



Stat Report 2019/05

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Unpaid work, work intensification and burn out

There is now little doubt that there is a crisis in medical sciences in Victoria.

Between the Department of Health and Human Services' own Allied Health Research reports and the RMIT University's report into rostering practices in pathology services, there is little doubt that there are huge shortages of medical scientists across public pathology with growing alarm about shortages in the private pathology sector.

There is little comfort in the research that has been conducted. It consistently points to issues of unsustainably high workloads, injuries, unpaid work, the huge intensification of work and constant growth in the volume and range of testing leading to burn out of MSAV members. Let's not forget that if we talk about burnout we are in reality talking about injuries.

These issues are not new to us and they've been at the centre of our efforts to improve working conditions and eliminate work intensification related injuries in the last public sector enterprise agreement and other private sector agreements. But it is important that we continue to highlight these issues.

Yes it's frustrating that a government which claims to be progressive continues to ignore this crisis and yes it's frustrating that media outlets are too focussed on 'who died' or 'will they die' rather than focusing on the fact that Victoria is on the precipice of world-class healthcare or third-world healthcare. But it's clear that unless we continue to fight for increases in staff we can only expect to see the crisis worsen to the point that more and more scientists will be injured and clinical services in our hospitals are compromised. Instead of managers actually doing their jobs and properly filling rosters, they continue to deny there are problems, pursue scientists to do unpaid work and complain when the Union pulls them up on their poor management.

I despair that in an environment where pathology services strive to introduce the best and most sophisticated technology, pathology managers adopt the values and attitudes of a 1960s brick factory foreman.

All too often medical scientists are dealing with management structures that under-value the work they do and the contribution they make to the delivery of Victoria's world-class healthcare. Instead of tackling the issue of chronic under staffing, pathology adopts the daily crisis management approach rather than run an internal case for funding for desperately needed scientists.

With the medical sciences in crisis, growing staff shortages and low graduate numbers, the ability of Victoria's public and private health sectors to deliver world-class healthcare is being stretched to the limit. And it won't be too long before our healthcare system breaks because clinical practitioners like medical scientists have been ignored to the detriment of patients and the entire system.

The Union will continue campaigning hard to make sure the Victorian Government immediately addresses the crisis facing medical scientists and the medical sciences in Victoria.

In the meantime please show your support and solidarity with medical scientists at Monash Health. They have commenced a work to rule to protect their health and safety in response to Monash Health's decision to walk away from its agreement to deal with the extreme under-staffing and workloads in their pathology labs.

Send your messages of support to enquiry@msav.org.au or leave them on [our Facebook page](#). You can also show your support by sharing our graphic below on your favourite social media platform.

Paul Elliott
Secretary



Bargaining Update

Vote on new Community Health Sector Agreement

Congratulations to everyone in Community Health on winning a great new agreement!

The results of the ballot last week were unequivocal. It now means the increase in pay and improvement in conditions will soon begin to flow your way. While it took longer to get this agreement done than we had hoped, it shows what we can achieve when we work together for the best possible outcomes.

And it's another example of why being a member of the Union is vital to improving our lives at work.

Dorevitch

The draft enterprise agreement has advanced to the point we are close to finalising a comprehensive document that can be put to a vote. We will report more details in the next edition of STAT.

Australian Clinical Labs

EA negotiations have stalled with the redundancy dispute at the Barwon Laboratory. We will resume negotiations as soon as we can.

Productivity Commission inquiry into Mental Health

The Productivity Commission is undertaking an inquiry to examine the effectiveness of the spending on mental health. Make sure you have your say and make a submission or you can make a comment. The deadline for initial submissions is 5 April.

You can find the terms of reference and how to make a submission at:
<https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/mental-health>

Positions not backfilled?

Let us know

Union Women's Conference 2019

Women have an essential and crucial role in our economy and society in both paid and unpaid work.

A recent ACTU survey tells us that 85% of workers have or have had significant caring and parenting responsibilities for children and family members, BUT our workplace laws and workplace culture don't allow them to juggle the demands of work and life.

We know that this work-life collision largely affects women. Women bear the majority of the load in parenting/caring, meaning women face disproportionate levels of job insecurity, casualisation when they take the time to care. The system is rigged against working women.

Is it time for women to strike?

At this one-day conference participants will workshop with union, legal and campaign experts on whether a union women's strike is achievable, what it would look like and how we can make it happen.

The keynote speaker for the conference will be Michelle O'Neil, new ACTU President.

Conference Details

5 March at 9am to 4pm

CFMMEU Building – 540 Elizabeth St, Melbourne

Registrations are now open for the Women's Union Conference so save your spot at

<https://www.unionwomen.org.au/conference19>

The Zelda D'Aprano Activist Award

Each year the Victorian Union movement recognises and reflects on the activism of unionist Zelda D'Aprano, whose courage, determination and no holds barred direct action changed history for working women in Australia.

Know a union woman who is making change through activism? Nominate them for the Zelda D'Aprano Activist Award! Nominations close on 29 March.

You can find all the details and how to nominate at: <https://www.unionwomen.org.au/zelda-award19>

Change the Rules Campaign

There are lots of different activities you can join to help Change the Rules at this year's federal election. And this weekend you can help out with:

Saturday 23 February

- [Higgins Electorate Doorknock at 10am](#)
 - [Sue's Fair Funding Street Stall at 10am](#)
 - [Mary's Heathmont 'Change the Rules' street stall at 10:30am](#)
-

- [Change the Rules Street Stall – AFLW Geelong v Carlton at 3:30pm](#)
- [Change the Rules Street Stall – NRL at 5:15pm](#)

Sunday 24 February

- [Lilydale Lake Change the Rules Street Stall at 9:30am](#)

You can find out what other activities are on by visiting <http://www.weareunion.org.au/when>

Or you can join our organising group on Facebook at:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/348061059362550/>

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.](#)

Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements

The 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, it negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

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.

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>

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: Decolonising the dictionary: reclaiming Australian history for the forgotten

"You're a student writing an essay or a journalist traversing uncertain historical terrain and you want to know a little, for example, about colonial leader Lachlan Macquarie, pioneering "settler" John Batman or former governor general William Slim.

So you search their respective names and "biography". Your top hit, in each case, is likely to be their entry in the [Australian Dictionary of Biography](#), this country's pre-eminent resource about noteworthy deceased citizens.

[Lachlan Macquarie](#), you'll learn, approached Aboriginal people with a "humanitarian conscience" – though he did once organise a "military drive to chasten them" when they'd shown signs of "ungrateful hostility". The ADB, meanwhile, portrays [Batman](#) in a most positive tone regarding Indigenous people. and [Slim](#), Australian governor general from 1953 to 1960, was a war hero and "former teacher [who] enjoyed visiting schools and talking to pupils".

In fact [Macquarie used "terror"](#) (his words) tactics including cutting off and displaying the heads of Aboriginal victims and ordered that black children be stolen from the sites of his soldiers' massacres."

Read the entire article by Paul Daley in The Guardian at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/feb/17/decolonising-the-dictionary-reclaiming-history-for-the-forgotten>

Worth Reading: For people at risk of mental illness, having access to treatment early can help

"How can we best help Australians who are at risk of developing a mental health disorder? A new recommendation to expand the [Better Access](#) initiative would open up government-subsidised psychological care to this effect.

The recommendation is one of [14 put forward](#) by the Mental Health Reference Group, part of the [Medicare Benefits Schedule Review Taskforce](#).

Determining who should actually be classified as “at risk” is difficult. And we’re yet to fully understand what the most effective treatments for this cohort are.

But while there may be a lack of detail accompanying this recommendation, targeting this group is worthwhile. The recommendation aligns with evidence that preventing mental illness is both achievable and cost effective."

Read the entire article by Lisa Phillips and Nicholas T. Van Dam in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/for-people-at-risk-of-mental-illness-having-access-to-treatment-early-can-help-111429>

Worth Reading: Cashed-up retirees getting a refund for tax they never paid? We've hit peak rort

"It's hard to believe that anyone who receives large cheques from the government can call themselves a “self-funded” retiree, but hey, this is modern Australia and powerful groups get to call themselves whatever they want. Sure, the full age pension is only \$23,823.80 per year for a single person and, sure, some wealthy retirees get cheques for “spare” dividend imputation credits worth far more than that – but if those cashed-up voters want to call themselves “self-funded”, Scott Morrison isn't going to burst their (taxpayer funded) bubble.

The term “self-funded” retiree has become as ingrained, and meaningless, as the term “dole bludger”. Just how it came to be that all old rich people “worked hard and paid their taxes”, while all unemployed people are lazy and in need of tough love, has been lost in the mists of focus groups past. But the cynicism in the way we talk about those with the most and those with the least speaks volumes about modern Australia. The land of the “fair go” is long gone.

Most self-funded retirees have been receiving enormous amounts of other people's money for a long time. Those with millions of dollars in superannuation have received hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of tax concessions over their lives. The most egregious was introduced by [Peter Costello](#) in 2007, when he made income from superannuation entirely tax-free. A wealthy Australian with a multimillion-dollar house and a million in superannuation can draw a pension of \$100,000 per year and not pay a cent in tax. Someone working on the minimum wage of \$37,398 per year pays more tax than a lot of our wealthiest superannuants."

Read the entire article by Richard Dennis in The Guardian at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/feb/20/cashed-up-retirees-getting-a-refund-for-tax-they-never-paid-weve-hit-peak-rort>

Worth Reading: Huge hack of medical records shows risk to health data

"Are you worried about your medical records falling into the wrong hands?

For patients at the cardiology private practice Melbourne Heart Group, that scenario may have just become a reality after a ransomware attack saw their medical files hacked and scrambled.

It's unclear whether the private practice has paid a ransom to the attackers, but weeks later many of the files have not been recovered.

What's in those files? Only some of the most lucrative information for those who might want to pursue identity theft.

The ransomware attack shows just how vulnerable our health institutions can be, in a month where [opt-outs of the My Health Record scheme ticked over to 2.5 million Australians](#)."

Read the entire article by Elise Thomas in the ABC at: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-22/melbourne-heart-hack-cyber-criminals-my-health-record-risks/10834482?section=analysis>

Worth Reading: How domestic violence affects women's mental health

"Every week in Australia, a [woman is murdered](#) by someone she knows. And it's usually an intimate male partner or ex-partner.

[One in three women](#) has suffered physical violence since the age of 15. In [most cases](#) (92% of the time) it's by a man she knows.

Added to this, one-quarter of Australian women have suffered emotional abuse from a current or former partner. This occurs when a partner seeks to gain psychological and emotional control of the woman by demeaning her, controlling her actions, being verbally abusive and intimidating her.

Physical and emotional abuse is not only distressing, it's psychologically damaging and increases women's risk of developing a mental illness."

Read the entire article by Rhian Parker in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/how-domestic-violence-affects-womens-mental-health-104926>

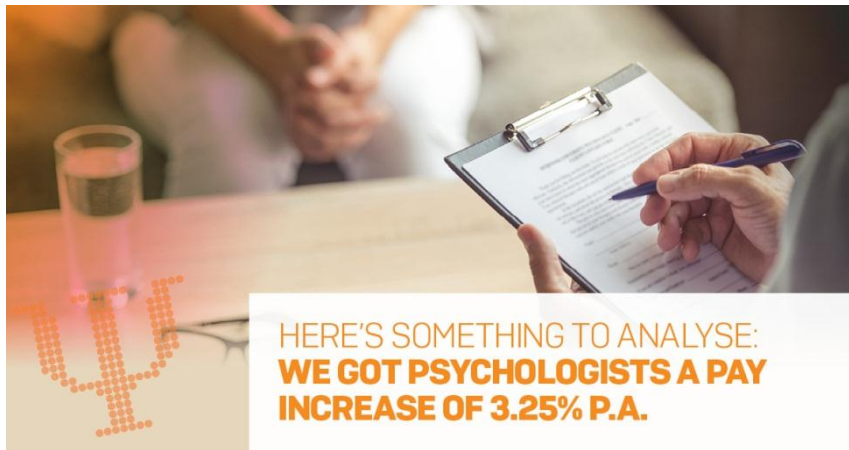
Join the Union

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

To protect our professions and stand up for our rights at work we must strengthen our collective voice by increasing our membership. You can help by sharing one of the images below on Facebook.



[Share on Facebook](#)



HERE'S SOMETHING TO ANALYSE:
**WE GOT PSYCHOLOGISTS A PAY
INCREASE OF 3.25% P.A.**

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WE WON PHARMACISTS AN EASY
TO SWALLOW **3.25% PER YEAR
PAY INCREASE.**

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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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