



Stat Report 2017/13

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Update on Public Sector bargaining

Despite much of the work being completed the Union is still waiting for the final draft agreement to be approved by the government so that it can then be put out to vote.

While it's incredibly frustrating that we are still waiting, the good news is that we're closer to getting the agreement finalised. It also means that it won't be long before we'll be asking you to vote for the new agreement but we will make sure a detailed explanation of all of the changes in the new agreement is distributed.

Until then, we're keen to continue to share with members the details of the agreement and what we've been negotiating. Please get in touch with us and let us know when it's a good time to meet with members in your workplace by calling 9623 9623 or via email at enquiry@msav.org.au

Outsourcing is undermining public healthcare

There is a lot to be said about this year's state and federal budgets. In both cases critical clinical services have been overlooked resulting in public health services continuing to allow private providers to downgrade quality and service levels.

In some health services we are currently witnessing a rapid decline in standards of healthcare and patient safety as private health providers make very significant changes to services based on commercial interests.

We're getting a grim picture of how much private pathology providers are dictating public health standards by moving work out of regional and rural areas and centralise it in Melbourne. We're witnessing this happening at Kyneton Hospital, the continuing of the contract with Dorevitch at Latrobe Regional Health and at Western Health despite a government report indicating there were significant contract compliance and administration problems with Dorevitch at LRH. Now we are witnessing this at Barwon Health as Australian Clinical Laboratories attempts to shift more testing work to Melbourne despite the assurances of former CEO of Barwon Health that they would not be allowed to do this.

The very worrying trend is that health service Executives and Boards are not lifting a finger to stop private providers implementing changes that are contrary to patient safety and clinical standards.

Instead of better healthcare, we get in pathology services closures of microbiology and other specialist services, redundancies of senior scientists, escalating workloads and widespread dysfunction in laboratories.

The MSAV has long been reporting that quality standards in pathology have been declining. Unfortunately, we are now witnessing a more rapid decline turnaround times, to the point that Bendigo Health Doctors this week publicly expressed concerns that patient safety is being seriously compromised.

The dangers of making scientists work longer hours and undertaking more work are obvious. As the scientific workforce is made smaller and the amount of work grows, there comes a point at which either quality standards suffer or the workforce suffers, or more likely both.

This is serious business; without medical scientists there is no clinical diagnosis and no treatment. Likewise, delayed turnaround times means delayed diagnosis and delayed treatment. Each scenario has dire consequences for patient safety.

We cannot continue outsourced clinical services, like pathology. There is no place in public health for private equity firms to determine levels of clinical quality and patient safety by cutting scientific staff and downgrading services.

Every time the government cuts funding to our universal healthcare system, the more we're allowing private equity to dictate the future level of healthcare we receive.

Scientists at Barwon Health – sign the petition

Australian Clinical Labs is trashing critical scientific positions to achieve better profits.

That's why we've asked all of our scientist members at Barwon Health to sign a petition calling on the Health Minister Jill Hennessy, Christine Cousens MP and CEO of Barwon Health to urgently intervene to ensure that the dangerous decline in pathology quality standards is reversed and that the Barwon Health laboratory is restored to a world-class pathology service for the Geelong community and treated as a crucial clinical service not something to be down-sized and outsourced.

Australian Clinical Labs is proposing further cuts to the scientific workforce at the pathology laboratory in Barwon Health. Patient safety is at risk as pathology test turn-around-times continue to grow delaying patient diagnosis and treatment. And with every job lost fewer clinical services can be delivered at Barwon Health.

It's up to us to keep the pressure on the Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy and Barwon Health's CEO to ensure that declining pathology standards are reversed and the cuts to the scientific workforce stop. **Please make sure you sign the petition we sent you on 10 May.**

So far we're only asking scientists and scientific staff to sign the petition to ensure that our petition carries the strongest possible weight as the experts in delivering pathology services.

Your confidentiality is guaranteed. We will not share your personal details with anyone other than those named in the petition.

Together we can take a stand to reverse these cuts – make sure you sign the petition.

If you need more information or want to discuss this with someone, contact the Union on 9623 9623 or via email at enquiry@msav.org.au

Bullying and harassment in the workplace

Bullying and harassment in the workplace is something we cannot tolerate. And there are plenty

of reasons why every workplace needs to ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated. Indeed every health service in Victoria has some kind of policy about bullying and harassment offering ways of reporting it and processes for how such issues are dealt with.

There is little doubt that bullying and harassment is occurring in our workplaces. You only need to look at the recent reports in the media about the extent of bullying and harassment in healthcare.

However when we go to do something about bullying and harassment in the workplace, it becomes difficult to prove. So why is it so difficult to prove bullying and harassment?

It's important to know what constitutes bullying and harassment. In general bullying and harassment is when:

- a person or group of people repeatedly act unreasonably towards you or a group of workers
- the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.

Unreasonable behaviour includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening. Whether behaviour is unreasonable can depend on whether a reasonable person might see the behaviour as unreasonable in the circumstances. And it is important to remember that there is a pattern to the behaviour over time. That's why we always advise any member concerned about bullying and harassment to keep a diary of when the behaviour took place and what happened.

Examples of bullying include:

- behaving aggressively
- teasing or practical jokes
- pressuring someone to behave inappropriately
- excluding someone from work-related events or
- unreasonable work demands.

A manager can make decisions about poor performance, take disciplinary action, and direct and control the way work is carried out. But this needs to be done in a reasonable way otherwise it can be considered as bullying.

And if you've ever found yourself in a situation that involves threats to harm someone, acts of violence, assault, property damage and stalking these should be referred to the police because they are criminal matters. The response to these issues in your workplace should be appropriate to the seriousness of what has occurred.

Bullying and harassment in the workplace are very serious issues and not taken lightly by the Union. If you think you are being harassed or bullied at work, it is vital that you start documenting it.

Need support or advice – contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au

Share with your colleagues: 7 Reasons to join the VPA Inc.

Joining your Union is an essential to having a healthy workplace. By joining the VPA Inc you're helping to ensure you and your colleagues have a stronger voice to protect your rights at work and when bargaining for a new agreement.

It also means we're able to do more to protect your profession and deliver even more benefits.

Together we are stronger!

Here are 7 reasons you should join the VPA Inc today!

1. Your Rights at Work

Your rights at work are worth fighting for and that's where the VPA comes in. We've been fighting for your rights at work for over 30 years and making sure that your employer is doing the right thing. It's the bread and butter of the VPA to make sure your rights are protected.

And when we find out an employer isn't doing the right thing we swing into action to make sure your rights are being protected. Whether it's to make sure you've been paid properly, to ensure you can negotiate your return to work from parental leave or to protect your right to consultation when things change at work, the VPA's got your back.

The VPA Inc is part of the Health Services Union Victoria Number 4 Branch which allows the VPA Inc to represent you in the Fair Work Commission, the Equal Opportunity Commission and other tribunals.

The VPA Inc:

- Offers members individual and collective representation
- Negotiates the terms and conditions of psychologists employed in public and private health services, including around classification definitions and career paths, rates of pay and higher qualifications allowances, as well as entitlements to all forms of paid leave
- Takes matters such as under-classification or underpayment to the Fair Work Commission or if necessary to the Federal Court on behalf of individual members.

By joining the Union you're able to access individual professional workplace assistance. The Union is here to help protect your rights at work. We assist members with returning to work from parental leave, WorkCover claims, unfair dismissal claims, disciplinary action, claims for back pay, under-classification and more.

And if you need it we can provide representation regarding workers' compensation matters through Union Assist.

We represent members in consulting with employers in relation to proposed work place changes, restructuring and redundancy.

2. Improving Workplace Health and Safety

We know that not every workplace is safe or puts in place the measures needed for a healthy workplace. That's why the Union works with our Job Reps, affected members and employers to ensure workplaces are safe.

We campaign on occupational health and safety (OHS) matters, including through our work on occupational stress. We take OHS seriously because, like you, we know that unsafe and unhealthy workplaces are dangerous workplaces which ultimately have a negative impact on your ability to do the best for your patients.

3. Professional Development

Your professional development is important to the Union. We know that it's a vital part of ensuring you're up-to-date with the latest developments and that regular and ongoing professional development is crucial to your continued registration as a psychologist. That's why the VPA Inc offers financial members two (2) professional development seminars each year, which are free and are delivered by your peers and/or specialist speakers.

We negotiate paid professional development leave for psychologists under the enterprise agreements applying to your workplace, including the entitlement to seven days paid PD leave per annum across public health services.

4. Professional Indemnity Insurance

Your membership includes cover under the VPA Inc's group Professional Indemnity insurance which supplements any cover you have from your employer and is compliant with the requirements of the Psychology Board of Australia (PBA).

Our Professional Indemnity insurance goes further than your employer's cover, and provides additional protection in the form of:

- Personal legal representation in relation to the Coroner's Court or other court proceedings, separate to your employer's legal representation
-

- Legal assistance in the preparation of statements or other documentation in relation to Court proceedings arising out of your employment
- Legal representation in relation to notifications or complaints to AHPRA/ PBA arising out of your employment.

There are members who have had to take advantage of all three of these aspects of the VPA Inc's Professional Indemnity insurance.

The Professional Indemnity insurance does NOT cover any private practice work and it lapses if you become unfinancial or resign from the VPA Inc while continuing to be employed as a psychologist.

5. Advocating for Psychologists

The VPA fights to protect the positions of psychologists employed in public and private health services through lobbying and strongly advocating for the essential input of psychologists into the delivery of world-class health care.

The VPA Inc is represented on the Department of Health and Human Services' Mental Health Workforce Planning Group and regularly makes submissions in relation to policy matters affecting the interests of psychologists employed in all areas of the provision of health services, including in mental health services, acute health services, community services, rehabilitation services, drug and alcohol services and aged care.

6. Member Benefits

By being a member of the Union you get to access a range of great services at discounted rates. The Union works with ACTU Member Benefits so you can take advantage of the collective buying power of more than 1.8 million union members to get big discounts from a great range of companies.

Your union membership allows you to save money on low cost banking and loans; financial advice; new cars and hire cars, travel, gift cards, movies, tyres, wine and more.

You are also able to access a free consultation with a solicitor re personal matters as part of your membership.

7. Your Union. Your Say.

Your Union is a democratic organisation that exists to make your working life less complicated by fighting for your rights at work and ensuring your rights are being upheld. And as a member of the Union you get to have your say on the direction of the Union.

You get to elect the leaders of your Union. The VPA Inc is governed by an elected Committee of psychologist members with expert knowledge who advise our industrial staff, and there are three dedicated psychologist positions on the Branch Committee of Management (BCOM) of the HSU#4 Branch. Elections for the VPA Committee occur every 2 years at the VPA AGM and HSU#4 BCOM elections take place every 4 years under the auspices of the Australian Electoral Commission

Plus you get to have your say on the kinds of claims and issues we lobby and advocate for when we negotiate new agreements.

There's never been a better time to join the Victorian Psychologists Association Incorporated. And don't forget that your VPA Inc membership is fully tax deductible.

Student Alert

There is a special discounted rate for Students who join the VPA Inc.

VPA Student members are welcome to attend the free VPA Inc Professional Development Seminars, and are able to access advice from our experienced industrial staff in relation to the terms and conditions of any offers of employment as a psychologist they may receive.

[Join online today](#) or [download an application form and join today.](#)

Check out this great video about what Unions have done for us.



Click on the image above or go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFxojfqGEbo>

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: Federal budget 2017: Don't bet on the rosy wages forecast

"Are you all set for the wages boom? Looking forward to your annual pay rise doubling or thereabouts and your overall package rising by even more?"

Woohoo! Happy days, if it's true.

The rosy forecast comes from no less reliable a source than those esteemed economic boffins in the Treasury Department. It's there in black and white in the Commonwealth budget.

So, should we bank on fatter pay packets (or the digital equivalent thereof)?

The short answer is no.

Excuse me for being cynical, but pigs might fly before Australia sees the kind of wage wins and salary surges that Treasurer Scott "ScoMo" Morrison's forecasts are based upon."

Read the entire article by Stephen Long on the ABC at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/story-streams/federal-budget-2017/2017-05-16/federal-budget-2017-wages-forecasts-not-likely/8528540>

Worth Reading: Is this the budget that forgot renters?

"The measures in the [2017-18 federal budget](#) targeting the supply of lower-cost rental housing are limited. There are no significant funding increases to social housing and homelessness services. There is no increase in rent assistance to help low-income renters in the private rental

market.

Capital gains tax and negative gearing settings remain largely untouched, and the [proposed bond aggregator](#) will support expansion of housing aimed at very specific groups.

For the majority of Australia's renters, housing will remain unaffordable, insecure and out of reach."

Read the entire article by Emma Power in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/is-this-the-budget-that-forgot-renters-77101>

Worth Reading: Drug testing welfare recipients raises questions about data profiling and discrimination

"The Australian government's proposed random drug test trial for welfare recipients is not so random.

Announced as part of [the 2017 federal budget](#), Treasurer Scott Morrison wants 5,000 people on Newstart or Youth Allowance in three locations to undergo random drug testing from January next year.

[Traces of drugs](#) including ecstasy, marijuana and ice will be sought using saliva, hair follicles and urine samples. If drugs are detected, the user could find their welfare quarantined.

But rather than doing people "a big favour", as Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull [put it on ABC Radio](#) Wednesday, such data-based programs often disproportionately target those of low socio-economic status.

Concerns [are already being raised](#) that the trial undermines the needs-based focus of Australia's welfare system. The use of data tools to profile people seeking help only adds to the problem."

Read the entire article by Bronwen Dalton in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/drug-testing-welfare-recipients-raises-questions-about-data-profiling-and-discrimination-77471>

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

[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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