



## Stat Report 2019/32

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### Health services failing to expand workforces

Victoria's public and private health services are failing all Victorians when they fail to expand the workforces covering our disciplines. And disappointingly it seems like this won't change until Victoria's health system becomes unsustainable under the weight of massive increases in demand.

What is being revealed from this year's No Pay? No Way! Survey is that members are still working huge amounts of unpaid work. And it is across all of our disciplines.

Management at our public health services are refusing to respond to redress clearly identified staff shortages. Earlier in the year we had Monash Health admit there were shortages in their pathology labs only to then have them turn around and claim there weren't any staff shortages. We see at Alfred Health efforts to introduce a new roster that actually has overtime built into the roster as a substitute for permanent staff, while refusing to acknowledge they have significant staff shortages.

The survey is revealing that members do unpaid work because it is the only way for our members to complete huge workloads. Members have so far reported they are doing more than 3 hours of unpaid work a fortnight to get their normal work completed. Once again members are saying the reason for performing unpaid work is simply because there are not enough staff.

Members report doing unpaid work is predominantly performed after their rostered hours and during meal and rest breaks.

It is also clear from survey responses to date that by and large services would not be able to continue if members stopped doing unpaid work. Hence the reliance on this form of wage theft to keep public health ticking along is becoming more deeply entrenched.

It is clear there is widespread non-compliance with enterprise agreement provisions requiring health services to replace on leave or prioritise work in order to keep workloads in balance. These new provisions, negotiated to prevent workloads increasing when colleagues are on leave are being negated by the very cause they were negotiated to address; under-staffing.

We are picking up a worrying trend that indicates more and more members are not able to take time off or access their leave entitlements due to understaffing.

There is another worrying trend we're noticing in our surveys and that is the worsening direct impacts unsustainable workloads are having on members' health and well-being. Overwhelmingly members are reporting that their health and well-being is being impacted and the impact has worsened since the last survey.

This year we included questions about mental health anxiety and stress to find out the impact of the workloads is having. It's quite evident from results to date that members' mental health is being negatively affected and that workload related stress and anxiety is a very significant feature across all of our disciplines.

It's also worth highlighting the surprisingly high number of members reporting that they have had to take leave due the level of stress and anxiety they're experiencing at work due to the workloads

Members are also reporting a growing concern about the impact of sustainable workloads on patient safety and quality standards.

In summary our survey continues to highlight:

- Workloads continue to increase and management is failing to respond
- Staff are left to pick up extra work when colleagues are on leave or away sick
- General and mental health and well-being is being severely negatively impacted by the extreme workloads
- Stress and anxiety about workloads and impact on patient safety are acutely felt by members and
- High workloads are contributing to members leaving their positions, including through early retirement which is like to further exacerbate workload and workforce issues

Sadly, we're not entirely surprised by the results of this year's survey so far and it continues to highlight the very serious trends of failure to build workforces to the level needed to safely deliver services, a failure of management to deal with workloads and increasing general and mental health impacts with increasing stress and anxiety about workloads.

We continue to run the survey each year because it makes our advocacy stronger and provides us the ability to highlight the very serious workload and associated health issues facing members. That's why the Union needs you take the "No Pay? No Way!" survey. The survey will be closed over the weekend so please take a few minutes to do our survey and help us continue fighting to grow our workforces, ease extreme workloads and eliminate stress related injuries.

[MSAV members take this survey](#)

[AHP members take this survey](#)

[VPA Inc members take this survey](#)

Paul Elliott  
Secretary

## Union Round Up

### **Monash Health – Biometric Data Dispute**

The Union continues to strongly recommend that members:

- Attend any consultation forums offered
- Ask about options for non-consent / opting out
- Ask about timelines for implementation
- Tell them what you think
- If questions aren't answered on the spot ask when you will receive the answers and how the answers will be given for example in an email, or at another forum.

- Communicate any information you receive with the Union to [heidib@msav.org.au](mailto:heidib@msav.org.au)

We continue encouraging members to sign the Pledge against Forced Biometric Sign-On and send it to us.

It's vital we show Monash Health the degree and level of anger and frustration about this issue and their on-going refusal to respect staff and their privacy. [Download the Pledge here.](#)

### **Alfred Health**

Alfred Health is trying to implement a new roster, but the Union is not being involved in discussions and we are now receiving reports that management are breaching the agreement by attempting to hold discussions with staff without Union involvement.

From what the Union has seen it appears the one of the new rosters has built in rostered overtime included. Between this and the fact that Alfred Health is breaching its obligations to negotiate with the Union, it's clear that management is trying to make staff do more work without expanding their scientific workforce.

Instead of working with the Union to lobby for additional funding for staff, Alfred Health would rather make you do more work without any consideration or care for the impact it has on you and your health; or the impact that it will have on the vital work you do as your health is impacted.

### **Melbourne IVF**

Scientist members at Melbourne IVF met on Thursday to discuss management's response to the NO vote for the proposed Scientists Agreement. Members discussed what they are prepared to consider to reach agreement with management and the need to continue protected industrial action.

If you were unable to attend the meeting and want more information please contact Rosemary on 9623 9623

**What is unpaid work costing you?  
Take the No Pay No Way Survey today!**

## Morrison's attacks on Unions continue

As the nation continues to hear of wage theft across a growing number of industries involving some of Australia's best-known companies, the Morrison Government is continuing their unprecedented attacks on unions. Yet there has been nothing done about breaches exposed by the Royal Commission into Australia's big banks even as they're still engaging in some bad behaviour. There has been nothing done about the ongoing wage theft that plagues the country with the Morrison Government being heavily lobbied to give companies that are caught stealing peoples' wages an amnesty so they can pay back the wages without facing any scrutiny or prosecution. And while these things are happening what is the government's response – attack unions and union members.

With the Government failing to convince Senators about the Ensuring Integrity legislation, they're working extra hard to do deals with the crossbench Senators in secret but refuse to inform Australians about what those amendments are and what impact they'll have on the legislation.

If unions are shut down or silenced, who will make sure workers get their rights and entitlements? Who will fight to improve workers' rights? We already know that it isn't going to be the Liberal Party and it's not corporate Australia either.

All workers in Australia benefit from the work of unions.

We need to be loud, clear and firm: Tell the crossbench Senators that they must [stop Scott Morrison's union busting bill.](#)

**Positions not backfilled?**

**Let us know**

## 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.

[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: How does poor air quality from bushfire smoke affect our health?

"New South Wales and Queensland are in the grip of a devastating bushfire emergency, which has tragically resulted in the loss of homes and lives.

But the smoke produced can affect many more people not immediately impacted by the fires – even people many kilometres from the fire. The smoke haze blanketing parts of NSW and Queensland has seen air quality indicators exceed national standards over recent days.

Studies have shown [there is no safe level of air pollution](#), and as pollution levels increase, so too do the health risks. Air pollution caused [nine million premature deaths globally](#) in 2015. In many ways, airborne pollution is like cigarette smoking – causing respiratory disease, heart disease and stroke, lung infections, and even lung cancer."

Read the entire article by Brian Oliver in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/how-does-poor-air-quality-from-bushfire-smoke-affect-our-health-126835>

## Worth Reading: Humans light 85% of bushfires, and we do virtually nothing to stop it

"It's hard to comprehend why someone would deliberately light a bushfire. Yet this behaviour regularly occurs in Australia and other countries. We would go a long way to preventing bushfires if we better understood this troubling phenomenon.

[Experts estimate](#) about [85% of bushfires](#) are [caused by humans](#). A person may accidentally or carelessly start a fire, such as leaving a campfire unattended or using machinery which creates sparks. Or a person could maliciously light a fire.

This criminal behaviour is [not widely recognised or understood](#) by the public, fire authorities or researchers. This means opportunities to prevent bushfires are generally being missed and resources devoted to tackling the cause are far from commensurate with the devastating consequences."

Read the entire article by Janet Stanley in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/humans-light-85-of-bushfires-and-we-do-virtually-nothing-to-stop-it-126941>

## Worth Reading: Our land is burning, and western science does not have all the answers

"Last week's catastrophic fires on Australia's east coast – and warnings of more soon to come – will become [all too common](#) as climate change gathers pace. And as the challenges of modern hazard reduction become clear, there is much to learn from the ancient Aboriginal practice of burning country.

Indigenous people learnt to use fire skillfully and to their advantage, including to moderate bushfires. Most of the fires were small and set at dry times of the year, resulting in a [fine-scale mosaic](#) of different vegetation types and fuel ages. This made intense bushfires uncommon and made plant and animal foods more abundant.

Contemporary fire managers also attempt to lower bushfire risk by reducing fuel loads through hazard reduction burning. To [minimise costs](#), this is often achieved by [dropping incendiaries from aircraft](#)."

Read the entire article by David Bowman and Ben J. French in The Conversation at:

<https://theconversation.com/our-land-is-burning-and-western-science-does-not-have-all-the-answers-100331>

## Worth Reading: Australia needs policy to deal with health effects of climate change, Chris Bowen says

"Australia needs to develop policies and structures to prepare for the health impacts of climate change because we have not moved quickly enough – domestically or internationally – to reduce emissions and mitigate the risk, Labor's health spokesman, Chris Bowen, believes.

Bowen will use a lecture at Sydney University on Wednesday night to argue a health response to climate change would not be necessary if there was a robust international policy response to emissions. "But the world, and Australia, has failed to act with appropriate seriousness and haste, and so we will need specific policies to deal with the health impacts of climate change," he will say.

A copy of the lecture shows Bowen will point to estimates that by 2030, 250,000 people around the world will die each year as a direct result of a warming planet.

But what was often missing from the public debate in Australia "is an understanding that severe climate change, of the type the globe is currently on track to experience, isn't just about the frequency and severity of weather events"."

Read the entire article by Katharine Murphy in The Guardian at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/nov/20/australia-needs-policy-to-deal-with-health-effects-of-climate-change-says-chris-bowen>

## Worth Reading: Australians are being watched at work. So what can we do about it?

"Software that logs each keystroke. Car trackers that monitor location as well as braking and acceleration. Australian employers are collecting increasingly detailed and intimate data about workers.

Often gathered in the name of health and safety, security and boosting productivity, this data can be incredibly personal.

When a potential employer asked John\* to take a blood test, his first thought was "it's none of their business".

After applying for a job on a Queensland gas project, a recruitment subcontractor asked him to sign a form allowing the test and other data to be sent overseas."

Read the entire article by Ariel Bogle in the ABC at: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2019-11-21/are-you-being-watched-at-work-privacy-laws-too-complex/11719254>

## Join the Union

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

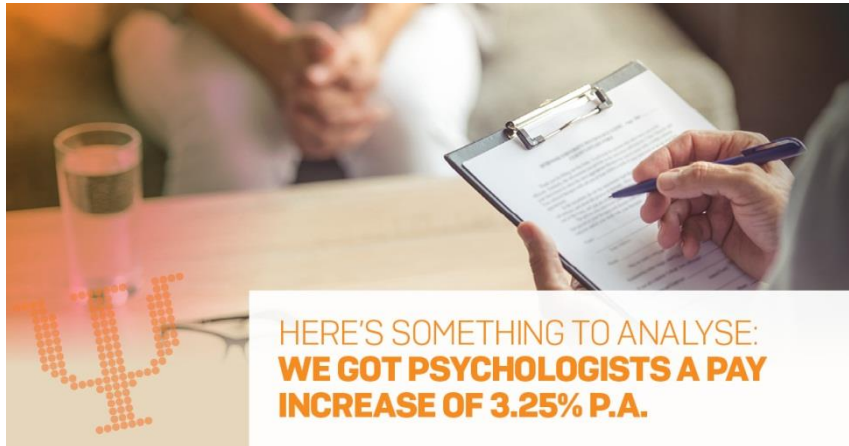
To protect our professions we must strengthen our collective voice by increasing our membership. You can help by sharing one of the images below on Facebook.





WE DIAGNOSE AN **INCREASE  
IN PAY OF 3.25% PER YEAR  
OVER 4 YEARS.**

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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](#)

## 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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If not print out a copy and leave it on the noticeboard or in the staff room for your colleagues.