



## Stat Report 2020/02

In this issue of STAT Report we cover:

- Unpaid work creates unhealthy workplaces
- Union Round Up
- Union Staff Changes
- Public Holiday Pay
- Union Bushfire Appeal
- Campaign Corner
- Worth Reading
- Member Benefits

### Unpaid work creates unhealthy workplaces

As the new year starts to get going, we feel it's important that the new year at work includes a lot more self-care; and a preparedness to report toxic workplaces; and to report when your workplace vacancies aren't backfilled.

The Union has been working to address the under-staffing and ever-growing workload issues. It remains a major disappointment that the state government, despite all the evidence, continues to allow public hospitals to maintain private pathology contracts that are clearly failing and have now resulted in services being downgraded, or worse, labs shut down.

In a few cases, we have seen that hospitals have had to cut previously offered clinical services because there is now no on-site pathology service. This isn't limited to those public hospitals with private pathology in place. There is significant under-staffing and workload issues in every health service in Victoria. It is particularly disturbing that the Health Department, Health Minister and public hospitals are blatantly ignoring research that illustrates unequivocally that there are severe shortages of medical scientists and that the situation is getting worse.

In addressing the clear shortage of staff across our disciplines, the Union has been working on the pharmacist leave relief bank while also working to increase the psychologist workforce. The state government announced there would be additional funding specifically for the recruitment of more psychologists into Victoria's mental health system. To this end, the Union continues to work with the government and stakeholders to ensure that our mental health system is properly staffed because we know there still aren't enough psychologists for the

rapidly increasing demand for better mental health. We will be holding the government to account to ensure there is an actual increase in psychologist numbers and we don't mean an increase in counsellors who have been employed as psychologists; a trick being used by some health services.

It has become increasingly clear that hospital executives are turning a blind eye to the critically important responsibility to effectively address workforce management. We continue to receive reports that staff are not replaced when they go on leave, work isn't prioritised when staff are on sick leave, vacant positions are not being filled and management refuses to step up to argue with DHHS for more staff.

Instead executive managers rely on the 1990s workforce model of demanding you do more work which is having a significant impact on the general and mental health and well-being of members. Rather than treat you like professionals, your management would rather work you until there is a burnt-out and injured workforce.

It is essential that you let your managers know that it is not acceptable to be doing unpaid work on a regular basis just to get your normal work done. In fact, you have the right to refuse to do unpaid work, and being a professional means knowing that unpaid work has an impact on your health and well-being, which ultimately impacts on your effectiveness at work.

By having management that encourages damaging workplace practices like working through meal breaks and doing unpaid work, it means there is less time for you to spend with your family and friends. It means that your physical and mental health and well-being are being damaged without any chance to recover. Being fatigued is a recipe for mistakes to happen and for injuries to occur; and we know that when you make mistakes there is no mention of the extreme workloads and amount of unpaid work being done.

With the growing body of research and evidence that is showing the dire shortages across our disciplines, it is only a matter of time before more hospitals cannot deliver on key clinical services. In some instances, public hospitals won't be able to deliver even the most basic services. The Union has been able to successfully take on health services about workloads and staff numbers but this success needs members support. Reporting cases of understaffing and high workloads, and not backfilling leave and vacancies, and providing key evidence is the key to continuing this success.

The Union remains unapologetic about our backfill and staffing-level campaigns given the very real need for all health services to employ more staff to deal with the ever-growing workloads. Make sure you [report positions not being backfilled or vacancies that remain open](#) so that we can take it up. Don't forget that the stories of patient impacts arising, these issues can be just as important for us.

Paul Elliott  
Secretary



**Positions not backfilled?**



**Let us know**

## Union Round Up

### **Melbourne IVF**

Melbourne IVF continues to ignore their workforce and their desire to have an enterprise agreement that has been properly negotiated. Unfortunately, Melbourne IVF continue to make appalling offers to scientists. It seems that Melbourne IVF's management seem have completely forgotten that without the scientists they have no business. Without scientists they cannot actually deliver the promises they keep making about helping people start their own families. It continues to beggar belief that the management at Melbourne IVF keep attempting to subvert the Union and the need to engage in good-faith negotiations. It's clear that the management at Melbourne IVF are not interested in doing the right thing by their staff.

The Union will continue to meet with members and management in order to keep negotiations for a proper enterprise agreement going. Members at Melbourne IVF must continue to resist management's tactics of attempting to divide and conquer staff. It is also important to continue reporting management's bad behaviour to the union.

Please contact Rosemary Kelly if you have any questions or concerns on 9623 9625 or at [rosemaryk@msav.org.au](mailto:rosemaryk@msav.org.au)

## **Ramsay Health**

Bargaining at Ramsay Health is underway and we have had feedback that some staff may not be aware that its EBA time. We have also had feedback that the employer keeps referring to its “direct feedback from staff”. Remember they are required to consult with staff and your union and not just conduct negotiations by going to individuals to play staff against each other. If you know a pharmacist, dietitian, psychologist or sleep scientist at Ramsay tell them to [join now](#)

Ramsay are currently offering 2.25% per year – tell us (and your managers) what you think – contact Heidi for further information on [heidib@msav.org.au](mailto:heidib@msav.org.au) or at 9623 9623.

## Union Staff Changes

### **Farewell Jimmy Cinar**

It saddens me to report to members that Jimmy Cinar is leaving the Union to pursue new opportunities. Jimmy will be a very much missed member of staff, contributing not just to the work and success of the industrial team but ensuring the smooth operations of the Union overall.

Jimmy came to the Union after working on the benches in labs. While probably not the career change Jimmy was expecting, it is definitely one we're glad he chose to make given the contribution he's made.

We wish Jimmy all the best as he pursues new opportunities and we hope he continues to stay in touch.

### **Welcome Lisa Alcock**

The Union is excited to welcome Lisa Alcock to the Union. Lisa joins us with a great deal of experience working in the healthcare sector having come from the Health Workers Union. She is a fierce advocate and a strong unionist so we know that Lisa won't take a backward step in ensuring your rights and conditions are protected.

We look forward to working with Lisa and the contribution she makes to our Union. Be sure to say hi to Lisa when she visits.

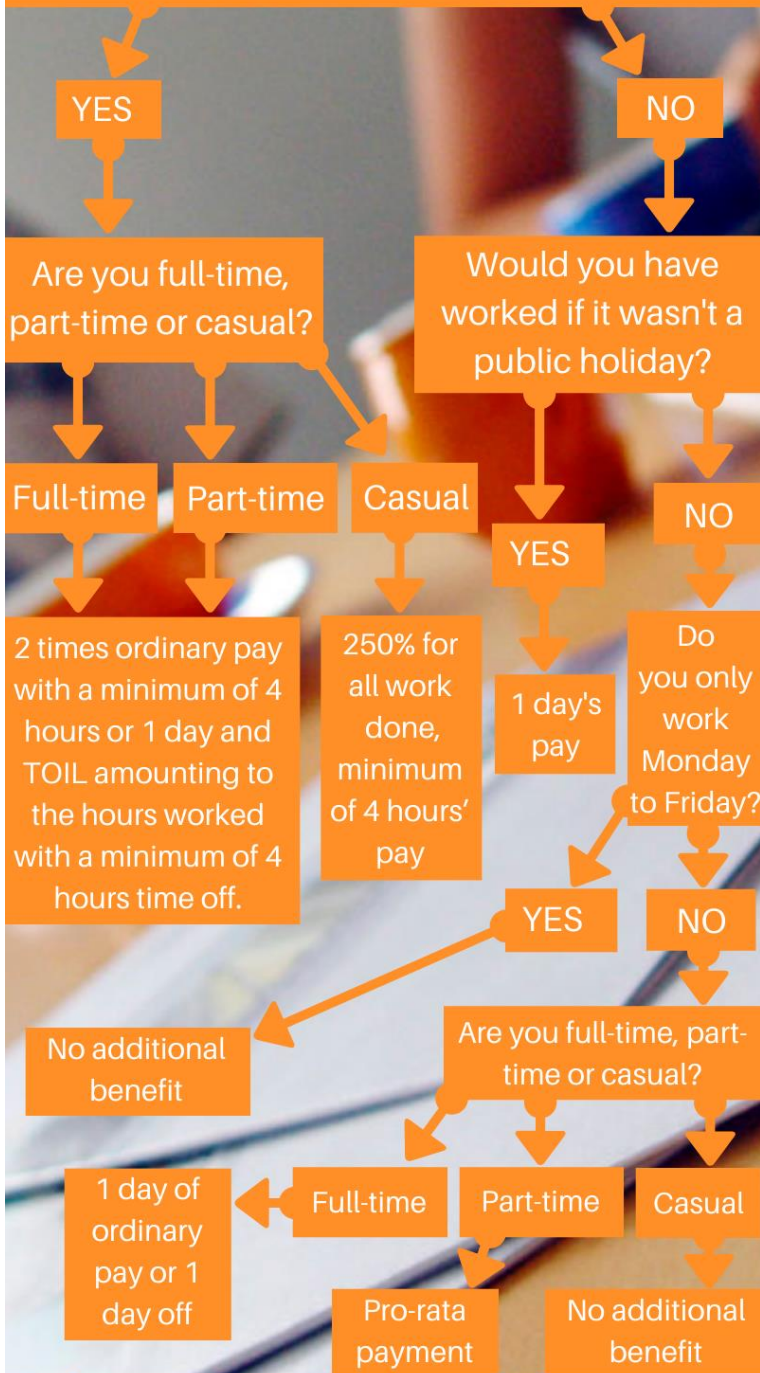
## Public Holiday Pay

The Australia Day public holiday is rapidly approaching, which means you need to know about your public holiday pay entitlements. It's important to know if you've been properly paid for the public holidays.

To make sure you know what your entitlements are and whether you've been properly paid, use the flowchart below. The flow chart applies mostly to public sector members so if you have any questions about your public holiday pay and you work in the community or private sectors, please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

# Public Holiday 2020 Payments

Did you work that day?



Union Bushfire Appeal

The Union is working with the Victorian Trades Hall Council to collect a list of people who can help rebuild our communities when the bushfire threat has passed and it's safe to rebuild. There are already over 800 unionists across Victoria who have pledged their expertise when it comes time to rebuild our local communities.

### Sign up to help out

If you can help build a fence, cook and serve food, handle hazardous material, drive a bus/truck or volunteer your time [please fill out this short form](#).

### Make a donation

Like the rest of Australia, we too are reeling from the stories coming from bushfire affected areas. Those working on the front line are telling us that they need money right now and don't need donations of goods at this time. If you feel you don't have the skills to help with the rebuild then [make a donation](#) instead.



## 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.

oil and gas.

And right now HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal,

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: Booch please: Is Kombucha good for you?

"Did you know kombucha was the most searched for wellness trend in 2019? From [DIY](#) videos to the iconic [meme](#), it's no secret we all love kombucha.

Kombucha is a fermented tea drink. It's slightly fizzy and sweet and it's made by fermenting (breaking down) the sugars in sweetened black or green tea with a SCOBY (symbiotic colony of bacteria and yeast). It's touted for its supposed gut health benefits as it has living microorganisms which act as a probiotic.

The ease of implementing kombucha into our lifestyles makes being healthy so easy. You get it, drink it, you've cleansed your gut and you feel amazing. But is that reaction true, or is it just a placebo effect?"

Read the entire article by Kashmi Ranasinghe in the CSIRO Blog at: <https://blog.csiro.au/is-kombucha-good-for-you/>

## Worth Reading: The sweet relief of rain after bushfires threatens disaster for our rivers

"When [heavy rainfall](#) eventually extinguishes the flames ravaging south-east Australia, another ecological threat will arise. Sediment, ash and debris washing into our waterways, particularly in the Murray-Darling Basin, may decimate aquatic life.

We've seen this before. Following 2003 bushfires in Victoria's alpine region, water filled with sediment and debris ([known as sediment slugs](#)) flowed into rivers and lakes, heavily reducing fish populations. We'll likely see it again after this season's bushfire emergency.

Large areas of northeast Victoria have been burnt. While this region accounts only for 2% of Murray-Darling Basin's entire land area, water flowing in from northeast Victorian streams (also known as in-flow) contributes [38%](#) of overall in-flows into the Murray-Darling Basin.

Fire debris flowing into Murray-Darling Basin will exacerbate the risk of fish and other aquatic life dying en masse [as witnessed in previous years](#)."

Read the entire article by Paul McInerney, Gavin Rees and Klaus Joehnk in the CSIRO Blog at: <https://blog.csiro.au/the-relief-of-rain-after-bushfires/>

## Worth Reading: Behind the smokescreen, the Coalition's stance on climate change hasn't changed at all

"The speed with which the conservative side of politics and the media has gone from assuring us climate change was not a problem, so we don't need to worry about reducing emissions, to asserting that climate change is a problem, but we still don't need to worry about reducing emissions, is breathtaking. Literally, given the levels of smoke still around.

You don't get a cookie for saying you think climate change is real.

I'm sorry, you don't. All you get is the capacity to say you have reached 1990 levels of comprehension – as that was when [the first IPCC report was issued](#). You don't get a prize for spending 30 years doing all you can to halt, undermine and dismantle action to reduce emissions, only to now say: "Hey, climate change is real."

Consider that the Sydney Morning Herald this week ran a front page story headlined "[Minister slams climate debate](#)", with the lead that "Australia's bushfire crisis has prompted a blunt warning from Science Minister Karen Andrews to those she says are wasting time arguing about whether climate change is real".

Oh good, that's all sorted then."

Read the entire article by Greg Jericho in The Guardian at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/18/behind-the-smokescreen-the-coalitions-stance-on-climate-change-hasnt-changed-at-all>

## Worth Reading: It's hard for people with severe mental illness to get in the NDIS – and the problems don't stop there

"The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) promises a life-changing opportunity for Australians living with disabilities to get the supports they need to engage and participate fully in their communities.

The size, complexity and rapid roll-out of the NDIS meant that teething problems would inevitably arise.

An [independent review](#), released yesterday, shows these problems are particularly serious for people with mental illnesses – also known as psychosocial disabilities.

People with a mental illness were the last group to be included in the NDIS. Initial planning focused on physical and intellectual disability, failing to recognise the unique needs and challenges of people with psychosocial disabilities."

Read the entire article by Nicola Hancock and Jennifer Smith-Merry in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/its-hard-for-people-with-severe-mental-illness-to-get-in-the-ndis-and-the-problems-dont-stop-there-130198>

## Worth Reading: After the firestorm: the health implications of returning to a bushfire zone

"Australia has a long history of bushfire disasters. The loss of almost 70 homes in [Tathra, New South Wales](#), and 18 homes in [southwest Victoria](#) this week has again reminded us of the risks and huge personal costs of living in a fire-prone country. The risk is increasing as fires the world over are [expanding in every dimension](#) – in their timing, with extended seasons of favourable fire weather, frequency and severity.

Emergency services, communications and community support during fire disasters have become increasingly sophisticated to meet these growing challenges. An often overlooked aspect of bushfire management is post-fire

risk. Many people will be returning to uncertainty. They will need to evaluate the immediate impacts on their homes and property, and the implications for their future.

After the firestorm has passed, the [risks to health](#) remain. These include physical and chemical hazards associated with damaged structures, contaminated air, food and water, and the well-documented [risks to mental health](#) and well-being."

Read the entire article by Fay Johnston in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/after-the-firestorm-the-health-implications-of-returning-to-a-bushfire-zone-93647>

## 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.



[Share on Facebook](#)



[Share on Facebook](#)





[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](#)

## Australian Unions Member Benefits app

As a Union member you get access to exclusive Member Benefits. The 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 – that means you! If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now.](#)



## Share STAT Report

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

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