



## Stat Report 2019/24

In this issue of STAT Report we cover:

- Morrison attacks Unions and workers' rights
- Bargaining Updates
- Clinical Labs undermining regional healthcare as Minister sits on hands
- Union Reconciliation Action Plan
- NPAAC Update
- New Membership System
- Check your Super
- Campaign Corner
- Worth Reading
- Member Benefits

### Morrison attacks Unions and workers' rights

Our members are the people who work tirelessly to deliver quality care and give support to our communities, day in and day out. They are the dietitian sharing a cuppa with your grandma; the scientist that diagnosed your loved one's health problem; the pharmacist making sure you have the right medications; the psychologist that helps you on your road to recovery. For many of our members, you carry out this important work while volunteering your own time to helping run your union.

The rights of workers to organise, seek union representation, and democratically run their unions, is an internationally recognised human right - just like a free press. Free unions are essential checks on the powerful in any democracy. As a member, you benefit from the work unions do through improved wages, conditions and job security. Without unions workplaces would be unsafe and there'd be no weekends or paid leave (or many of the things we take for granted – this video will help explain).

During the Federal Election campaign, the Morrison Government insisted that it had no plans to reduce workers' rights. But now, Morrison is dusting off failed legislation called the Ensuring Integrity (EI) Bill to attack unions; your freedom to organise and your rights at work. The Australian union movement is already heavily regulated and the EI Bill goes further than any other western democracy in interfering in democratic workers organisations. In fact the union movement is more heavily regulated than industries like the finance industry or corporations where it was revealed how dodgy the banking industry is in Australia.

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The Morrison Government is launching an outright attack on workers and dressing up as tackling the 'bad guy'. The truth is that they let the bad guys get away with all sorts of things. Let's look at the record so far; the Morrison Government is failing Australians on letting the banks get away with dodgy practices like billing dead people; continuing to allow employers get away with wage theft and refusing to call it wage theft; dismantling penalty rates; more attacks on Medicare and failing to increase Newstart which hasn't seen an increase since 1994.

The EI Bill would give the Morrison Government, employers or any other party with 'sufficient interest' the power to interfere in the running and work of unions. It would give them the ability to disqualify people from union leadership, block union mergers, and more easily deregister unions. The EI Bill fundamentally interferes with our fundamental democratic rights and undermines the basic premise of what western liberal democracies stand for. Ultimately the legislation is designed to stop workers like you from organising with your colleagues, running unions and getting a choice as to who represents you.

The legislation is so extreme it opens the door to allowing employers to block who represents you in important union work such as negotiating wages and defending you in disciplinary or performance matters.

These laws will not apply to corporations or other types of elected officials, like politicians. Despite the numerous scandals in banking and other corporations, including those operating in health and community services, that have seen money stolen, elderly people without enough food, wage theft and fraud, no one in any of those cases has been barred from holding office, nor has a single organisation been de-registered or prosecuted under the full weight of the law. Instead the corporate regulator lets them off with a slap on the wrist and a promise to do better.

Your union will be campaigning to protect the rights of members. The work we do is steeped in our firm belief that unions, as the longest standing, democratically run vehicles for social progression and economic equality must be protected.

But to win this fight we need your help.

If you are interested in helping fight back, we need you to share your story about what the union means to you. If you're ready to fight back contact Alex at [alexs@msav.org.au](mailto:alexs@msav.org.au)

Paul Elliott  
Secretary

## Bargaining Updates

### **Community Health Sector Agreement – FWC Approves New Agreement**

At long last we have some great news. The new Community Health Sector Agreement has finally been approved by the Fair Work Commission. This is great news for members who have been waiting months for the Commission to approve the agreement.

The new agreement will come into full force from 23 August with all the benefits flowing on from that date.

## Clinical Labs undermining regional healthcare

The Union has fears that any regional centre with a public hospital that has pathology services provided by Australian Clinical Labs will soon be unable to safely offer even the most basic healthcare as Clinical Labs cuts more scientists from their regional labs.

Over recent years Clinical Labs has been systematically slashing the scientific workforce in its regional public hospital labs, redirected work to Melbourne and Geelong while massively increasing turn-around times for pathology tests. In some cases, the turn-around time for tests for cancer, which should only take 48 hours, are now taking up to 21 days. This kind of delay to test

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results can mean life or death when treatment is delayed.

Clinical Labs continues to prove it has no interest in delivering world-class healthcare to Victorians and is solely driven by profits. Clinical Labs is putting Victorians' health at risk and should have existing contracts in public hospitals torn up and pathology laboratory services returned in-house.

We now have a situation where regional hospitals serviced by Clinical Labs, will have to tell patients who are facing a life-threatening disease like cancer that they have to wait 21 days before knowing what's wrong with them; and putting patients into harm's way if treatments are delayed.

It simply is not possible to run a pathology laboratory with fewer and fewer scientific staff and expect the same results. If a pathology laboratory is essential to being able to deliver safe, high quality clinical services to patients, how can the same services be delivered safely with no pathology? The government needs to immediately step in and ensure pathology services in regional Victoria are maintained in-house and not stripped back and sent to Melbourne or Geelong.

The profit motives of Clinical Labs are directly dictating the level of safety for patients and the quality and range of care in Victoria's regional public hospitals. There is every chance that patients in regional Victoria will now have to travel large distances to receive medical treatment that was once delivered in their local public hospital.

The Union is calling on Victoria's Health Minister, Jenny Mikakos, to assure regional communities that vital pathology laboratories will remain open, fully staffed and fully functional. The Union continues to call on the Minister to end the practice of privatising vital clinical services and to restore in-house pathology services across Victoria.

## Pathology closure sparks fear of delays for tests

**The shock closure of a Colac pathology laboratory means patients will have to wait for their pathology results and treatment, with samples going to Geelong or Melbourne for testing.**

Australian Clinical Laboratories announced it would close its service at Colac Hospital due to low patient numbers adding to a financial loss of \$500,000 a year.

ACL said it would provide an extensive suite of point-of-care services and would "continue to conduct all specialist, urgent and routine pathology tests for Colac Area Health and the Colac Hospital, including the provision of urgent blood transfusion support at its Geelong facilities".

Read the entire article by Greta Lannen at: <https://colacherald.com.au/2019/07/pathology-closure-sparks-fear-of-delays-for-tests/>

**Professional Development Seminar - Gender Dysphoria**

**Save your spot and register today!**



## Union Reconciliation Action Plan

Next week is NAIDOC Week and the Union wants to ensure that it is doing everything it can in order to recognise and acknowledge Indigenous Australians, their culture and their contribution to the Union and Australia's healthcare system, especially the disciplines we cover.

There is little doubt that much more work needs to be done and towards this end the Union is working on its first Reconciliation Action Plan. In order to do this properly we're seeking

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involvement from members who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Together we will work through what the first Reconciliation Action Plan will be about; what measures of success we will have and the timelines for achieving actions set out in the plan.

If you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and want to help the Union develop its Reconciliation Action Plan please contact Alex at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au) or on 9623 9623.

## NPAAC Update: Requirements for Supervision in the Clinical Governance of Medical Pathology Laboratories

The National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council has released its latest guide: Understanding the NPAAC Requirements for Supervision in the Clinical Governance of Medical Pathology Laboratories (Fifth Edition 2018). You can find and download a copy on the [NPAAC website](#)

## New Membership System

Our new membership system is up and running

With the new system up and running it means you'll be able to directly update your financial information and your personal details without having to call the Union. Of course if you prefer to chat to us about the changes we're always happy to take your call and make those changes. And with our new system you'll be able to download your own tax invoices for the union fees you pay when it comes to tax time.

As soon as we have these member features available through our website we'll let you know!

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Union on (03) 9623 9623 or at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)



## Check your Super

**Check your Super! There are changes to Super that affects all funds.**

Since July 1 2019, legislation has come into effect - called Protecting Your Super - aimed at stopping members' savings being eaten away by fees. Members with inactive accounts could lose their insurance cover, and those with inactive low-balance accounts could be transferred to the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

- An 'inactive' account is when any super account hasn't had any contributions or rollovers for 16 months or more.
- When a super account hasn't had any contributions or rollovers for 16 months or more, and has a balance less than \$6,000, it is regarded as an 'inactive low-balance' account.
- 'Inactive low-balance' accounts will be transferred to the ATO unless members personally e-mail their super by completing the ATO form for Inactive low-balance (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super/In-detail/Growing-your-super/Inactive-low-balance-super-accounts/>) - to tell them they don't want their account to be considered 'inactive low-balance'.

None of the measures introduced by the government will make our superannuation system better or improve the returns that funds generate. In fact it increases the bureaucratic workload for superannuation members to protect their super funds. And we all now know how dodgy the big

banks are thanks to the Royal Commission but the Morrison Government remains beholden to the big end of town and continues looking for ways to drive more superannuation money to the big banks.

We encourage all members to check your Super on how and whether these changes will impact you, here's how you can find out more from [First State Super](#) and [HESTA](#).

We will continue to keep members informed of potential changes to superannuation that the Morrison Government will seek to introduce; and the potential impact those changes will have on your retirement.

*This article is for information only. If you're at all concerned about your superannuation and want advice please make sure that you contact your Superannuation Fund to discuss your situation.*

## 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](http://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.

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[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: Dangerous to human health: that's a housing problem much bigger than a few high-profile apartment blocks

"Australia's biggest city is abuzz with news of yet another housing development declared unsafe for human habitation. This time it is apartments built on a toxic dump the local council fears was not properly cleaned up.

In the past 12 months three other significant Sydney developments have all been evacuated due to major building defects. The plight of residents forced from their homes has focused national attention on issues to do with shoddy apartment construction, such as poor regulation and lax enforcement.

Read more: [Buck-passing on apartment building safety leaves residents at risk](#)

What gets less media attention is a greater systemic problem: the fact that hundreds of thousands of Australians are forced into inadequate or unhealthy housing by high housing costs. Thousands are evicted by landlords wanting higher rents. Some end up homeless."

Read the entire article by Andrew Beer and Emma Baker in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/dangerous-to-human-health-thats-a-housing-problem-much-bigger-than-a-few-high-profile-apartment-blocks-120656>

## Worth Reading: Poor housing leaves its mark on our mental health for years to come

"Australia carries an enormous and increasing mental health burden. At the same time, housing disadvantage is on the rise in Australia. Our latest research indicates the trends are related. A systematic review of the evidence shows housing disadvantage is harmful for mental health, and

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the effects stay with you well after your housing situation might have improved. For instance, living in an overcrowded house from birth to early childhood is associated with depression in midlife.

So how many people are affected? One in five Australians experience a mental disorder in any given year and nearly half will experience some form of mental illness during their lifetime. Mental health accounts for more than A\$9 billion of public and private spending in Australia, and 4.2 million Australians received mental health-related prescriptions in 2017-18.

As for housing, up to 1.1 million Australians live in homes that are in very poor condition."

Read the entire article by Ankur Singh, Emma Baker, Lyrian Daniel and Rebecca Bentley in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/poor-housing-leaves-its-mark-on-our-mental-health-for-years-to-come-120595>

## Worth Reading: The link between climate change and disease

"Have you made the connection between climate change and its impact on human health? Then a [new report](#) released today is one you should read.

A report released today by the Global Health Alliance Australia states that "Australia and neighbouring countries in our region are experiencing more deaths, illnesses and injuries from heatwaves, cyclones and other extreme weather events because of climate change."

Already, in the Asia Pacific region, climate change is raising sea levels. But it's also exacerbating the severity of natural disasters, reducing nutrition levels in food and increasing disease produced by unclean water.

Australians are becoming increasingly vulnerable to climate-related health issues. This includes new infectious diseases, malnutrition and a rise in the number of deaths during sustained heatwaves."

Read the entire article by Dr Rob Grenfell and Dr Trevor Drew in the CSIRO Blog at: <https://blog.csiro.au/link-between-climate-change-disease/>

## Worth Reading: Government's own department confirms the depth of wages crisis

"The government's own figures have confirmed the depth of Australia's wage-growth crisis.

Figures from the [federal Attorney-General's office](#) have confirmed that average annual wage increases in more than 1300 newly approved enterprise agreements (EAs) fell in the March quarter to 2.7 per cent – down from 2.8 per cent in the December quarter.

Wages negotiated in private sector EAs fell from 3 per cent in December to 2.9 in March, while those in the public sector fared worse, tumbling from 2.7 per cent to 2.4 per cent in the March quarter."

Read the entire article by Mike Bruce in The New Daily at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/money/work/2019/08/01/wages-fall-enterprise-bargaining-agreements/>

## Worth Reading: 2°C of global warming would put pressure on Melbourne's water supply

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"Melbourne's existing water supplies may face pressure if global warming hits the 2°C level, according to our new research published today in [Environmental Research Letters](#).

The effects of drying and warming in southern Australia are expected to reduce natural water supplies. If we overshoot 2°C of warming, even the desalination plant might not provide enough drinking water to a growing population.

However, keeping warming to 1.5°C would help avoid many of these negative consequences. This brings home the local benefits of acting swiftly to limit global warming. Luckily, there are options available to secure our water supply."

Read the entire article by Ben Henley, Andrew King, Anna Ukkola, Murray Peel, Rory Nathan in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/2-of-global-warming-would-put-pressure-on-melbournes-water-supply-118389>

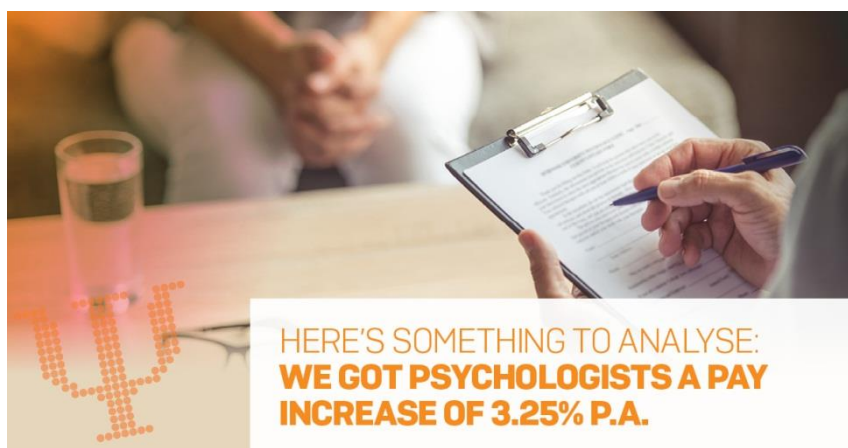
## Join the Union

**Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Join the Union today!**

To protect our professions we must strengthen our collective voice by increasing our membership. You can help by sharing one of the images below on 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](#)

## 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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