



Stat Report 2017/11

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Union responds to the State budget

The State budget announced this week was quite a mixed bag when it came to public health with some big gains in mental health while hospital pathology and pharmacy lost out again. The Union is disappointed that the Victorian Government has again forgotten to ensure that Victoria's health system is underpinned by world class pathology, a critical clinical service.

Public health services continue to treat pathology as a less than critical clinical service and this year's budget will ensure that the health and wellbeing of Victorians is put at risk because there is not enough funding to these critical services. With more than 80% of all patients in the public health system getting their clinical diagnosis from a pathology test of one kind or another, turn-around times are crucial to ensuring patient safety. 100% of patients rely on pathology tests for diagnosis and treatment and without pathology it is not possible to deliver world-class cancer treatments and care.

The outsourcing of pathology services to private pathology providers is putting Victoria's public hospitals at risk of being incapable of delivering world class healthcare as pathology laboratories are closed and testing is shifted out of public hospitals.

Putting patient safety first means our hospitals must have world class medical scientists and pathology laboratories not more outsourcing. It's not possible to deliver patient safety when it's entirely reliant on getting tests done quickly which can't be done when private pathology providers dictate the level of service.

Regional and rural Victoria will not be able to deliver world-class healthcare or ensure cancer patients are properly cared for regardless of how much is spent on upgrading hospitals if pathology services are slashed or outsourced. Without pathology done locally it means test turnaround times are delaying diagnosis and treatment.

It's not good enough for the Andrews Government to ignore the need to properly fund critical clinical services like pathology. It's just not possible to deliver the best possible care without pathology services being conducted in-house.

And it's absolutely impossible to deliver the best possible care wherever Victorians need it, especially in regional and rural Victoria, when private pathology providers are consolidating services and shifting pathology out of local hospitals to Melbourne. Healthcare when we need it

means ensuring pathology services are fully funded and the outsourcing stops. Every outsourced pathology lab means turnaround times for tests increase resulting in delays to diagnoses and treatments.

But this is an important budget for the mental health needs of all Victorians including additional funding to provide for the employment of more staff to ensure that all Victorians are able to enjoy good mental health.

The Andrews Government's budget commits significant funding to mental health services in Victoria. The Victorian Psychologists Association welcomes this funding and believes it will provide a much needed boost to expand mental health services across Victoria.

In particular the Victorian Psychologists Association is pleased to see additional funding for the state's mental health institutions and to increase access for those requiring urgent mental health assistance.

The VPA also welcomes additional funding targeted at increasing the mental health workforce including for the employment of psychologists. The increase in funding will necessitate an increase in mental health workers but it will be a major challenge for the Andrews Government to ensure mental health services are properly staffed with specialist mental health clinicians such as psychologists.

The Victorian Psychologists Association also welcomes the additional funding committed to the Thomas Embling Hospital and the massive boost in funding to address family violence including the workforce needed to deliver services.

And the VPA Inc welcomes the increased funding to drug and alcohol services, and urges the government to ensure that sufficient psychologists and other specialist clinicians are recruited to service the additional 30 beds and other services.

It's definitely a budget that does a lot for mental health but does very little to ensure that vital clinical services like pathology and pharmacy are properly resourced.

VPA Professional Development – 10 May 2017

VPA PD Wednesday 10 May 2017 from 1.30pm to 4.30pm at ANMF House – 540 Elizabeth St, Melbourne

This is your last chance to register for our upcoming Professional Development seminar to hear about the implementation of the Victorian 10 Year Mental Health Plan and the work of the Workforce Reference Group established by the Minister.

The VPA is represented on the Workforce Reference Group by Dr Rosemary Kelly and one of the key projects of the Workforce Reference Group is to look at the attraction and retention of workers in public mental health including psychologists.

By attending the seminar you'll have the opportunity to give feedback on issues affecting psychologists working in public mental health, as well as being informed about current developments.

Speakers will include Emma Cadogan and Clare Handley, Senior Project Officers, from the Mental Health and Drugs Workforce Team in the Department of Health and Human Services.

Registration and a light lunch will start from 12.45pm. Please inform us if you are joining us for lunch or not.

RSVP at <https://goo.gl/forms/BFjpefq3pQ2NzwrR2>

Legionella detected at The Austin

The Union has been informed that legionella has been detected in the hot water system in one of the Austin Tower, which doesn't affect their cooling towers and air conditioning. As per

Department of Health and Human Services guidelines, Austin Health has initiated heat disinfection of the hot water systems

As Legionella is transmitted in aerosols, staff who work in the Austin Tower are being asked to avoid the use of showers until this process is complete in your area.

Austin Health is also re-checking systems at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and will heat-disinfect hot water systems on this campus. These systems previously tested positive but were then cleared.

While the risk to staff is extremely low, and Austin Health and the Union are not aware of any staff members affected but you are encouraged to monitor yourselves for symptoms.

Any staff member who develops symptoms such as a cough, shortness of breath or fever during the next two weeks, should mention the possibility of Legionella infection to their doctor.

Austin Health has assured the Union and staff that it will take every step necessary to ensure the safety of patients and staff. It is understood by the Union that Austin Health is closely reviewing their monitoring and surveillance processes.

If you need more information or further guidance is required please contact Infectious Diseases on extension 6676 or the Infectious Diseases Registrar on-call via the Austin Health Switch.

Psychologists: If you need help at work you need the VPA Inc.

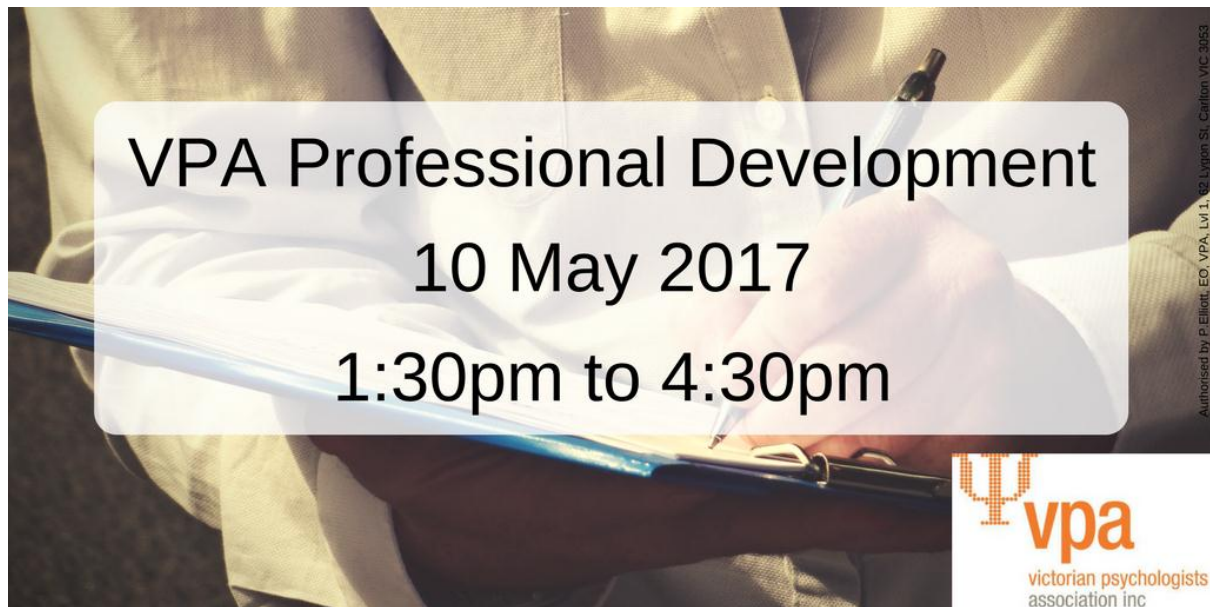
If you are a psychologist and not in the VPA, you are taking unnecessary risks with your reputation and career. [Download an application form and join today.](#)

Here's a 'real-life' case where the VPA has acted on behalf of VPA members.

When a patient of a major public health service committed an act of serious self-harm, Psychologist 'D', who had seen the patient many months previously, was subjected to disciplinary proceedings concerning her clinical notes. After enduring unfounded allegations by the employer, the psychologist decided to resign. VPA was able to negotiate on her behalf to obtain an attractive severance package in recognition of the injustice to which she had been subjected.

Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements
In addition to the above, VPA routinely assists members over issues such as harassment and bullying, under classification, organisational re-structuring, incorrect calculation of leave entitlements and health and safety. In addition, the VPA negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

[Check out 7 more reasons to join the VPA Inc.](#)



Health professionals urge authorities to address pollution and unmask cities

Air pollution is driving a global public health crisis. It is responsible for one in nine deaths worldwide, and touches everyone given 92% of the human race live in places that do not meet World Health Organisation guidelines. As it is also driving a climate crisis - with increasingly heavy health implications - doctors, nurses, public health practitioners and other healthcare professionals are coming together to call for practical solutions to cut pollution levels in cities and deal with both.

In a new global initiative called Unmask My City, these health groups are using air quality monitors, smartphones, and innovative LED light masks that change colour according to pollution levels to highlight the preventable and direct impacts of air pollution. These include asthma attacks, increased risks of heart disease, lung cancer, respiratory diseases and strokes, and climate change-related heatstroke, tropical disease spread, and more. The sources of and solutions to air pollution are clear. It is up to authorities to make better choices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and get our cities into the World Health Organization's green "healthy" air zone by 2030.

Addressing poor air quality and unmasking our cities by 2030 will have huge immediate and long term benefits for the health of our communities, for our economies, and for our shared global climate. #UnmaskMyCity is a response by health professionals to this global crisis. Find out more and get involved here: <https://goo.gl/OmDrmH>

Oh the places you could go with Union Aid Abroad- APHEDA!

Need a holiday? It's Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA raffle time!

[Buy your ticket online](#)

The annual raffle raised over \$80,000 last year. Your support is vital in keeping Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA independent, effective and strong and helps build unions and social movements.

As well as knowing your money goes to great things, you'll be in the draw for some terrific prizes.

[Buy your ticket online](#)

FIRST PRIZE: Take the holiday of your dreams with an \$8,000 travel voucher. Can be used on domestic or international travel through Flight Centre stores.

Can be used to take one big holiday or a number of smaller trips.

SECOND PRIZE: Ride off into the commuter sunset on a fabulous Gazelle bicycle (valued at \$2,499). Dutch-made, the Ultimate S8 is a sporty trekking bike with a lightweight aluminium frame.

THIRD PRIZE: Escape into a world of books with a \$500 book voucher from Abbey's Bookshop, an Aladdin's cave of words and pages! Abbey's has been an institution for book lovers since 1968.

How to buy your tickets:

- [Buy online](#)
- [Download and complete this form](#) [PDF]; or
- FREECALL 1800 888 674, fax (02) 9261 1118 or email office@apheda.org.au

If you have supported our raffle in the past, please keep an eye on your letter box for a book of tickets that our volunteers will be sending out to you this week.

So, spread the word and help us raise more than \$100,000 this year.

Support Family Violence Leave for all workers

Survivors have suffered for too long behind closed doors. We all have a part to play in ending violence: it's time that employers played theirs. Tell employers that everyone has the right to paid days away from work if they are subjected to family violence.

Make your voice heard: <http://bit.ly/FDVLeave>

Stopping Gendered Violence at Work

Far too often women are attacked, harassed and threatened in their workplaces. And it needs to stop. That's why the Union is fighting back against gendered violence in the workplace – it's a very serious occupational health and safety issue.

Gendered violence is like a disease in our workplaces. Working women's experience of violence at work indicates that the problem of gendered violence is endemic in our workplaces.

Sign up to support the campaign at: <http://www.unionwomen.org.au/stopgv>

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.

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 \(WDV\)](#)
[Women's Housing Ltd](#)
[Women's Information Referral Exchange \(WIRE\)](#)
[Women's Legal Service](#)
[Women's refuges](#)

Worth Reading: Budget deficit nearly \$2bn worse than projected five months ago, report finds

"The Turnbull government's budget deficit for the 2016-17 financial year is likely to be \$38.3bn, nearly \$2bn worse than projected five months ago, according to Deloitte Access Economics.

Deloitte's twice-yearly Budget Monitor, released on Monday, shows stagnant wages and lacklustre jobs growth have weighed so heavily on personal income tax collections in Australia that they will trim \$1.7bn from official revenue forecasts in 2016-17 and a further \$600m in 2017-18.

But the report says last year's surging commodity prices, and the Reserve Bank's record-low interest rates, will help the government's 2017-18 budget record a deficit \$1.2bn smaller than projected five months ago, at \$27.5bn."

Read the entire article by Gareth Hutchens in The Guardian at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/may/01/governments-budget-deficit-for-2016-17-likely-to-be-383bn-report-says>

Worth Reading: Suddenly, the future doesn't seem so far away

"This summer was not a good time to be pregnant. New South Wales experienced its hottest summer on record, hotter even than the [Angry Summer](#) of 2012–13. From Christmas to mid February, heatwave after heatwave engulfed Australia's largest city. The outskirts of Sydney broke records by reaching [almost 47°C](#), and many other parts of the state, and of Queensland and northern Victoria, received no reprieve from the heat.

My specialty is heatwaves, so ordinarily I would be captivated by weather like this. I study the weather charts to work out where the mass of hot air has originated, how long it might last, and whether another one will follow. I discuss with my team how natural climate variability and other physical mechanisms might be influencing the weather pattern, and formulate and conduct experiments to determine whether human-induced climate change had a role to play. My phone rings hot as media requests roll in, and in interviews I find myself stressing how heatwaves are

becoming longer, hotter and more frequent, with summers like the last one just a taste of what is to come."

As a scientist, I'm trained to be exceptionally careful. The publication process subjects all my findings are subject to [critical peer review](#). Before that, they are discussed extensively with colleagues to ensure the validity of my interpretation and the significance of the results. Along the way are many control checks, which mean that when I say that summers like 2016–17 will [become the new normal](#), I have the evidence to back it up. Feelings don't figure in the process, only the presentation of the most accurate and scientifically robust results."

Read the entire article by Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick in Inside Story at: <http://insidestory.org.au/suddenly-the-future-doesnt-seem-so-far-away>

Worth Reading: Your sons and your daughters: mental health in the age of overtime

"I'm looking at anyone who associates the word "millennial" with young people who seem to feel entitled to the "good things" in life but are unwilling to put in the hard work to earn them; anyone who thinks being overworked and underpaid is a normal way to start your career.

Without a doubt, you're going to experience some deep-seated resistance to what I am about to say.

It's not your fault; your work ethic has been conditioned with each and every pay cheque, and I'm about to undermine it.

But you need to hear this, for the good of us all.

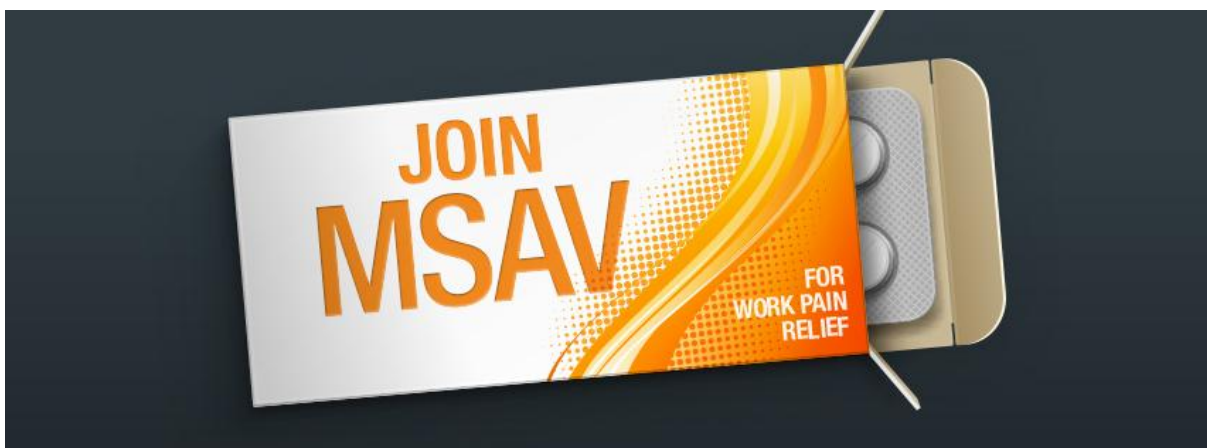
So, for the love of God, will you do yourselves the favour of putting aside your well-meant anxieties and hard-earned wisdoms for a minute, and just listen?"

Read the entire article by Courtney A Landers in The Conversation via the ABC at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-01/mental-health-in-the-age-of-overtime-the-conversation/8486054>

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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[Share on Facebook](#)

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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