

Stat Report 2019/11

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Federal Budget 2019 and Healthcare

This week the federal budget was handed down. There was much fanfare about the coming tax cuts, big spending on infrastructure, cash handouts to deal with the growing costs of power, and how the budget would end up being in surplus in 2020.

But what did the federal budget deliver for healthcare and easing the enormous workloads across the health workforce. Unfortunately it wasn't a great budget for healthcare and in fact was more a case of groundhog day given how much of this budget is like the 2018/19 Budget.

It failed to deliver significant increases in the quantum of funding for health care. Instead we saw huge cuts to the National Disability Insurance Scheme; and these cuts are what the Morrison Liberal Government is using to bring the budget back into 'surplus'. There was some funding set aside for frontline services which we know is code for more funding for nurses and doctors but no new funding for the remainder of the healthcare workforce who continue to experience exploding workloads to the detriment of their health and safety and of the care of their patients.

But there is some good news in that Medicare appears to be safe from further cuts and efforts to privatise it, at least for now.

While there is additional funding being put into our public health system there has been nothing done to reverse the freeze on rebates for pathology testing, but the freeze on diagnostic imaging

has been slightly thawed but those benefits won't begin until 1 July 2020. These two essential areas of our healthcare system are becoming rapidly unaffordable as the out-of-pocket expenses become too large forcing many vulnerable Australians into making impossible choices between their health or paying bills.

While funding to boost Australia's medical research is welcome, the value of developing world-class medical breakthroughs is lessened if we're not able to take advantage of these because the workforce isn't available. Fortunately this budget saw additional funding put into mental health however there remain concerns about the funding for mental health programs delivered through the community health sector and the continued expansion of Headspace with no consideration for other programs and approaches. But the government fails to understand that you can't deliver more services unless there are more people to deliver those services with little new investment in the mental health workforce.

In the mental health funding domain there is also nothing in the budget to help resolve longstanding unethical employment practices adopted by many funded services of applying vastly inferior rates and conditions and refusing to negotiate enterprise agreements.

The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has failed to address any of the systemic issues that allow large corporations to avoid paying tax and to offshore their profits. The budget fails to address the growing inequality in our society and leaves young people even more vulnerable with rising living costs and unaffordable housing.

Alarming, the budget fails to address the growing real threat that climate change poses to our future health and well-being. The inspiring demonstrations of students marching in our streets demanding government action on climate change have been ignored.

The proposed overhaul of the taxation system will further entrench inequality as those on lower incomes pay a higher proportion to taxes. Inexplicably, endemic corporate tax avoidance does not get a mention. The 'overhaul' will also see that more and more government services are cut as the proportion of revenue from income tax diminishes.

It's disappointing that the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government continues to fail Australia when it comes to delivering world-class healthcare that is universally accessible to all Australians.

Unfortunately this is a budget that continues to look after the big end of town and does very little to close the gaps in health and education or the growing intergenerational inequality. It's a budget that ensures that big business will be able to continue to avoid paying tax and offshore their profits. It's a budget that reinforces that the rules are broken and it's time to change the rules. The Morrison and previous Liberal Government clearly has only the interests of the wealthy at heart, and this is highlighted by the budgets they've handed down and the inequality they've grown since coming to power.

That's why we're going to hit the streets next week on 10 April to make our voices heard and march for fair wages and better job security; for lifting the Medicare freeze on a range of health services; and for an Australia that values its workers rather than continuing inequality. We urge everyone to join us to show the Morrison Liberal Government that we're going to vote them out and we're going to change the rules.

The Union will have its own contingent at the rally and we will meet out the front of the Union's office before joining with tens of thousands of others. We also have some [resources you can use to help promote](#) the march to colleagues, friends and family.

Paul Elliott
Secretary

National Protest Details

The Union's contingent will meet at the Union's offices at 62 Lygon St, Carlton at 10:15am to join the rally when it commences at 10:30pm from Victorian Trades Hall (corner of Victoria and Lygon Sts, Carlton).

MARCH FOR FAIR WAGES AND JOB SECURITY

10:30am | 10 APRIL 2019

Check your Voter Enrolment

We're expecting a federal election to be called by the end of this week, signalling the actual start of the campaign. But once the election is called there is only a narrow window of time to update your voter enrolment information to make sure it is correct. This is particularly important if you have recently moved house or have recently changed your name.

The only way to make sure your vote counts is ensure you're enrolled correctly.

Visit the [Australian Electoral Commission's website to check your enrolment](#) as well as ways of updating your relevant details.

Daylight Saving Time Ends

On Sunday 7 April daylight saving time ends at 3am. It means that when you go to bed on Saturday night make sure you put your clock back 1 hour.



A new Agreement at **Dorevitch**
and a **Special Membership Offer**

Visit msav.org.au/dorevitch for details

2019 Australian Rural & Remote Mental Health Symposium

The 2019 Australian Rural & Remote Mental Health Symposium will be held from Monday 28th – Wednesday 30th October at the Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, South Australia.

Australians living and working in rural and remote areas are only able to access mental health services at a fifth of the rate of those in urban areas. This inequality poses serious risks for a large population of Australians, resulting in increased suffering of those seeking help, support and treatment for mental health issues.

Connect with professionals working to advance the services and support mental health receives in rural and remote areas, from renowned keynote speakers and industry workers through to government, academics, researchers and individual service providers.

Registrations are now open at: <https://anzmh.asn.au/rrmh/registration/>



Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA Raffle

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

The annual raffle raised more than \$60,000 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.

FIRST PRIZE: Take the holiday of your dreams with an \$8,000 travel voucher.

- Can be used on domestic or international travel through any Australian accredited travel agent.
- 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 \$2199). Dutch-made, the Ultimate C1 is a premium lightweight city bike designed to be the lightest hub drive city bike in its class.

THIRD PRIZE: Escape into a world of books with a \$500 book voucher from Gleebooks, Sydney's leading independent bookseller for more than 40 years – available online or in-store.

How to buy your tickets:

[Buy online](#)

[Download and complete this form](#); or

FREECALL 1800 888 674 or email office@apheda.org.au

Spread the word and help us blitz the raffle this year - **raffle closes Friday 17 May**

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: Medicare-funded mental healthcare needs major re-think, health experts say

"Health experts say a cornerstone of Australia's mental health system, which costs more than \$800 million a year, is "inequitable", under-scrutinised and in need of urgent reform.

The Better Access scheme, which was introduced in 2006, allows Australians living with mental illness to receive up to 10 government-subsidised sessions with a psychologist each year.

Yet while access to Medicare-funded psychology services has increased significantly in recent years, research shows levels of psychological distress in the community [have not changed](#), and rates of suicide are [on the rise](#).

Dr Sebastian Rosenberg from the Australian National University's Centre for Mental Health Research said it was "colossal investment" by the Federal Government to fund a program that operated with "little to no accountability".

Read the entire article by Olivia Willis in the ABC at: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2019-04-01/mental-healthcare-needs-major-re-think-experts-say/10957812>

Worth Reading: The seven graphs that expose the Coalition's 2019 budget fairy tale

Welcome to Budget 2019-20, where the future is bright and the horizon is clear of danger – apart from the dangers which the budget papers themselves warn about but bizarrely ignore.

This year's budget is an odd mix of tax cuts and spending measures targeted to win an election, but with assumptions so joyous and optimistic that you could be forgiven for thinking the Liberal party wants to lose just so it can blame the ALP for not living up to their predictions.

Before we get to the fanciful economics outlook, first the numbers:

Once again we find it's always easier to deliver a surplus with lots of revenue."

Read the entire article by Greg Jericho in The Guardian at: <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/apr/02/federal-budget-2019-the-seven-graphs-that-expose-the-coalitions-2019-budget-fairy-tale>

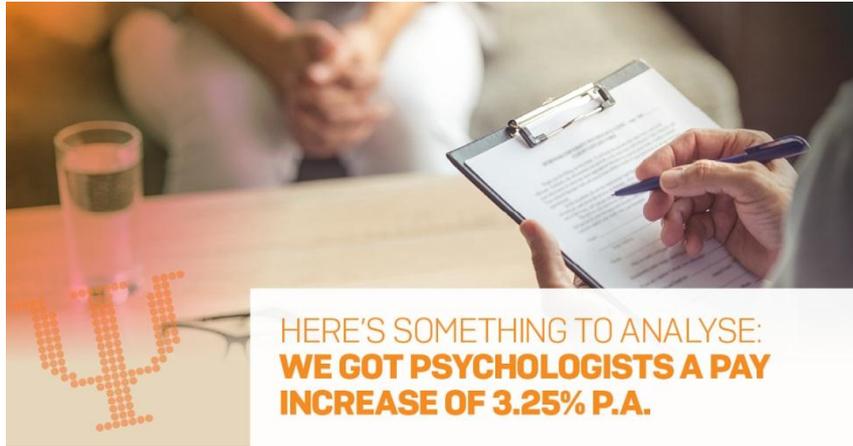
Join the Union

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.**

[Share on Facebook](#)



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

[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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Is there a copy of STAT Report on your Union noticeboard or in your staff room?

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