



Stat Report 2021/13

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What does the Federal Budget do for you? Not much!

In essence this year's federal budget does very little for most Australians. The big ticket items, which were already leaked and discussed in various forums online and in mainstream media, appear to be great but the devil is always in the detail.

Unfortunately, those that have will have a direct impact on you, like making childcare more affordable, won't start until July 2022, well after the next federal election. There has been an increase in funding for women's services and initiatives to support women, but it fails to make up for funding cuts over recent years to refugees and programs aimed at supporting women fleeing domestic violence.

Then there's the sad, yet very expensive, efforts at addressing domestic violence through the production of so-called educational videos aimed at young people; we all know those terrible videos about milkshakes and tacos.

It is pleasing to note that the government will not stand in the way of the legislated increase to superannuation contributions and people on low incomes will no longer need to meet the \$450 per month threshold to get superannuation. The threshold disproportionately affects women, who are often employed on low hour part time contracts. This is a small step towards closing the super pay gap, but there is a lot more work to be done. Yet when it comes to structural change, the budget contained no new money to extend paid parental leave and the government rejected a recommendation from a recent income retirement review that superannuation be paid while women are taking paid maternity leave.

For a budget that has been touted as the women's budget, there is little for women to celebrate as male-dominated industries continue to receive the largest slices of the budget pie.

The federal budget also does very little to address major structural issues in our economy, like the growing levels of under-employment and the increasing level of insecure work.

Earlier this year, the federal government again joined with employer groups to demand that the minimum wage be increased by a paltry amount which doesn't deliver the wage people need to live on. Recent surveys of the rental market demonstrate that people on the minimum wage are not able to afford most rental properties.

We now know that a major contributing factor for failures in our hotel quarantine system; and why there were so many outbreaks in federally run aged-care facilities is in large part due to insecure work, which forces people to work multiple jobs. We also know that women are disproportionately in insecure work for a range of reasons, which means they are not able to plan for their future and will end up with significantly less in their superannuation account when they retire. Then there's the ending of various support payments linked to addressing the pandemic, which will create poverty and further increase inequity in Australia.

There has been little spending put towards addressing the drivers of climate change and instead the Morrison government invests in mitigation and mythical carbon capture and storage projects. There are yet to be any carbon capture and storage projects that have been successful at the scale needed, which begs the question why aren't we investing in addressing the drivers of climate change? Investment in sustainable, renewable energy and moving the economy away from reliance on fossil fuels is a far better use of our taxes than trying to mitigate the impacts of climate change. I'm reminded of the adage about finding a cure is better than treating the symptoms. There was nothing in the budget to address the need to have a nationally coordinated plan to address the health impacts of climate change, something the Union has been advocating along with a broad coalition of health organisations and health unions through the Climate and Health Alliance. The budget will continue with the ludicrous so-called gas lead recovery rather than investing in a green new approach, which is why the Union is supporting the Student Strike for Climate on 21 May.

The federal budget is delivering a significant amount of additional funding for healthcare. As expected, the lion's share of health-related funding will go to the aged care sector. This comes as no surprise given the disastrous outcomes within in aged care during the height of the pandemic and the very serious issues highlighted in the Royal Commission. Commentators and people within the aged care sector will undoubtedly spend a great deal of time unpacking and debating the funding delivered to aged care but early analysis suggests it is inadequate and won't address the structural issues outlined in the Royal Commission.

There has been additional funding put into mental health but it is not nearly enough to address the structural issues in mental health care. While there are laudable initiatives outlined in the budget, they are not going to address the bigger issues around ensuring fair and equitable access to mental health care for all Australians; does little to enhance telehealth services despite the headline numbers; and fails to address the systemic workforce issues by ensuring access to psychologists or encouraging people into such career paths.

There is little to celebrate from the budget for scientists, dieticians, audiologists, physicists or pharmacists. Despite the Treasurer talking up the investment in hospitals, there has been a cut in public health spending. While admitting there are critical workforce shortages across the health care sector, the Morrison government provides no initiatives or incentives to address them.

Overall, it is a disappointing budget that does little to improve our daily lives, does little to address that wages in real terms are shrinking, and fails to properly address the huge challenges our nation faces for the future; it is just more band-aids to cover over the other band-aids. This year's federal budget is indicative of the fact that the Morrison government is all spin and no substance.

Next week the Victorian State budget will be released, which we hope will address health care in a more substantive way than the Morrison government's budget. We'll be sure to provide members with our analysis.

If you need to contact us, please use the enquiry email at enquiry@msav.org.au or via telephone on (03) 9623 9623.

In solidarity
Paul Elliott
Secretary

Positions not backfilled?

Let us know

Union Round Up

Alfred/Monash Cluster Pathology Project

It has come to the Union's attention that the taskforce for the Alfred/Monash Cluster Pathology project have reference the Union as being in partnership with them. While the MSAV has indicated our support for the broader pathology reforms advised by the Government, we are concerned that the taskforce continues to present this project as being in partnership with the MSAV and other Unions.

Members should be made aware that this is not the case. Indeed, we have been frustrated by the inability of the taskforce to provide us with information about the work done on the project, with claims that much of it was to be commercial in confidence.

The Union has consulted with Government about the Cluster project and expect to continue receiving briefings from the taskforce and DHHS about the work that has been done by the taskforce but we have not been invited to be part of the taskforce (despite requests), we have not been invited to sit on any of the Cluster projects at the various Health Services, and as such, have not been allowed to have input into the appropriate form a cluster or clusters should take and the associated flow on of decisions.

The MSAV's role to date has been limited to asking questions that in the main have not been answered.

We have made it clear to the taskforce team that we want them to stop representing to members that there is partnership when there is not.

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact Heidi at heidib@msav.org.au

Enterprise Agreement Updates

NextSense (formerly the Royal Institute of Deaf and Blind Children) Agreement

We have now been bargaining with NextSense since December 2020. This has been a really complex round of bargaining, in part because the organisation is trying to combine more than 5 industrial instruments into the one agreement.

We also want a structure which recognises the skills, qualifications and experiences of our members, and provides a clear career structure for progression.

Contact Lisa at lissaa@msav.org.au for more information about bargaining at NextSense.

Monash IVF Scientists Agreement

The current Agreement expires on 30 September 2021. We are working with members now to understand what they want negotiated.

We are also scheduling a members' meeting for 19 May 2021 via Zoom. If you have any questions about bargaining at Monash IVF, please contact Lisa at lissaa@msav.org.au

Melbourne IVF Counsellors Agreement

The Union is in the process of finalising negotiations with MIVF. We have negotiated 10% wage increases over a 4-year agreement, plus a sign on bonus which has been endorsed by members.

The first wage increase will commence on 26 April 2021 and will be passed to workers on the 10 May 2021.

We're happy to share that we negotiated for MIVF to withdraw plans to implement a Christmas close down clause. And, Genetic and IVF Counsellors will now be able to access higher qualifications allowance.

Questions about the new enterprise agreement with Melbourne IVF should be directed to Lisa – lisaa@msav.org.au

TissuPath Laboratories Agreement

Negotiations for the new TissuPath Labs agreement has now commenced. We are working with members to understand what they want negotiated.

Negotiations are scheduled to recommence with VCCI and management after 17 May 2021. In the meantime, if you have any questions about negotiations with TissuPath Laboratories please contact Lisa at lisaa@msav.org.au

Annual Leave Entitlements

Here's a couple of quick facts about public sector annual leave:

- Under our Agreement, annual leave needs to be taken at a time “determined by mutual agreement”. If you don't agree to take your leave, you can't be forced to take it: cl 60.3
- There is no provision in our Agreement, about excess annual leave. And there is also no clause in our Agreement, which enables an employer to direct a worker to take annual leave;
- If more than 2 weeks annual leave is taken, this leave must be backfilled: cl 34.1

Having said that, employers can have respectful conversations with workers about annual leave planning. And, the Union does encourage workers to take their annual leave to generally recharge and to be happy and safe at work when they're there!

If you do feel pressured to submit leave requests, here's some advice:

- Think about when you actually want to take your leave and try not to feel pressured by arbitrary dates presented by management (such as, needing to submit a plan to use X amount of leave before the end of the financial year);
- Put this plan to your employer and have a conversation about that proposal;
- Then, when that proposal is agreed, advise your employer that you do not intend to discuss leave planning further; and,
- If you're ever in doubt, the Union is always here for support.

Whilst the above references are to our Public Health Sector Agreement our private sector agreements contain the same, or similar, provisions. If you have any queries about your annual leave entitlements, please contact the Union at enquiry@msav.org.au

Special leave for COVID-19 vaccines

Below is what is being advised by the Victorian Department of Health with respect to employees in the public sector who have an adverse reaction after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine (emphasis is ours):

Where an employee experiences an adverse event after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine

Employees may experience minor side effects after receiving the COVID-19 vaccination. There is some overlap between an expected adverse event following immunisation (AEFI) following the COVID-19 vaccination and the presenting symptoms of COVID-19. This can lead to uncertainty around requirements for testing and isolation in a person with symptoms following vaccination.

The Department of Health has issued Recommendations for testing and isolation following COVID-19 vaccination which provide guidance on distinguishing AEFIs from other symptoms of illness that an employee may experience.

Where an employee is required to isolate in the circumstances described in the Recommendations for testing and isolation following COVID-19 vaccination, the employee has access to paid Special Leave for the requisite period of isolation.

Paid Special Leave should also be made available to an employee who was prioritised in Group 1A or Group 1B to receive a COVID-19 vaccination and who suffers an AEFI that does not require them to isolate, but does result in them being unable to attend work because of the symptoms experienced. To access paid Special Leave

in this circumstance, the employee is required to provide a medical certificate confirming that the reason for not attending work is due to an AEFI that does not require them to isolate.

In this instance, **paid Special Leave will be capped at a maximum of two days per COVID-19 vaccination received, or four days of leave in total per employee across all COVID-19 vaccinations received by the employee in 2021.**

Employers should retrospectively authorise paid Special Leave to an employee who has already received a COVID-19 vaccination as part of the Group 1A or Group 1B vaccinations and took Personal Leave for any absence that resulted from an AEFI that did not require them to isolate. The evidentiary requirement may be waived in such cases and the employee may have their Personal Leave recredited.

Employers should assess such situations on a case-by-case basis.

School Strike for Climate

The Union strongly believes in the need to urgently address climate change. After the Morrison government failed to address climate change in the budget this week it's even more important we demand an end to the reliance on fossil fuels. That's why the Union is supporting the latest School Strike for Climate rally on 21 May from 1pm at Treasury Gardens.

The team behind the action need some marshals to help on the day. If you're intending on going and what do a little more to support the action, then consider [signing up to be a marshal here](#).

Details are available at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1440575416288630/>



Membership Fees and Invoices

Members paying union fees by manual annual subscription will be receiving the upcoming renewal subscription invoice for the 2021/2022 FY early June 2021 via email. Members who have not yet paid the current 2020/2021 FY subscription, or haven't received an invoice, please contact Anastasia on 9623 9623 or anastasiap@msav.org.au to receive another one or to pay by credit card over the phone. Members can also log in to the membership portal to make sure all contact details are correct. Please email Anastasia if you require another activation link emailed to you.

Members who have had changes in their work hours or have returned to work from maternity leave, or from a period of being stood down please contact Anastasia to update your subscription rate, in order to maintain the correct coverage for Professional Indemnity Insurance purposes.

Members paying by Direct Debit will receive tax receipts for the current FY early July 2021. Payments for the 2021/2022 will continue as usual. Members can update their payment details, when necessary, via the membership portal. Any changes to work hours, please contact Anastasia on 9623 9623 or anastasiap@msav.org.au

You can access your membership details, PI Insurance information and details on what you've paid in membership fees from your own page through our membership portal. The membership portal allows you to update your membership details, download your PI Insurance information and your tax receipts when it comes time to prepare your tax return. It's easy to use, secure and gives you the information you need whenever you need it! To access your membership portal, visit <https://msav.360membership.com.au/login.aspx>

Membership Issues – Experiencing hardship?

Non-Members

For non-Union members who work in workplaces across our coverage; **we will give advice immediately over the phone if they join.**

In the spirit of supporting health workers through this unprecedented time we hope you might have a quiet word to colleagues who are not members, and suggest that there has never been a more important time to join a Union. Let them know that it is as simple as going to our website and [clicking on the 'JOIN' link](#).

Members

If you are in the unfortunate position of being stood down or forced on to unpaid leave, [contact us to move your membership payments to a 'non-working' subscription rate of \\$8.26 per month](#).

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.

Right now, Aware Super, Australia's biggest health industry super fund, is investing our money in fossil fuels - oil and gas. While they have plans to divest from fossil fuels, it's vital that we maintain the pressure to make sure they divest faster to ensure a reduction in financial issues posed by stranded assets like fossil fuelled power stations.

Join us in asking Aware Super to divest from fossil fuels at <https://www.healthyfutures.net.au/awaresuper>

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: Why I won't swallow the 'pink' budget pill

"I won't swallow the federal government's "pink" branding pill for its 2021-22 budget.

Some have portrayed the budget as a pivot to "soft hearts" instead of "hard hats". But in reality, this government is confirming its hard-hearted willingness to not just tolerate growing rising inequality – but to concretise it in the structure of our post-COVID economy.

After last year's widely critiqued "hard hats" budget, with its narrow focus on announcing big construction projects (many of which still haven't got past the photo-op stage), this year the Coalition announced \$3.4 billion in funding over four years to purportedly address women's economic security, safety and health. Keep in mind,

that represents just 3.6 per cent of the total \$96 billion in new tax and spending measures announced in this budget."

Read the entire article by Alison Pennington in The New Daily at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/news-federal-budget/2021/05/12/alison-pennington-federal-budget/>

Worth Reading: The Band-Aid Budget helps, but it's no cure

"The main job of budget watchers is to come up with a headline to capture the theme. My contribution: The Band-Aid Budget – slap it on where it hurts, it helps, but doesn't provide a cure.

The areas causing the government political pain received cash – women, aged care – but buried in the budget papers' fine print are acknowledgements that the key to building a stronger for longer economy is missing.

And the Band-Aids in Josh Frydenberg's third budget are largely temporary, never mind all the rhetoric."

Read the entire article by Michael Pascoe in The New Daily at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/news-federal-budget/2021/05/12/federal-budget-2021-michael-pascoe/>

Worth Reading: Farewell the utopian city. To cope with climate change we must learn from how nature adapts

"Among all species, it is perhaps only humans who create habitats that are not fit to live in." – Stephen Marshall

It's a damning statement but one that can be reasonably argued to be true. We don't have the best track record in creating lasting and sustainable habitats, especially if one considers cities built in the past century.

The next 50 years will demand a new model of urban development. For a more sustainable future in a world of climate change, 21st-century cities must be based on models of adaptation that learn from natural systems. We now have the digital modelling technology to design such cities, rather than the fixed urban form that now dominates our world."

Read the entire article by Mohammed Makki in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/farewell-the-utopian-city-to-cope-with-climate-change-we-must-learn-from-how-nature-adapts-157878>

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 the image below on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit or your favourite social media platform.

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.](#)



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