



Stat Report 2019/25

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More members means stronger action

Since the federal election the Coalition and big business has become emboldened by the result.

We now have a Prime Minister who is openly advocating that Australia's governments stop running hospitals and schools and outsource it to private enterprise. We have ministers who are attacking the most vulnerable in our society while banks and big business continue to get away with wage theft, bullying behaviour and fraudulent behaviour.

The Morrison Government is launching an outright attack on workers and dressing it up as tackling the 'bad guy'. The truth is that they let the bad guys get away with all sorts of things. The Morrison Government is failing Australians by letting the banks get away with dodgy practices like billing dead people; continuing to allow employers to get away with wage theft and refusing to call it wage theft; dismantling penalty rates; more attacks on Medicare and failing to increase Newstart which hasn't seen an increase since 1994.

Across the health sector we're seeing senior executives being emboldened telling people they can't comply, and won't comply with an agreement because they don't have the funding. But they will demand that you and your colleagues comply with the same agreement, do more and more work, and then blame you when you can't get through gigantic workloads left by ever dwindling workforces. These are the same executives who have no problems lining up to get bigger bonuses but do very little to properly manage our health services when they refuse to do things like comply with agreements.

In the wake of the federal election we find ourselves confronted with a government more willing to attack workers, the vulnerable and unions than do something about companies that flaunt Australian law or banks that undertake fraudulent behaviour or labour-hire firms that exploit staff in order to maximise profits. There is an endless list of corporate misconduct that the Morrison

Government seems to laud and approve of given their failure to tackle the lawlessness of Australian corporations. Unfortunately in the health sector we're seeing more and more corporate robber barons set up shop given it is seen as "the growth industry". Just think of Australian Clinical Labs or Dorevitch Pathology, companies who claim to have our healthcare in their best interests but slash workforces and undermine health professions to the point that the integrity in our healthcare system is being severely eroded; and the trust in our health organisations to deliver high quality and safe care is severely questioned.

That's why it's never been more important to join your Union. It is much harder for bad managements and the government to take away our rights at work when we stick together and fight for our rights. We saw how workers united to get rid of WorkChoices and the Howard Government. With the growing attacks on workers and unions it's vital we stick together and fight together to ensure that workers' rights aren't further eroded.

If every member asked a colleague to join the Union, our effort to push back and fight against the growing attacks on workers and unions will be that much stronger. And, just as importantly, show the Morrison Government and big business that workers will not silently allow their rights to be destroyed.

Paul Elliott
Secretary

Bargaining Updates

Monash Health

The Union has been informed about potential changes at Monash Health that will require members to sign in at work using a finger print. It is part of Monash Health's so-called bio-security measures. Members are asked to forward their concerns to Heidi at heidib@msav.org.au

The Union has made the following initial response to the change impact statement:

Timelines

Our enterprise agreement does not provide timelines for consultation in the same way as other Unions and that it is unlikely that we will have canvassed all our affected members' views by 29 August to allow a written response. We flag this timeline is unrealistic and this email ought not to be taken as our members response.

This timeline is particularly problematic when at the same time you are in the process of implementing EMR and requiring training to be undertaken in an already busy environment. This is further compounded in the context of a range of departments suffering from staff shortages.

We do not accept that our members are obligated to respond by the 29 August - particularly in light of the lack of information in what has been provided to date.

Provision of information

Members report that they have not had any staff meetings where the proposal has been flagged and are effectively asked to respond cold before any information meetings have been held.

- What information processes are you putting in place to deal with this proposal? Your CIS says you will be explaining it - how and when will this occur?
- What processes are you putting in place to ensure that staff on leave or working PT are able to be consulted on this alteration in practice?
- What timelines are you proposing for implementation? – we note you have said implementation will not clash with EMR but have not said when or how the proposal will be implemented.

It is not clear to us whether all departments where we have members are considered "allied health"

Our members in pathology have received a copy as have dietitians. We have not heard whether Pharmacy members, genetic counsellors, psychologists etc are affected – this appears to be a blanket rollout but it is not completely clear that this is who the document is intended to cover, bearing in mind that different organisations ascribe different meaning to the term “allied health”.

Could you please clarify the departments/ employees to which this CIS is intended to apply (or not)

There are a range of things that need to be clarified for our members including?

- How will the system impact upon the recording of overtime (paid and unpaid)
- How start and finish time records will be affected – presumably staff will now be docked if their finger scan is not detected within a short time of their rostered start – how will shortages & or overtime either end of a shift be recognised and paid under the proposed system.
- We have many members that work through breaks because of patient care concerns – how does the system deal with this?
- We note that our EBA has provisions that overtime must be paid in circumstances where emergency work cannot reasonably be left unperformed?
- How will the system deal with outreach/other services where staff may start or finish their day off site?
- How does the system deal with On-call and recall?

Privacy

We also flag that a number of our members have stated already that they feel the collection of biometric data is an invasion of privacy and that they will not participate in the process. Please confirm that opt out is available for all staff members if they wish.

Mildura Base Hospital back in public hands

The Health Minister, Jenny Mikakos, has written to advise the Union that Mildura Base Hospital private operator's, Ramsay Health, agreement is due to expire in September 2020.

The Minister also outlined in her correspondence that she will be announcing that Mildura Base Hospital will transition to full public operation from September 2020. This decision is in line with the community's and staff views expressed during consultation and is aligned with the Government's strategic objective of bringing consistency to the way in which rural public hospitals are operated across Victoria.

Staff of Mildura Base Hospital are a crucial part of the provision of high-quality health services to the Sunraysia community. The Minister indicated that the Andrews Labor Government intends to work with the Union closely throughout the transition process to ensure staff are supported, that there is full consultation and that staff experience no disadvantage.

We will be sure to keep the Government to its intentions and ensure that staff are properly and fully consulted during the transition back to full public operation.

Nominations for VPA Inc Committee are open

Nominations are now open for membership of the VPA Committee

Financial members of the VPA can nominate for a position on the Committee and we would welcome members who would like to make a contribution to the governance of the VPA to nominate for one of the officer positions or as an ordinary member of the Committee. Current members of the Committee may renominate.

The election will take place at the VPA AGM on 11 September 2019 for a 2 year term of office. The Committee meets at 3.30 pm six times a year on a Thursday afternoon, and members who are employed in the public sector are entitled to paid leave to attend.

If you have any questions please contact the Secretary, Rosemary Kelly
rosemaryk@msav.org.au

[Download the nomination form here](#)

March for Climate Action

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. We are facing a climate emergency.

On 20 September students across Australia and the world will start a week of climate emergency activism starting with a huge strike action.

The Union fully supports students taking action to address the climate emergency and we encourage all members to support the strike by attending with your family, friends and colleagues.

While the Union encourages members to support the school strike make sure you do so without falling afoul of our harsh industrial laws. If you're considering on supporting the action by attending the strike you might want to consider taking leave or using TOIL. Since the school strike will be happening during lunch time you might think about having a longer lunch but be mindful of your shift requirements.

If you're concerned that attending the strike might cause you some problems you can still show your support by organising a workplace action. This can be as simple as having a special lunch to highlight the gravity of the climate emergency while taking selfies with signs that explain what you're doing and why and then sharing them on social media.

You can find out more about the next school strike for climate [here](#) and you can find resources to help promote the climate emergency action [here](#).

And while you're at it, another vital action you can take is to let your superannuation fund know you want them to stop investing in fossil fuels.

Unfortunately HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas. It's not good enough that Health industry super funds are investing in fossil fuels when we know the dangers that climate change presents for the planet's health and well-being.

Join us in asking HESTA and FSS to divest from fossil fuels at www.healthyfutures.net.au/divest



Check your Super

Check your Super! There are changes to Super that affects all funds.

Since July 1 2019, legislation has come into effect - called Protecting Your Super - aimed at stopping members' savings being eaten away by fees. Members with inactive accounts could lose their insurance cover, and those with inactive low-balance accounts could be transferred to the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

We encourage all members to check your Super on how and whether these changes will impact you, here's how you can find out more from [First State Super](#) and [HESTA](#).

We will continue to keep members informed of potential changes to superannuation that the Morrison Government will seek to introduce; and the potential impact those changes will have on your retirement.

This article is for information only. If you're at all concerned about your superannuation and want advice please make sure that you contact your Superannuation Fund to discuss your situation.

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: No, eating chocolate won't cure depression

"A recent study published in the journal [Depression and Anxiety](#) has attracted [widespread media attention](#). Media reports [said](#) eating chocolate, in particular, dark chocolate, was linked to reduced symptoms of depression.

Unfortunately, we cannot use this type of evidence to promote eating chocolate as a safeguard against depression, a serious, common and sometimes debilitating mental health condition.

This is because this study looked at an *association* between diet and depression in the general population. It did not gauge causation. In other words, it was not designed to say whether eating dark chocolate caused a reduction in depressive symptoms."

Read the entire article by Ben Desbrow and Rosemary Stanton in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/no-eating-chocolate-wont-cure-depression-121504>

Worth Reading: For the first time in a long time, we're setting up a generation to be worse off than the one before it

"We've become used to each new generation of Australians enjoying a better standard of living than the one that came before it. Until now. Today's young Australians are in danger of falling behind.

A new Grattan Institute report, [Generation gap: ensuring a fair go for younger Australians](#), reveals that younger generations are not making the same economic gains as their predecessors.

Economic growth has been slow for a decade, Australia's population is ageing, and climate change looms. The burden of these changes mainly falls on the young. The pressures have emerged partly because of economic and demographic changes, but also because of the policy choices we've made as a nation."

Read the entire article by Kate Griffiths and Danielle Wood in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/for-the-first-time-in-a-long-time-were-setting-up-a-generation-to-be-worse-off-than-the-one-before-it-121983>

Worth Reading: Australia's US–China dilemma

"As anyone who has been paying attention is aware, the emerging tensions between China and the United States have created a dilemma for Australia. Key elements of those tensions include ongoing friction over both countries' trade; China's posture in the South China Sea; and the ever-present problem arising from US military protection of Taiwan, over which neither we nor the United States challenge China's claim of sovereignty.

In a nutshell, our dilemma arises from the fact that we have relied on the United States for our security since the fall of Singapore in 1942, but in recent decades China has become by far our largest trading partner. China represents a quarter of our two-way trade, taking about a third of our exports and providing about a fifth of our imports.

John Howard was able to assert with some plausibility that we didn't have to choose between our ally and our major trading partner, but in the age of Xi Jinping and Donald Trump that assuredly doesn't apply. Beijing and Washington are becoming increasingly assertive and increasingly strategically competitive. Plausible scenarios in both the military/strategic and trade domains will force us to make choices, and we need to think carefully, ahead of time, about how we would handle as wide a variety of scenarios as we can imagine. This level of forethought will enable us to respond in a timely and appropriate way to such exigencies as do arise and, just as importantly, to signal to each of these great powers both what we expect of them and what they can expect of us."

Read the entire article by Paul Barratt in Inside Story at: <https://insidestory.org.au/australias-us-china-dilemma/>

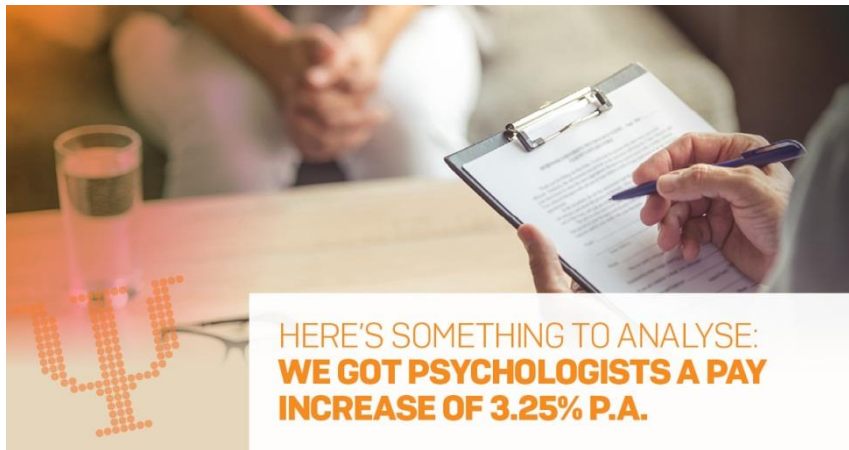
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Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Join the Union today!

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.



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INCREASE OF 3.25% P.A.**

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WE WON PHARMACISTS AN EASY
TO SWALLOW **3.25% PER YEAR
PAY INCREASE.**

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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.](#)



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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).

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