



Stat Report 2019/16

In this issue of STAT Report we cover:

- Healthcare under a Morrison Government
- Bargaining Updates
- VPA Professional Development
- End of Financial Year
- You and the flu vaccine
- Social media and the workplace
- The Aged Care Royal Commission (ACRC)
- Campaign Corner
- Worth Reading
- Member Benefits

Healthcare under a Morrison Government

The election has been run and Australians have entrusted the leadership of our nation for the next 3 years to Scott Morrison and the Coalition. We're not sure if Mr Morrison will still be the Prime Minister by the time we get to the next election but the reality is he'll be the man in the big chair from the start of this Government.

So, what has Scott Morrison been saying about what a Coalition government will do? Frankly they have not said much at all.

The Coalition was able to spend an entire election campaign without outlining their plans or what they'll cost Australia and Australians. We already know that healthcare costs will continue to rise as the freeze on pathology testing continues. Within days of the election having been run we are getting reports from GPs that they will have to cease offering home visits and will have to review the fees they charge which will likely result in higher gap fees and people putting off seeing their GP.

Much was made about Labor's plan to ease the cost to people who have been diagnosed with cancer, which was only belatedly matched by the Coalition. It's now time to see if the Coalition will keep its promise to cancer patients or will they conveniently forget about the commitment.

We know that in July workers across a range of industries, especially in hospitality, will have their penalty rates cut again. We were told these cuts were necessary to increase employment but there have been no increases in shifts for people or an increase in employment opportunities as was promised.

Any chance of real action on the climate emergency has been dealt a frightening blow, given that Scott Morrison has long been a climate-change denier. It's one of the reasons that Morrison replaced Turnbull as Prime Minister last year. Despite the evidence and growing community demand for action we aren't expecting him to reach an epiphany about the need to transition to

renewable energy or the need to develop a framework to deal with the impact climate change is already having on our health and well-being.

But then it's hard to know what the Coalition will be doing with Morrison in charge since they spent the entire election campaign running down the opposition rather than outlining their vision for the nation. We saw some announcements here and there like the one meeting the commitment Labor made about easing the cost of cancer treatment but they were few and far between.

The election result is extremely disappointing. But we will continue to fight for our rights at work and defend existing employment benefits. We know if we don't continue to fight for better wages and conditions ultra-conservative voices in this Government and its cheer squad corporate sector will be looking to drive our wages and conditions down.

Victorian State Budget

The Victorian state budget was handed down on Monday. There wasn't the usual fanfare around the budget, mostly because a federal election was happening, but we were pleased to see the increase in funding for health.

While there is additional funding towards public hospital infrastructure, there is again a failure to address the staffing crisis across all of our disciplines. Despite independent research by the government that shows there is a crisis in medical science, there was no dedicated funding to ensure this critical problem is addressed. There are growing problems in mental health as there are not enough psychologists. There is more stress in our hospital pharmacies as the work piles up but the number of pharmacists doesn't increase.

The Victorian health system is being unnecessarily put under strain because state governments of all persuasions fail to address the crisis in staffing. It's not possible, as suggested by the Andrews Government, to build a healthcare system that people can rely on when they fail to address key staffing crises. Understaffing and high workloads significantly impacts on the ability of our system to safely treat patients. The Government must not ignore the vital and essential roles of allied health professionals and scientists to the delivery of world-class healthcare. There is no doubt that following significant growth in the doctors and nurses workforces over the past decade the remaining crisis in staffing are all in our disciplines.

For mental health there is mixed news. Unfortunately there is no additional funding to increase the mental health workforce and in particular increase the number of practicing psychologists. This is despite reporting of how the public mental health system is breaking down. However there has been additional funding to increase the number of services available across Victoria and the number of dedicated beds. While the mental health care budget for this year may not necessarily be as impressive as last year's budget, the government has indicated that this is due to the Royal Commission into mental health and acknowledges there will be recommendations that will need to be acted upon. In fact the Andrews government has promised to act on all the recommendations from the Royal Commission.

Despite the disappointing election result and a disappointing state budget, I want to give the same assurance the Union will continue to fight for our rights at work, for better conditions and for increases in staff across all of our disciplines.

In the meantime make sure you get your colleagues to join – the more members we have the more powerful our collective voice will be.

Paul Elliott
Secretary

Bargaining Updates

Melbourne Pathology

Negotiations for a new scientists and lab technicians agreement have resumed but to ensure the best possible outcomes from negotiations it's vital we increase our membership at Melbourne Pathology.

By having more members our voice is stronger and we can have an even bigger impact. That's why the [MSAV is offering new members from Melbourne Pathology a special offer - all the details here](#).

If you want more information about the Union's negotiations or the special membership offer please contact us on 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au

Caraniche

Negotiations with Caraniche are continuing albeit slower than the Union would like. Meetings with management are proving useful as the Union works through the claim and the agreement.

If you have queries regarding negotiations with Caraniche please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au



**A Special Membership Offer
for Melbourne Pathology**
Visit msav.org.au/melbpath for details

End of Financial Year

The End of Financial Year is coming which means that it's almost tax time. If you're a member on Annual Subscriptions you can expect to see your invoice in your inbox towards the end of May so that you have received it before 30th June, and can therefore use them to claim your membership in the current Financial Year tax returns. Don't forget your union membership is tax deductible!

If you haven't paid your membership you will want to do it ahead of the end of Financial Year. If you're not a member we can't help you at work and we can't extend the Professional Indemnity Insurance to cover you.

If you pay your membership through Direct Debit you will continue to receive your receipts as you pay your membership each month. We will also email members on Direct Debit a tax receipt after the last direct debit is done in June for the current Financial Year.

If you have any queries about your tax receipts please contact Anastasia on (03) 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au

VPA Professional Development Seminar

Save the Date for the VPA Professional Development Seminar on the afternoon of Wednesday 11 September 2019

The subject for the seminar is Gender Dysphoria and it will touch on the following themes:

- Overview of gender in childhood and adolescence
- Gender dysphoria in childhood and adolescence
- RCH Gender Service model
- Working with families of Trans and Gender Diverse children and adolescents
- Therapeutic models of care for adolescents and adults

The seminar will be held at the Royal Children's Hospital's conference facilities at Flemington

Road Parkville.

Registrations will open in June 2019. Attendance is free to VPA members



Positions not backfilled? Let us know

You and the flu vaccine

It's that time of year when the dreaded lurgy is doing the rounds. And it's also that time of year for lots of health services to make the flu vaccine available to staff. It is entirely up to you if you wish to take the flu vaccine and you can't be forced to take the flu vaccine regardless of any claims made by your employer.

However, if you feel it's something you should do and your employer is offering the opportunity to take the flu vaccine then you should feel free to take the vaccine.

If you've been told to take the flu vaccine and failure to do so will result in some kind of disciplinary action make sure you contact the Union on 9623 9623 or via email at enquiry@msav.org.au

Social Media and the Workplace

Social media is a lot of fun. It's a great way of keeping up with what your friends and family are doing, wherever they are in the world. But there are some big downsides to social media, especially when they include the workplace.

The increasing use of mobile devices combined with social media means there is an ever-increasing blur in the distinction between work and private life. And let's not forget that employers are regularly monitoring and watching social media for what employees are saying.

Like other areas of the law, industrial law has been slow to react with the increasing use of social media. However there have been a range of matters brought before the Fair Work Commission (FWC) relating to the use of social media by employees. FWC will consider if the conduct in question:

- Is likely to cause serious damage to the relationship between the employer and employee
- Damages the employer's interest
- Is incompatible with the employee's duty as an employee

It's worth pointing out that the FWC has ruled in favour of many employers for employee social media use, even for use of social media outside of work hours.

Unfortunately workers have to be extremely careful in using social media when talking about their work and workplace. There is little doubt that a lot of social interaction exists in the workplace but it is vital to avoid some of the following pitfalls:

1. Social media is not private interaction; unless you set the strictest privacy levels for your content to protect yourself from being monitored by your boss. But even then there are no guarantees!
 2. Make sure you don't follow or friend the boss and work colleagues or even your workplace's official page. It seems harsh but the number of work colleagues that have access to your social media can be an important determinant in any FWC proceedings.
 3. Don't mention your boss and the health service you work for. FWC will consider whether there has been a direct reference to the health service or anyone individual. This doesn't mean you can't discuss wages and conditions or genuine grievances but make sure you don't mention the boss or the health service.
 4. Don't discuss patients and definitely don't name them. This is particularly relevant for health sector workers as it can result in immediate termination of employment because of
-

- breaches of the privacy of a patient or patients.
5. The degree of offence of the comments posted to social media will be an issue consider by FWC.
 6. Only post material that you would be happy to post in a public forum or shout out in the middle of a packed MCG.

There is definitely one golden rule for social media use and that is: don't drink or use drugs and use social media.

If you have any questions make sure you contact the Union on 9623 9623.

The Aged Care Royal Commission (ACRC)

The Aged Care Royal Commission was established in 2018. Its terms of reference require it to examine and report on, amongst other things, 'the quality of aged care services provided to Australians, the extent to which those services meet the needs of the people accessing them, the extent of substandard care being provided, including mistreatment and all forms of abuse, the causes of any systemic failures, and any actions that should be taken in response'. (Full terms of Reference here: <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/Pages/Terms-of-reference.aspx>) Members of the Health Services Union can provide valuable insights and suggestions from their experiences working across a range of occupations directly in the sector and in health services that interrelate with aged care.

While the HSU recognises the importance for members to be seen and heard in this process, it is very important that prior to providing evidence to the ACRC, members understand their rights and role in the process.

Community Forums

The ACRC is hosting travelling community forums in regional and metropolitan areas around the country. The community forums provide an opportunity for the public to hear about the work of the ACRC and to provide information by way of speaking or providing written accounts. Although community forums are a more "informal" approach to information gathering, participants may still subject to the formal powers of the ACRC.

This means, for example, that if you speak at a forum you may later be compelled as a witness to appear at a hearing, or to provide documents, relating to your testimony at the community forum. Witnesses who are compelled to give evidence do not enjoy the usual protection against self-incrimination. This means you can be forced to give evidence even if that evidence might implicate you in a breach of the law. However there are restrictions on how this sort of evidence can be used against you if the matter later goes to court.

Submission via the HSU

The HSU is working with a qualified legal team to prepare a comprehensive formal submission. The submission will be largely made up of statements from members and officials, along with supporting evidence such as academic research. The union's national office will work with the legal team, branches and members to collect and compile the required evidence. There is no obligation for members to participate and those that do will be given thorough information about how their information will be used by the union and how the ACRC may use it too. For example, a member may wish to obtain advice from the union's legal team about the Commission's processes before they agree to proceed any further.

The HSU encourages members wishing to contribute to do so through the union's formal submission. This way, members can access support throughout the process. Members should carefully consider the extent of involvement they are willing to have in the ACRC. Remember that Royal Commissions have extensive powers. Any information provided by you may be taken as formal evidence and subject to requests to appear at hearings or produce additional documents. If you have any questions regarding the HSU submission or about the Commission, please contact National Research and Policy Officer Lauren Palmer via email at: lauren@hsu.net.au

Professional Development Seminar

**Wednesday 11
September**

Save the Date!



Women's Leadership Development

FINAL CALL: UP TO \$7,000 AVAILABLE FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Women currently working in the health sector have a final opportunity to register their interest in a scholarship worth up to \$7,000 to support participation in an accredited leadership development program.

Funding must be apportioned by the end of this financial year and it is unsure when these grants will be available again. Find out more and register your interest by completing the Expression of Interest form here prior to 5pm on June 21: www.wla.edu.au/health

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.

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: Your credit report is a key part of your privacy – here's how to find and check it

"The Australian government encourages citizens to protect their privacy and personal information.

Most of the [tips provided](#) by the Office of the Information Commissioner are pretty intuitive – know your rights, read privacy policies, use security software and more.

But you might be surprised to know “check your credit report” is also on the list of recommended actions.

Checking your credit report, preferably annually, is a good way to ensure incorrect information is not listed against you. Having the right information in place can protect you against [identity theft](#), so is an important component of privacy in this sense.

The [Privacy Act 1988](#) is an Australian law which regulates the handling of personal information about individuals. The Privacy Act has very strict rules, reflected in 13 [Australian Privacy](#)

[Principles](#), that control the way information about you is accessed, used and corrected.

The Privacy Act gives you the right to find out what's in your credit report and change any incorrect information in your report."

Read the entire article by Nigar Sultana, Harjinder Singh, Yeut Hong Tham in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/your-credit-report-is-a-key-part-of-your-privacy-heres-how-to-find-and-check-it-116999>

Worth Reading: Tax cuts: 'The Trojan horse to take Australia's social security down the path of the US'

"Australia's social security safety net faces a radical undermining in the new Parliament's looming tax cuts battle.

The re-elected Morrison government is using promised tax cuts for low- and middle-income earners in the near term as a Trojan horse to move Australia's century-old commitment to look after more vulnerable citizens closer to the American model.

Boosting the government's confidence it can push the Parliament hard to pass its seven-year tax cuts package are the election results where poorer "aspirational voters" deserted Labor for the Liberals.

Economist Richard Denniss points to some big swings to Labor in Liberal seats and the reverse in Labor seats."

Read the entire article by Paul Bongiorno in The New Daily at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/election-2019/2019/05/27/tax-cuts-the-trojan-horse-to-take-australias-social-security-down-the-path-of-the-us/>

Worth Reading: Is China's social credit system coming to Australia?

"Privacy was not a hot topic in the recent Australian election, but it should have been. This is because the City of Darwin is adapting elements of the [Chinese social credit system](#) for use in Australia. The Chinese system's monitoring of citizens' behaviour has been widely condemned as "Orwellian", with [frequent comparisons to the dystopian near-future sci-fi of Black Mirror](#). But for Australians it's pitched as progress towards a digitally integrated future, embedded innocuously in the "Switching on Darwin" plans for a smarter city.

To see why this is a worrying development for Australian democracy one must first play a patient game of join the dots.

Dot 1. One of Darwin's [six "sister cities"](#) is Haikou, capital of the Chinese island province of Hainan. Links established through sister-city relationships are commonly understood to be a springboard to wider networks of co-operative arrangements. Such connections may provide opportunities for cultural exchange, but also for technological exchange.

Recently there have been reports on how smart city plans in Darwin [draw inspiration](#) from the Chinese social credit surveillance system."

Read the entire article by Peter Rogers in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/is-chinas-social-credit-system-coming-to-australia-117095>

Worth Reading: Uber drivers' experience highlights the dead-end job prospects facing more Australian workers

"Being an Uber driver doesn't seem like a great job. Conditions [aren't great](#) and the rate of pay, already typically [less than the minimum wage](#), is [declining](#).

So why do Uber drivers keep driving?

When we asked them, they [told us](#) the job was better than any others they had.

That's something that should concern us all.

Across the world the proportion of people in "insecure" jobs is creeping upwards. [Less than half](#) of all Australian workers now have permanent full-time jobs.

As the "gig-economy" grows, casuals and contractors without protections such as paid leave and job security may become the new normal. So too may be the experiences of those who end up driving for Uber."

Read the entire article by Peter Holtum and Greg Marston in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/uber-drivers-experience-highlights-the-dead-end-job-prospects-facing-more-australian-workers-116973>

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](#)

Get the most out of the Union's website

The Union's website has a number of special features for members. These features, like the Members section and the Forums, require you to have a log-in and password.

But to ensure that your privacy is protected we have created the website in such a way that you will need a separate log-in and password for the Members section and the Forums section. It might seem to be inconvenient but it does better protect you and your private information. It also means that we can be more certain about the source of a hack if such an event is ever to arise.

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.](#)



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.

[follow on Twitter](#) | [friend on Facebook](#)

Authorised by Paul Elliott, Secretary, Level 1, 62 Lygon St, Carlton South. Medical Scientists Association (03) 9623 9623 Association of Hospital Pharmacists (03) 9623 9624 Victorian Psychologists Association Inc (03) 9623 9625 Fax (03) 9663 8109 Email enquiry@msav.org.au A.B.N. 30 345 343 541 (MSAV), 72 520 393 213 (AHP), 87 851 818 075 (VPA Inc).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)