



Stat Report 2022/22

In this issue of STAT Report, we cover:

- National Jobs and Skills Summit
- Union Round Up
- Work Shouldn't Hurt Survey 2022
- VPA PI Insurance covers Private Practice
- Contacting the Union
- Membership Issues – Experiencing hardship?
- Campaign Corner
- Worth Reading
- Member Benefits

National Jobs and Skills Summit

Members will have seen and heard over the past couple of weeks about the national Jobs and Skills Summit.

Undoubtedly, we will be hearing more about the summit and the discussions that took place, and the various views about how to move forward.

While many will lambaste it as a waste of time, it is actually very important to address the key issues in our economy holding down wages (especially changing unfair bargaining laws), addressing gender pay equity, improving workforce participation, increasing casualisation of Australia's workforce with more 'independent contractors' and the growth in the 'gig economy'.

We've seen the impacts of a broken system across healthcare and our own disciplines. There are serious issues to be tackled. Workloads are continuing to increase while staffing numbers have not kept up.

More and more members are engaging in more unpaid work as workloads rise. This only leads to members being left exhausted and facing burn out. It exacts a substantial toll on members in the form of stress related injuries.

The negative impacts of high workload have worsened as healthcare workers struggle to cope with the ongoing COVID pandemic.

There are serious issues around the general and mental health and well-being of healthcare workers. Issues like these are not being properly addressed by employers.

In many ways working through such issues on a national scale can only be done through measures like summits. They are opportunities to bring people together to begin a discussion.

The summit is also vital to focussing more attention on the issues facing workers, especially as wages are not keeping pace with the cost of living, leading to a decline in living standards for many workers.

This is not just because of the pandemic but has been happening over a decade.

The Union fundamentally believes that one of the biggest issues the summit must address is the broken bargaining system.

Our work and workplaces have changed, and laws have not kept up.

Modernising the bargaining system to keep up with changes is a sensible change around which there should be sensible solutions, including making the bargaining system more flexible, and restoring the power of workers and their unions to be able to achieve fair and reasonable wage increases.

We reject the notion that productivity must keep up in order for wages to go up. All too often those who talk about productivity can't even see the huge productivity gains produced by Australian workers, including those in health, over the past 3 decades. All they want is more.

Productivity in Australia is very high, yet wages are not. There is an utter disconnect between what big business and their lobbyists say about productivity and reality.

This is particularly the case when you consider profits have grown at 5 times the rate of wages over the last decade with CEOs and senior executives pay going up and up, while everyone else's has stagnated.

The truth is that low wage growth hurts people, families and business; it hurts the economy.

Unfortunately, only 1 in 7 workers is now covered by an enterprise agreement. This is half the rate of coverage we had a decade ago.

The gig economy is unregulated and some workers are working for as little as \$6 an hour.

Some will say that trying to fix the broken system will hurt small businesses or make it attractive to larger businesses to keep wages low.

Small business is being hurt by workers' wages going backwards and having less spending power. Worker wages going up helps every business. Money spent by workers in their local communities helps our communities and the economy as a whole. Even the Reserve Bank has acknowledged this point.

That's why it's vital the summit ensures there are robust discussions and debates about addressing the growing gender pay inequity, makes workplaces safer and more inclusive and that stagnating wages are addressed.

If the only solutions to come out of the summit are to increase productivity in order to increase wages, the summit will be an adject failure. No one buys the 'trickle-down' theory anymore.

We look forward to how the summit unfolds and what priorities arising from it will be tackled by the Albanese Government to address stagnating wages and falling living standards.

If you need advice or assistance with issues at work, please contact us by calling on 9623 9623 or emailing enquiry@msav.org.au

In solidarity
Paul Elliott
Secretary



Positions not backfilled?



Let us know

Union Round Up

Proposed change at VIDRL

VIDRL is proposing a restructure.

The Union has no views on the appropriateness or otherwise of the restructure. The Union has given our "approval" simply to discuss the proposal. Nothing more.

It's important, for starters, that we discuss the proposal with members to ascertain your views before we enter into discussions with VIDRL management.

The Union will also seek to have interested members participate in discussions.

Information provided so far appears to be lacking in detail so, no doubt, there will be additional information that we need to engage with constructively.

To begin discussions with members, the Union has organised a Zoom meeting for Tuesday 6 September at 12.30pm

VIDRL members should have received these details earlier in the week.

If you have not received the email or have any initial comments or questions, please contact Matt at matth@msav.org.au

Proposed change at Melbourne Pathology

The Union has been advised by Melbourne Pathology that it intends to introduce a digital time keeping record (punch / sign on and off duty) in the near future.

There has been no implementation date given as yet, but we have been advised that the Kronos system sign on will be accessed via computer or that a pay schedule will be set up for those without regular access to compute

The Union has also been advised that at present this new time keeping method does not involve any biometric sign on component (i.e., use of fingerprint algorithm or other).

Melbourne Pathology will be sharing more information with you prior to implementation.

If you have concerns about how this will operate and think you may need support, please contact the Union at enquiry@msav.org.au

Mandatory Flu Vaccinations

Members have been contacting the Union recently about their requirement to be vaccinated against the flu.

There has been a change this year, with the Secretary of the Department of Health mandating flu jabs for the health workforce. He has done this utilising powers granted to him by parliament in 2020 under the Health Services Amendment (Mandatory Vaccination of Healthcare Workers) Act 2020.

This directive effectively covers all or most of our members as it requires health care workers who come into contact with patients, blood, body substances, or respiratory droplets to be vaccinated by August 15 and annually thereafter.

As with COVID-19 vaccinations, there is very little wriggle room for not getting vaccinated.

If you want all the details, click on this link: [Vaccination for healthcare workers](#)

Promoting the Union in your workplace

The Union is stronger with more members. Having more members means we have a more powerful voice. One of the best ways of increase the Union's membership is through members like you.

Putting up posters in your workplace, sharing STAT Report with colleagues and mentioning they have a Union that advocates for them, lobbies for them and provides professional industrial advice and assistance are great ways of helping the Union grow its membership.

We can help you with posters, social media content and more or if you want to suggest an idea for material that would work for your workplace, contact Alex on (03) 9623 9623 or at alexs@msav.org.au

Union's Reconciliation Action Plan

The Union affirms our commitment and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture. However, the Union wants to do more by developing a reconciliation action plan.

The management committees of both the MSAV and HSU 4 Branch in their June 2021 meetings very proudly adopted resolutions of support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart and support for an Indigenous voice to our national Parliament to be adopted as a constitutional reform.

If members who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are interested, please contact us so that we can develop our reconciliation action plan together.

Please contact Alex if you're interested at alexs@msav.org.au

Public Sector Healthcare Worker Wellbeing program

From 1 July to 31 December, the Healthcare Worker Wellbeing program will expand to provide free meals and refreshments to staff working night shift. To tailor to individual needs, and ensure maximum benefit to workers, health services will be given flexibility to deliver this program.

The Union strongly encourages members working night shift to enquire with their health service about the provision of free meals and refreshments and the delivery of the Healthcare Worker Wellbeing program.

We're interested to hear about responses members receive and their views on the delivery of the Healthcare Worker Wellbeing program.

Information about this program was sourced from the Department of Health at:
<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/news/healthcare-worker-winter-retention-surge-payment>

Work Shouldn't Hurt Survey 2022

The 'Work Shouldn't Hurt' survey is back, and your input is critical!

Each year, Australian Unions runs this survey to better understand worker experiences of health and safety in the workplace. It covers topics about how work is managed as well as common risks and hazards.

This is your chance to have your say and share your experiences.

Just because you might not think there are occupational hazards in your workplace, think again. The design of workspaces, having to do repetitive actions and activities, and high levels of stress are all hazards to your physical and mental health and well-being.

Even if you completed the survey last year, you can complete it again this year. Perhaps in the time since the last survey your workplace has improved its occupational health and safety standards; or maybe things have gotten worse.

This is a great chance to share those experiences.

The 30,000 responses collected last year were critical to winning stronger health and safety laws and rights for workers, but there is much more to be done.

Everyone is welcome to take the survey at <https://ausunions.io/WSH2022>

VPA PI Insurance includes cover for Private Practice

One of the benefits of joining the Victorian Psychologists Association is that membership includes Professional Indemnity Insurance.

The VPA always works to ensure members have the best possible Professional Indemnity Insurance. To keep up with changes in the insurance landscape, we've changed our coverage provider and policy.

One of the biggest changes, and one that we're really excited about, is that our **new policy covers members working in private practice!**

The new policy includes some important changes, including:

- The new policy now includes cover for private practice, where the private practice income does not exceed \$100,000 per annum
- Complaints to AHPRA, coronial inquiries, investigations etc are covered with maximum legal costs of \$100,000
- The policy includes cover for claims of 'Abuse' including sexual harassment, provided that the insurer will not pay where the accused is found to have committed the abuse. It covers legal costs of up to \$500,000
- All other complaints of professional malpractice leading to 'bodily injury' – the definition of which includes mental anguish, mental injury – is covered for up to \$2,000,000, including legal costs and compensation.
- There is run-off cover for 7 years, as required by AHPRA

Don't worry, the new Professional Indemnity Insurance policy meets the Psychology Board of Australia registration requirements and AHPRA's requirements for insurance coverage.

As a member you get access to **professional advice** and assistance with workplace issues, **representation** in the negotiation of workplace agreements, **advocacy** for the profession, and, among other things, Professional Indemnity Insurance.

By maintaining your VPA membership you will always be covered whether you work in community, public or private practice.

The VPA delivers members fantastic value. Share this great news with your colleagues so more of Victoria's psychologists can be covered at work.

Covering private practice is a major change we're proud and excited about! It's another way we're keeping members covered at work.

The new Professional Indemnity Insurance policy is provided by Tego, a specialist healthcare indemnity underwriter.

Subscribe to The New Daily



The Union is pleased to provide all members with a free subscription to The New Daily an online news service.

This news service is Australian owned, which aims to provide fair and balanced coverage of major events across Australia and around the world.

Delivered to your email box every morning you will be provided with the top stories of the day.

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/subscribe/>

Contacting the Union

Members can ring the Union to seek support, advice and assistance with workplace issues.

MSAV: (03) 9623 9623
VPA: (03) 9623 9625
AHP: (03) 9623 9624

As always members can raise workplace issues by emailing the Union at enquiry@msav.org.au

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. [You can join quickly and easily here.](#)

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.

Campaign Corner

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>

Organise for Equality

To make real change - the kind of change that can't be swept under the rug when the news cycle moves on - we need distributed, organised women campaigning together.

Distributed organising activates a network of self-starting supporters/campaigners in multiple locations, which can spread across geographical boundaries, interests and cultural groups. It draws on the initiative and energy of volunteer organisers to start groups and lead teams.

Help organise for equality by signing up at <https://www.weareunion.org.au/o4e>

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: If productivity was the magical fix some claim, we wouldn't need a jobs summit

"The Treasury issues paper published in the lead-up to the Albanese government's Jobs and Skills Summit runs to 11 pages of text. It mentions productivity 21 times.

It's a safe bet that increasing productivity – put simply, looking at how Australia's workers can produce more from the same inputs – will be a dominant theme in the summit's crowded agenda.

That's certainly the emphasis business groups want. Their pre-summit messaging has stressed that productivity is the secret to prosperity and higher wages.

It's an equally safe bet the summit will hear a familiar list of business-friendly measures – deregulation, lower business taxes, liberalised immigration – as the means to that end."

Read the entire article by Jim Stanford in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/if-productivity-was-the-magical-fix-some-claim-we-wouldnt-need-a-jobs-summit-188716>

Worth Reading: The US has ruled all taxpayer-funded research must be free to read. What's the benefit of open access?

"Last week, the United States announced an updated policy guidance on open access that will substantially expand public access to science not just in America, but worldwide.

As per the guidance, all US federal agencies must put in place policies and plans so anyone anywhere can immediately and freely access the peer-reviewed publications and data arising from research they fund.

The policies need to be in place by the end of 2025, according to President Biden's White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)."

Read the entire article by Virginia Barbour in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/the-us-has-ruled-all-taxpayer-funded-research-must-be-free-to-read-whats-the-benefit-of-open-access-189466>

Worth Reading: Democracies are fragile. Australians must act urgently to safeguard ours

"The solicitor-general's recent finding that former Prime Minister Scott Morrison's furtive accrual of ministerial portfolios "fundamentally undermined" the principles of responsible government has drawn attention to the precarity of democracy. In seeking to safeguard our democracy, we must consider the extent to which Australians' long-standing apathy about our democratic system allowed Morrison to treat it with such contempt.

Democracy is under threat around the world. Donald Trump's autocratic populism and the attempted coup at the Capitol in January 2021 are familiar to Australians, but so-called "strongmen" have been white-anting democratic conventions in countries including the Philippines, Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Venezuela and Brazil for the past two decades."

Democratic government is a compact between the people and the state. It relies on robust institutions and an engaged and informed citizenry that holds its elected representatives to account. Complacency and ignorance provide fertile ground for populists and autocrats to spread misinformation, undermine institutions and disregard democratic conventions.

Read the entire article by Carolyn Holbrook in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/democracies-are-fragile-australians-must-act-urgently-to-safeguard-ours-188580>

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](#)

Union Member Benefits

As a Union member you get access to some great

benefits.

Motor vehicles, rental cars, cameras, computers, travel, accommodation, entertainment, wine, gift cards, jewellery, insurance and health products are just some of the categories covered with great deals for union members.

Getting access to UnionShopper discounts is free to all members of the MSAV, VPA or AHP – that means you!

[Visit UnionShopper and sign up.](#)

*Member Benefits has wound up with UnionShopper being the preferred provider of discounts for union members. Members who used Member Benefits will have to sign up at UnionShopper

Please note that UnionShopper is not run by the MSAV, VPA or AHP



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.