



Stat Report 2022/29

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Union responds to State Health Workforce Strategy

Members may know that the Victorian Government is working on the development of a Health Workforce Strategy. The Union has been very involved in these discussions, attending meetings and actively advocating on behalf of members.

Recently, the Union was invited to provide a written submission on the Health Workforce Strategy. I want to thank Matt Hammond for putting together our submission.

We raised our many concerns as to the current situation with the health workforce with particular attention given to:

- Enterprise Agreement compliance culture within health services
- Chronic backfill delays
- Training in team management skills
- Abolition of training grants (bursary years) for Medical Pathology Science students
- Psychologist career structure
- Pharmacist resourcing levels
- The need for a Chief Psychologist and Chief Pharmacist.

Agreement compliance

It is our view that, increasingly, there is less real and meaningful understanding of the importance and role of enterprise agreements in the workplace. It appears to us that, often, agreement compliance is regarded as optional or inconvenient by some health services.

Organisational change is often initiated without the provision of all relevant information and asserted as a fait accompli with tight timeframes and inadequate resourcing. Language often talks about the needs of “the business” and places operational managers in situations of being decision makers about matters that they are not best placed to decide.

This causes significant distress to members and causes unnecessary disputes.

Backfill delays

Many health services wilfully delay filling vacant positions in order to save money. Some health services require managers to routinely make a “business case” for filling of vacant operational positions.

This type of slavish adherence to “business rules” routinely results in important hospital functions running short staffed for significant periods of time resulting in increased employee workloads and dissatisfaction.

Training in team management skills

Health services employ many highly educated and skilled people across all areas. However, there is very little practical training given about how to lead a team.

There is little or no assessment of skills in team management and little practical support given for development of the skills needed to successfully lead teams.

Psychologist career structure

Arising from the recent Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health Services, there is very significant unmet demand for professional services in this space.

At the same time, psychologists are increasingly finding it difficult to justify pursuing a career in public health when there are better paid and less stressful options available to them through private practice. The career structure is not satisfying with limited ability to progress into senior clinical positions within health services.

Pharmacist resourcing levels

Pharmacy demands have grown immensely over recent years with more and more functions within health services operating on a seven day per week basis.

This commonly manifests significantly in demand for out of hours discharges and increased demands for Emergency Department services coinciding directly with reductions in available bulk billing GP services.

Greater adherence to SHPA (Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia) ratios for pharmacy functions should be implemented in all health services to ensure that, in the same way as nursing staff formulas work, there is sufficient resourcing for the work required.

These are matters the Union actively pursued in the negotiations for our new Public Health Sector Agreement.

The Union will continue to actively pursue these issues with the Victorian Government. However, there is significant concern that such issues would be ignored by a Guy Liberal government.

Many of these issues were ignored by previous Liberal governments and there is no indication that a Guy Liberal government would consider or address these issues.

Members can read the entire submission [here](#).

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

Voting on the new Public Sector Agreement begins this weekend

Voting on the new Public Health Sector Agreement begins tomorrow (Saturday 22 October) and closes on Thursday 27 October.

The ballot will be conducted electronically by Elections Australia, who will send you an email with a link that you must use to cast your vote.

The MSAV, VPA and AHP support the settlement terms and recommend that members vote "YES".

If you have not received an email from Elections Australia, make sure you contact the human resources department for your employer as soon as possible in the first instance.

In the event you're given the run around, contact us without delay.

If you have any queries about the Agreement, please contact us at enquiry@msav.org.au



Positions not backfilled? Let us know

Union Round Up

Additional sixth week of leave for shift workers – Public Sector

Public Sector members will already know that our Enterprise Agreement provides all workers a minimum of 5 weeks annual leave.

If you work ordinary hours on weekends, you are also entitled to accrue an additional 6th week of annual leave.

What is the entitlement?

If you work ordinary hours on weekends, you are entitled to additional annual leave

1. The sixth week of annual leave should start accruing progressively with each weekend shift that you work
2. Additional annual leave only accrues on ordinary hours worked, not overtime hours
3. You do not need to work 10 days, before you accrue the additional annual leave
4. The hours accrue as follows:
 - A. For full-time workers: When you work more than 4 ordinary hours on a Saturday and/or Sunday: additional leave will accrue at the rate of 0.5 times the number of ordinary hours that you worked on any weekend day, up to a maximum of 38 hours, in any 12-month period.
 - B. For part-time workers: Same as above, except that if you work both a Saturday and a Sunday on the same weekend, only one shift per weekend will attract the accrual of the additional annual leave (not both). The longer shift will be used to calculate the accrual of additional leave.

Underpayments and Union Support

Over the last 6 months, we have had some members who have not been receiving their additional sixth week of leave.

We have worked with each member to resolve these underpayments and those members now have the additional leave recredited.

If you feel that you haven't been paid the additional sixth week of leave in the past, please contact us at enquiry@msav.org.au

Workplace change – What are your rights?

Over the last 6 months, a few Public and Community Health Services have started to implement workplace change.

We know that change processes can sometimes be stressful. The Union is always here to provide support to individuals and teams.

Here are our top 6 tips:

1. Know what your rights are under the Agreement before change happens
2. You have the right to be consulted about workplace change:
 - a. This means a genuine opportunity to influence the decision maker.
 - b. Merely announcing that a change will be implemented is not consultation.
3. Workplace change should be presented in writing in a Change Impact Statement (CIS) – The CIS must be presented to all impacted workers and the Union to start the consultation process.
4. The consultation process is your opportunity to raise concerns and share feedback!
5. Contact the Union to get support – enquiry@msav.org.au or 9623 9623.
6. Don't go it alone; we are stronger when we work together.

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>

MSAV/HSU Victoria #4 Branch AGMs

The Annual General Meetings for the MSAV and HSU Victoria #4 Branch are scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 26th October 2022 at the Charles Latrobe Theatre at the Royal Melbourne Hospital.**

Details:

Date: 26 October 2022

Venue: Charles Latrobe Theatre at RMH

Lunch: 12:00pm

MSAV AGM: 12:30pm

HSU Victoria #4 AGM: 1:30pm

Members can access the agenda and financial reports for the [MSAV here](#) and [HSU Victoria #4 Branch here](#).

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>

State Election 2022

The state election is coming up fast

Join the fight for equality and fairness for all Victorians. Let's keep Matthew "lobster with a mobster" Guy and the Liberals out of parliament.

This year union activists are fighting for all Victorians to have access to:

- sick and carers leave, without losing income.
- free ambulance cover.
- a secure, comfortable place to call home.
- be free to speak out against bullying and harassment.
- have guaranteed access to meaningful training and work.
- have privacy at work and the right to disconnect at home.
- receive a high-quality early childhood education for their kids.
- have access to affordable, renewable, publicly-owned power.
- have a safe and mentally healthy workplace.

You can join local groups and get more involved with things like phone banks.

Union Doorknocks

Ashwood & Ringwood

When: Saturday (22/10/22) 10am – 2pm

Where: Forest Hill Uniting Church, 333A Canterbury Rd, Forest Hill, 3131

Contact Alex at alexs@msav.org.au if you're interested in participating in this doorknock.

Find out other ways you can get involved in the campaign at:

https://www.weareunion.org.au/state_election_2022

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: Are 'core memories' real? The science behind 5 common myths

"What are your core memories from childhood? Can you lock in a core memory by choice? What do your core memories say about you?"

The notion of "core memories" has become well known in popular culture. First seen in the 2015 movie *Inside Out*, core memories are thought to be your five or so most important memories. The idea is that some specific events are so important, experiencing them instantly shapes your personality, behaviours and sense of self.

Thousands of TikTok users have made "core memory" posts about salient memories (often from childhood), with more than 880 million views worldwide. Typically these posts have a strong element of nostalgia and focus on small moments: watching Saturday morning cartoons, holding hands with a schoolyard crush, or splashing through the rain.

So, do core memories actually exist? While we do use memories to construct a sense of self, and these memories support our psychological wellbeing, memory science suggests the notion of a "core memory" is faulty in five key ways."

Read the entire article by Penny Van Bergen and Celia Harris in *The Conversation* at:

<https://theconversation.com/are-core-memories-real-the-science-behind-5-common-myths-191942>

Worth Reading: George Orwell is everywhere, but *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not a reliable guide to contemporary politics

"In January 2017, Donald Trump's advisor Kellyanne Conway was quizzed on White House press secretary Sean Spicer's false claims about the number of attendees at the president's inauguration. When pressed on why Spicer would "utter a provable falsehood", Conway said that Spicer was offering "alternative facts".

Her wording was widely characterised as "Orwellian". Everywhere from *Slate* to the *New York Times* to *USA Today*, journalists were linking the new administration to George Orwell's dystopian fiction. Less than a week after Conway's claim, the sales of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* had gone up an estimated 9,500%.

In a serious case of “I know you are but what am I?”, Republicans have gotten in on the act, accusing the left of being the fulfilment of Orwell’s dark prophesy. In April this year, for instance, Donald Trump Jr. tweeted: “Historically, was there ever a despotic regime that didn’t have the equivalent of a Ministry of Truth?”

Read the entire article by Chris Fleming and Jane Goodall in The Conversation at:

<https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-george-orwell-is-everywhere-but-nineteen-eighty-four-is-not-a-reliable-guide-to-contemporary-politics-190909>

Worth Reading: A bread-and-butter budget with no hundreds and thousands

"Treasurer Jim Chalmers started it a while ago and at the weekend the Infrastructure Minister Catherine King joined the chorus telling us that the imminent fiscal reckoning from the Albanese government will be “a bread-and-butter budget”.

It will be a no-nonsense, down-to-earth “reconciliation” of Labor’s campaign promises within the confines of straightened circumstances, leaving no room for excitement or fireworks.

The repetition of this mantra has become, well, a tad boring and that’s precisely what is intended – bread and butter without a sprinkling of hundreds and thousands.”

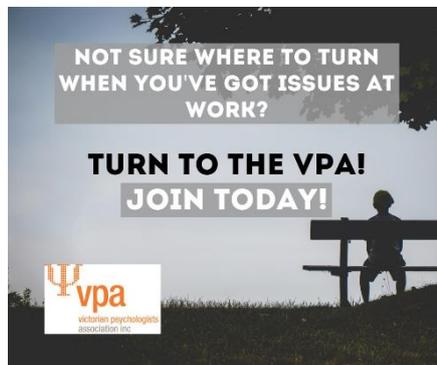
Read the entire article by Paul Bongiorno in The New Daily at:

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/2022/10/18/paul-bongiorno-bread-and-butter-budget/>

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.