotiate but set a firm deadline of 30 November for final in principle*
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- agreement to be reached.*
- 2. Report back to reps meeting on Wednesday 9 November for a decision to be made in relation to a campaign of industrial action.*
  - 3. Conduct workplace meetings to report to members and gather support for the negotiations and possible industrial action.*

**Note** that the report back meeting date has been changed from 9 November to 16 November, 12.00pm, Meeting Room 1, Trades Hall, cnr Lygon & Victoria Streets, Carlton.

The Union will continue to keep members up-to-date on the progress of negotiations and in the meantime we are holding workplace meetings to report to members about the progress of negotiations and to gather support for possible industrial action if negotiations continue to be delayed.

Contact the Union on 9623 9623 to discuss arranging a meeting in your workplace or how you can help with our campaign for decent jobs and healthy careers.

## Paid Parental Leave under attack...again

You will have heard and read over the weekend that the Turnbull Government is going to undermine Australia's paid parental leave scheme, claiming that women taking up the scheme are 'double-dipping'.

This isn't the first time the Coalition have attempted to undermine this hard-won workplace right which acknowledges the need for women to recover from their pregnancy and to bond with their child ahead of returning to work. And this isn't the first time the Coalition have attempted to paint women that access their paid parental leave entitlement as 'double-dippers' with former PM Tony Abbott and former Treasurer Joe Hockey declaring the scheme allowed for double dipping.

Unfortunately there is nothing new in the latest attack on paid parental leave by the Coalition. It's discouraging but not surprising that the Turnbull Government has little regard for women in the workforce. It is also telling in how the Turnbull Government views workers as it pursues a hard-won workplace right but is completely unwilling to tackle corporate tax dodgers and continues to give high income earners further tax cuts.

It wasn't that long ago that Tony Abbott was arguing, as a signature policy, for 6 months of paid parental leave with full income replacement up to \$75,000. Now we find ourselves discussing changes to paid parental leave that will see nearly half of all eligible families losing out.

And the worst part is that the Turnbull Government continues to claim women accessing paid parental leave are somehow 'double-dipping' and 'rorting' the system.

What's been announced is essentially the same as the cuts proposed in the Abbott Government's 2015 Budget; a major winding back of the paid parental leave scheme that working Australians have fought for through bargaining and lobbying over decades. And for the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and the Social Services Minister to say (repeatedly) that some families are double-dipping is extremely disingenuous to say the least, especially since it was proven not to be the case when this claim was first made in 2015.

The paid parental leave scheme was always designed to be a complementary measure to those schemes already offered by employers. And where those employer schemes didn't cover 26 weeks of paid parental leave, the government topped up those provisions. No families are double-dipping. None.

But if these proposed changes go through the Parliament it will result in tens of thousands of families losing out and forcing parents back into the workforce sooner without the availability of adequate childcare options. This will only cause greater stress and could actually result in a reduction in workforce participation as women, predominantly the primary care-giver, are unable to find childcare. Ultimately it will make it more difficult for families to make ends meet.

It also says a lot about the real agenda behind political parties like One Nation and Family First, who claim to support working families but have reportedly agreed to support the ruination of paid

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parental leave which would see the families they purport to represent being punished for accessing a scheme as it was intended.

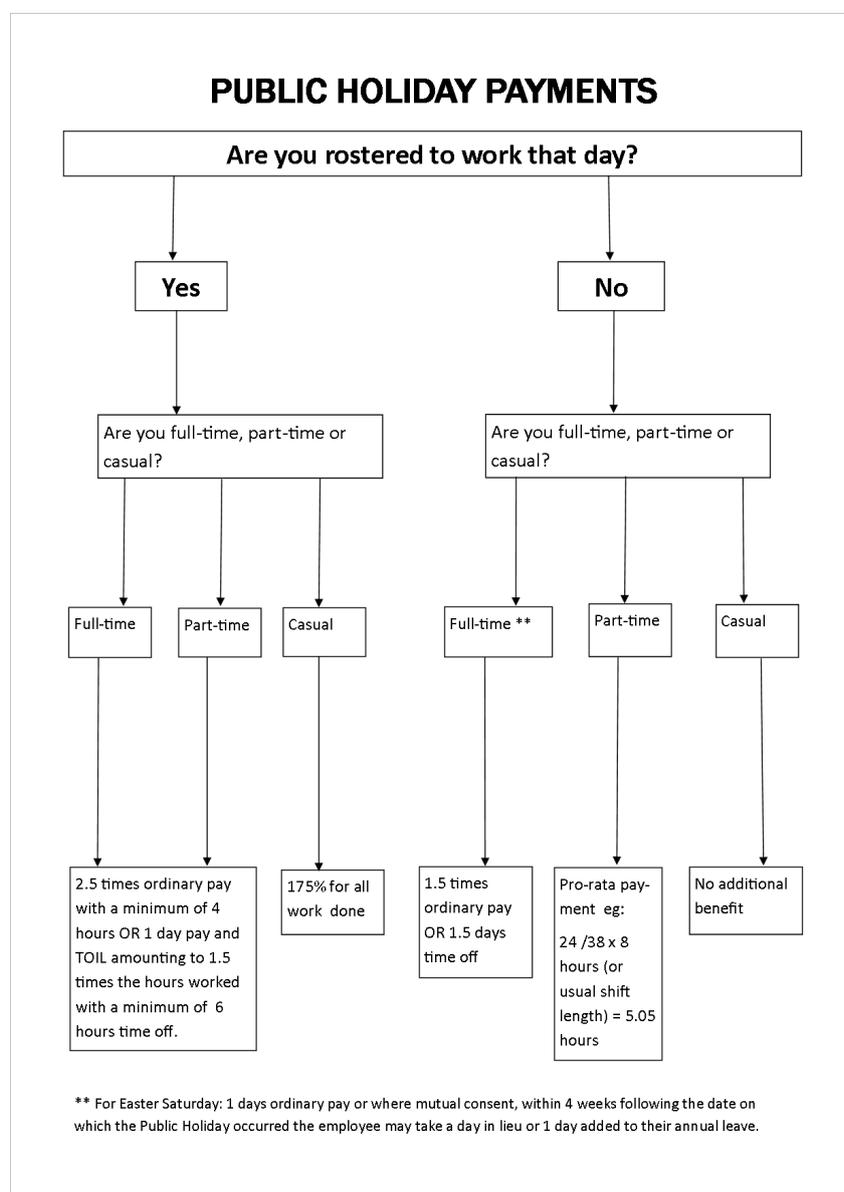
In the end what was meant to be a gold-standard, key signature, Paid Parental Leave scheme has been up-ended for a dismantling of a hard-won scheme. In all of this it is important to remember that the Paid Parental Leave scheme wasn't a gift from government or from employers. It was won due to the decades-long fight by union members like you.

The Union remains confident that these measures are very unlikely to be passed by the Senate.

But to make absolutely sure we continue to enjoy this hard-won entitlement, sign the petition telling the Senate to save paid parental leave at: <http://www.australianunions.org.au/ppl>

## Public Holiday Entitlements

Our Enterprise Agreement provides public holiday benefits whenever one occurs, whether it's for the Grand Final, Melbourne Cup Day or over Easter and Christmas. Unfortunately this particular provision in our agreement is complex with individual entitlements varying due to a number of different factors, e.g. part-time employment, shift work or whether you're normally rostered on the day of the public holiday. It is important that members remind themselves of their entitlements and the easiest way to check is to use our handy flow-chart below.



If you still have queries about your entitlement please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or via email at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

# Northern Hospital and Australian Clinical Labs

Members at the Northern Hospital are still lobbying State Members of Parliament over concerns about Australian Clinical Labs taking over pathology services at Northern Hospital with the private provider looking to sack staff to replace them with staff at lower classifications.

ACL still expects the same level of expertise and productivity; they're just not prepared to pay for it and seriously believe that top scientists will want the privilege of being poorly paid.

The Union continues to have strong concerns about a private equity firm buying up pathology providers. It raises serious issues about the future quality of health care as private equity firms apply a standard business model which places a much higher priority on the level of profit than pathology quality standards. This business model means decisions that reduce operating costs but actually compromise quality standards can become the norm. It is also becoming increasingly clear that these firms appear not to understand the need for pathology services to build the scientific expertise and knowledge required to deliver world-class pathology services.

The Union's experience with Clinical Labs to-date, leads us to believe that Australian Clinical Labs will pursue corporate strategies similar to other private pathology providers, like Dorevitch, by centralising work, sacking scientists and closing pathology labs in hospitals.

Please support your colleagues at the Northern Hospital by contacting State Members of Parliament.

Contacting local Members of Parliament is a powerful and effective way of making our voices heard by the people that make the decisions about our healthcare system. By contacting them you're ensuring they know what is happening in their local hospital and you're alerting them to a critical issue that can have very large ramifications on the standard of healthcare offered at their local hospital.

Express your concerns by contacting the following State Members of Parliament:

- Bronwyn Halfpenny, Member for Thomastown: (03) 9465 7533
- Danielle Green, Member for Yan Yean: (03) 9432 9782
- Ros Spence, Member for Yuroke: (03) 9305 7177
- Colin Brooks, Member for Bundoora: (03) 9467 5657
- Lizzie Blandthorn, Member for Pascoe Vale: (03) 9354 9935
- Frank McGuire, Member for Broadmeadows: (03) 9300 3851

To help you contact Members of Parliament we have prepared the following information about Australian Clinical Labs at the Northern Hospital:

1. Australian Clinical Labs wants to sack scientists and downgrade senior scientist positions at the Northern Hospital.
2. There are growing concerns about whether patient records will be sent, accessed and maintained offshore; and how Australian Clinical Labs will protect patient privacy and confidentiality.
3. Quality standards are rapidly declining leading to a decline in healthcare standards across the Northern Hospital's clinical services.
4. Patients are now delayed in being discharged from the Emergency Department.
5. Pathology test results are delayed leading to delayed diagnosis and treatment for patients.
6. Australian Clinical Labs is a wholly owned subsidiary of Crescent Capital, a private equity firm.

## NPAAC public consultation on Requirements for the Clinical Governance and Supervision of Medical Pathology Laboratories

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The National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) has released the *Requirements for the Clinical Governance and Supervision of Medical Pathology Laboratories (Fourth Edition 20xx)* for public consideration and comment. A copy of the draft document, and associated information, is available from the NPAAC website at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-npaac-publications-draft.htm>

NPAAC is seeking the views of the pathology sector and interested parties on the draft Requirements for Governance and Supervision of Medical Pathology Laboratories (Fourth Edition 20XX) with a view to finalising the document.

**The public consultation period closes Friday, 25 November 2016** and details on how to make a submission can be found on the website mentioned above.

Should you have any further queries, please direct them to the NPAAC Secretariat via email at [npaac@health.gov.au](mailto:npaac@health.gov.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](http://www.healthyfutures.net.au/divest).**

## Do you need access to Domestic Violence services?

If you're experiencing domestic violence and need help, here is a list of Victorian services which may be able to assist you.

[Safe Steps \(formerly Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria\)](#)

[Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria \(FVPLS\)](#)

[Centre Against Sexual Assault \(CASA\) Forum](#)

[Community Legal Centres](#)

[Court Network](#)

[Domestic Violence Victoria](#)

[Elder Rights Advocacy \(ERA\)](#)

[Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service](#)

[inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence](#)

[Men's Referral Service](#)

[No To Violence](#)

[QLife Australia](#)

[Seniors Rights Victoria \(SRV\)](#)

[The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence](#)

[Victoria Legal Aid \(VLA\)](#)

[Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency](#)

[Women with Disabilities Victoria \(WDV\)](#)

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[Women's Housing Ltd](#)

[Women's Information Referral Exchange \(WIRE\)](#)

[Women's Legal Service](#)

[Women's refuges](#)

## Worth Reading: It's Time To Call The Liberal's Social Welfare 'Reforms' What They Really Are: Class Warfare

"Australia's unemployed are being exposed to a system which Christian Porter, the Minister for Social Services, has blatantly admitted is supposed to be undesirable by design. He argues this is to encourage "self-reliance".

This ideological rhetoric doesn't deserve to be taken seriously. The real aim is to encourage obedience and subservience amongst workers, especially those of the precariat class (those in precarious employment/circumstances).

The message is, 'don't risk your job by demanding better conditions, pay or hours; if you do lose your employment in this way, the only payment you'll receive will be below the poverty line until you find your next job in an ever fluctuating marketplace'."

Read the entire article by Peter Thrupp at New Matilda: <https://newmatilda.com/2016/10/23/its-time-to-call-the-liberals-social-welfare-reforms-what-they-really-are-class-warfare/>

## Worth Reading: Housing: the hidden health intervention

"Australia's long run of "home ownership for all" appears to have ended. [Smashed avocado](#) aside, young people are now [much less likely](#) than their parents to ever own their own home. Almost one-third of the nation rents, mainly from private landlords.

Governments have gradually shifted the focus of welfare away from public housing and towards subsidising housing in the private rental market. At last count, around [1.3 million households](#) were receiving government rental assistance – that's around one in five Australian households receiving on average [A\\$128 per fortnight](#).

As the private rental sector expands and the cost of housing rises, it is important to acknowledge that the effects of unaffordable housing cascade into other areas of life, in particular, mental health."

Read the entire article by Rebecca Bentley, Aaron Reeves and Emma Baker in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/housing-the-hidden-health-intervention-65465>

## Worth Reading: How pharmaceutical companies profit from drugs for rare diseases

"Pharmaceutical companies' traditional focus on discovering the next US\$1 billion "blockbuster" drug has shifted in recent years, from products for common diseases to treatments for rare conditions. And in [new research we've published](#), we found that legislation enacted to incentivise the pharma industry to invest in medication for rare conditions is now so profitable that it's stifling investment in other vital areas of drug research.

Blockbuster drugs have been dependent on a high volume of prescription sales. Heartburn treatment [Losec](#), the brand name for omeprazole, earned pharmaceutical company Astra US\$6 billion a year up to the year 2000. [Pfizer's Lipitor](#) (atorvastatin), used to reduce cholesterol, generated up to US\$12 billion per year and cumulative sales of US\$131 billion to 2011. Yet unit prices were low, with both available for about US\$2 per patient per day."

Read the entire article by Dyfrig Hughes and Jannine Poletti-Hughes in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/how-pharmaceutical-companies-profit-from-drugs-for-rare-diseases-65266>

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## Join the Union

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

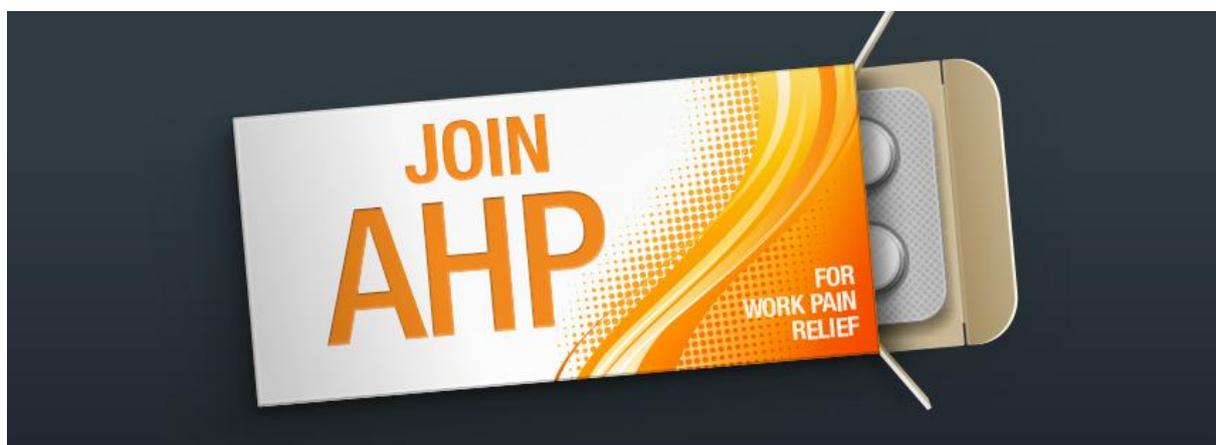
To protect our professions and stand up for our rights at work we must strengthen our collective voice and strengthen our bargaining position by increasing our membership. And you can help right now by sharing one of the images below through Facebook.



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## Your Union is on Facebook

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

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## 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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