



Stat Report 2020/08

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On the COVID-19 Outbreak

The Union is working closely with the State Government and Health Services to best address the major issues around ensuring the Victorian health system has the resources and people it needs to effectively respond to the outbreak.

The Union is very wary about the workload impacts that might arise from COVID-19 response plan, which could obviously give rise to significant occupational health and safety issues where staffing resources are insufficient to meet service demands. Hence, we have made it our priority to advocate for additional staff, in the first instance across medical pathology laboratories during this time.

Whilst it is unclear how the COVID-19 response will impact more broadly across the health system, it is very important that in any circumstance where members are impacted by increased activity and therefore workloads, that we are advised as quickly as possible so we can pursue additional staff.

It is also our priority to make sure that all of our members have access to personal protective equipment with adequate time between shifts to limit the impacts of fatigue, stress and anxiety as Victoria's health system deals with the outbreak.

Here's the Union's advice for public sector members:

The Union understands that advice has been issued to Health Services about staff arrangements as the system deals with the COVID-19 outbreak. The Union wants to assure members that you will be paid in the event you are impacted by COVID-19 outbreak, whether you are instructed to isolate or you are required to self-isolate. It is absolutely vital that members impacted by COVID-19 contact the Union so that we can go through your particular situation to advise you on payment and leave entitlements. Since there are likely to be a wide range of scenarios to deal with, the Union will work through them on a case-by-case basis.

The Union has made it clear to the Government and Health Services that our members are committed to support the COVID-19 response plan as best as you can. We have made it equally clear that we will not abandon our responsibility to defend and protect our members safety and interests throughout this pandemic.

Here's the Union's advice for members at St John of God:

SJoG is providing 'special paid sick leave' in the event a worker is required to undergo a period of self-isolation in accordance with Australian Government Department of Health's guidelines. This paid leave is in addition to workers' existing paid personal (sick/carers) leave entitlements. And, if a worker is required to self-isolate following travel, SJoG will also provide special paid sick leave. However, SJoG is encouraging workers have regard to the Governments travel advisories. If a worker subsequently becomes unwell and is declared unfit for duty, this special paid leave will cease and workers will be able to access their existing leave entitlements.

Regardless of whether you work in the public, community or private health sectors, should you find yourself having to be isolated whether at the direction of your employer or due to contact outside of the workplace, please contact the Union as quickly as possible on 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au

The Union is also considering our internal response should we find it necessary to restrict staff travel and movements or have to temporarily close. I want to assure members that we will have contingencies in place to continue to be available to assist and support members and will advise immediately if any of the current contact arrangements change.

Paul Elliott
Secretary



Positions not backfilled? Let us know

Union Round Up

Dorevitch Pathology – Entitlement to higher qualifications allowance

A reminder that under the new Dorevitch Agreement, workers are entitled to be paid an allowance if your qualification is relevant to pathology science. If you hold a relevant Graduate Diploma/Masters level qualification, you should receive an allowance of \$79.71 per week. Or, if you hold a Doctorate/Fellowship level qualification, you should receive an allowance of \$106.27.

This allowance, like other allowances, will increase each year. If you meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in the Agreement, ensure you make an application for your entitlement to higher qualifications allowance. Any questions, contact Lisa.

Alfred Health – Medical physicists

The Union met with Alfred Health representatives on Thursday 5 March to discuss the proposed change to reduce the EFT in the Radiation Physics workforce by 1.0 EFT. During the meeting, the Alfred suggested that while complexity in work is up, overall workload is down, which they say justifies the reduction in EFT. In response, we required they produce the data and evidence they are relying upon to justify this decision.

The next consultation meeting is scheduled in late March. It is anticipated that during this meeting the Union will present our evidence and argument on why the position should not be removed. The Union will also use this meeting to press the Alfred for further responses to the questions: how will this change impact the workload of employees and quality standards/service outputs; and what measures will be implemented to avert the effects on workers.

Separately, on 6 March we wrote to the Alfred again urging they increase the EFT of the temporary position. We have stressed any decision to increase the temporary EFT would return good faith and improve negotiations. We are still waiting to hear their decision. Any questions, contact Lisa on 9623 9623 or at lisaa@msav.org.au

Alfred Health – Haematology

The Union attended a telephone conference with the Fair Work Commission on 24 February 2020. The Union argued strongly the structural grade 3 medical scientist position must remain, and offered to enter into further conciliation with the Alfred to try and reach a resolution. However, the Alfred refused this invitation.

As a result, the Commission listed this dispute for a formal arbitration hearing on 29 April 2020, and requested the Union file its written submissions and evidence by 25 March 2020. We met with members on Wednesday 11 March to discuss this process and what they can expect. Then, as we were leaving this meeting, we received a request from the Alfred to engage in further conciliation, which we have agreed to.

Importantly, the Union has not given up our right to have this matter arbitrated if we do not achieve a resolution through further meetings. We will keep members updated as these meetings are being coordinated. Should you have any questions, contact Lisa on 9623 9623 or at lisaa@msav.org.au

Work Shouldn't Hurt – Respect at Work

Last week, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner released her report '[Respect@Work](#)', showing that sexual harassment in Australian workplaces is rife and our laws are failing to keep workers safe. The report makes 55 recommendations for reform.

Almost 10,000 workers bravely came forward to tell their stories for this inquiry.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions' survey found that 2 in 3 women, and 1 in 3 men, have been subjected to sexual harassment at work. 64% told the ACTU they had witnessed sexual harassment. 40% of workers who are harassed tell no one at all about their experiences, because they fear that they will not get justice. Only 27% made a formal complaint.

Our current laws put the burden solely on the individual to address sexual harassment after it happens. This has to change. The right to be free from sexual harassment is a workplace right, a health and safety right and a human right.

Governments and employers can no longer get away with turning a blind eye.

We urgently need a new health and safety regulation requiring employers to proactively deal with the underlying causes of sexual harassment at work and stop it before it starts. Over 100 community organisations have signed the #Power2Prevent joint statement calling for urgent changes, including stronger health and safety laws requiring employers to tackle the underlying causes of sexual harassment at work and stop it before it starts.

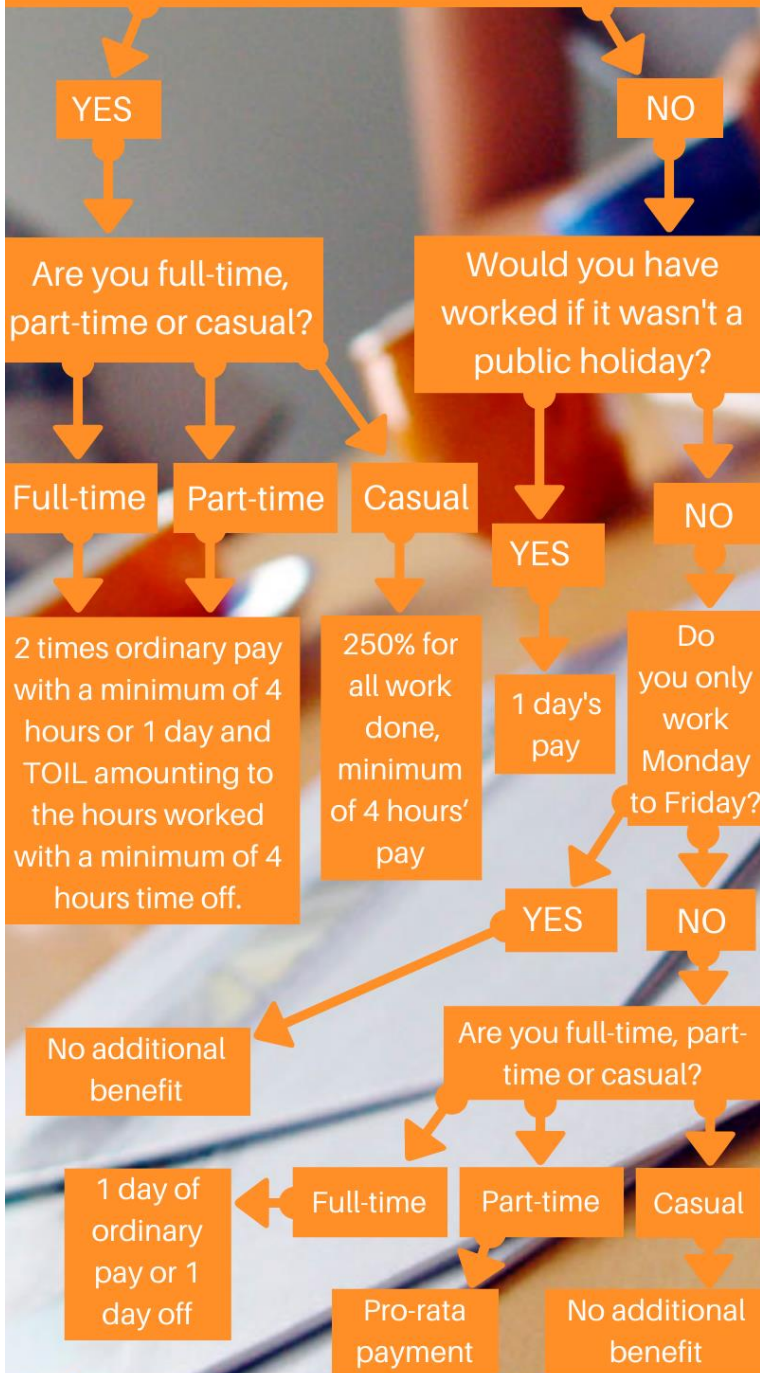
Following on from International Women's Day, it's time to speak up and tell the Attorney-General and Minister for Women to make workplaces healthy, safe and respectful for all of us. [Click here to send them an email.](#)

Public Holiday Pay

Last Monday was Labour Day and a public holiday which means there's public holiday pay. To make sure you get paid properly for this public holiday use our flow chart below. The chart applies mostly to the public sector so if you're unsure about public holiday pay, especially if you work in the community and/or private health sectors, contact the Union on 9623 9623 or enquiry@msav.org.au

Public Holiday 2020 Payments

Did you work that day?



Late in 2019 the Australian Institute of Medical Scientists announced the registration of a national certification body for medical laboratory scientists.

According to the AIMS, the new governing body will be called the [Australian Council for Certification of the Medical Laboratory Scientific Workforce \(ACCMLSW\)](#) and it will utilise a not-for-profit, limited liability company governance structure that, along with consumer representation, allows for the formal participation of representatives from all key scientific disciplines.

It is important to note that all of our enterprise agreements define what a scientist is. The proposed new body can not in any way alter the agreement's definition of a scientist, and therefore can not infect existing employment arrangements.

It is unclear, however, what status the new body has with respect to future employment requirements and whether new scientists could be refused employment if not certified. We now know from correspondence from this body that they do in fact hope it is used by employers. There is no detail about how this new body intersects with higher education and existing professional bodies. It is also disappointing that AIMS did not bother to engage with the MSAV in their consultation in relation to this change.

In correspondence with the Union, the Australian Council for Certification of the Medical Laboratory Scientific Workforce indicates they have now included a privacy policy on their website. However, that policy is dangerously problematic when it makes claims that it doesn't collect personally identifiable information when in fact it does. The site dangerously compromises people's privacy in the worst way by giving any visitor access to your first and last names and your employer. It's worth pointing out that this body only developed their privacy policy after the Union pointed out there was no privacy policy.

We remain very concerned that the website being used is not based in Australia, which means that all data is held offshore and not controlled properly by the organisation.

While the MSAV is not opposed to the concept of certification for medical scientists in order to protect the profession from rogue elements, certification must be done properly. Given recent revelations the Union is not at all confident the new body will be able to properly undertake the ambitious plans it was designed for; or for that matter be able to start 'certifying' people by 1 July 2020.

[You can read the final report here](#)
[Download a copy of the implementation plan](#)
[Download a copy of the implementation timeline](#)

The MSAV is seeking your feedback and comments about the Australian Council for Certification of the Medical Laboratory Scientific Workforce.

[Send your comments and feedback here](#)

Solidarity BBQ for refugees, Unions and Allies

As part of Victoria's largest Multicultural Celebration, Cultural Diversity Week, held from 21 to 29 March, with the theme "Curiosity, Conversation, Community", HACSU invites you to join the conversation and attend the Solidarity BBQ for refugees, Unions and Allies.

When: 25 March 2020 at 12Noon **Where:** Victorian Trades Hall Council 54 Victoria Street, Carlton

We Are Union Women – Brazen Hussies

An incredible group of women film-makers are developing the documentary BRAZEN HUSSIES, celebrating an exciting and revolutionary chapter in Australian history; the Women's Liberation Movement (1965 -1975).

The film features union hero Zelda D'Aprano in her fight for equal pay and see if you can spot some union women in 'Ask Me About My Feminist Agenda' t-shirts! Women's contributions to history are often invisible and ignored so if you'd like to help these women share such important stories of Australian feminist trailblazers.

[Brazen Hussies are fundraising](#) in order to finish the film and ensure its release far and wide.

You can watch a trailer for the movie here: <https://documentaryaustralia.com.au/project/brazen-hussies/>

Women and Leadership Australia Scholarships

Scholarships of up to \$5,000 for current and aspiring female leaders

Women and Leadership Australia is offering scholarships of \$2,000 to \$5,000 to women working in the health sector to help support their participation in a range of career building leadership development programs.

The initiative is providing junior through to executive managers with scholarships to support their growth and development. The scholarships assist with participation in one of three flagship development programs. The programs provide highly collaborative learning environments uniquely tailored to the needs of female leaders.

Find out more and register your interest by completing the Expression of Interest form here prior to Friday, March 20: <https://www.wla.edu.au/health.html>

Union Bushfire Appeal

The Union is working with the Victorian Trades Hall Council to collect a list of people who can help rebuild our communities when the bushfire threat has passed and it's safe to rebuild.

Bushfires – Hardship

We understand that some members may find themselves in hardship due to bushfire related circumstances. We want to make sure that you don't have to worry about the small but important things. If you're affected by the bushfires and experiencing hardship please reach out to us and we will provide what assistance we can.

Email on enquiry@msav.org.au or call us on 9623 9623.

Sign up to help out

If you can help build a fence, cook and serve food, handle hazardous material, drive a bus/truck or volunteer your time [please fill out this short form](#).

Make a donation

Like the rest of Australia, we too are reeling from the stories coming from bushfire affected areas. Those working on the front line are telling us that they need money right now and don't need donations of goods at this time – [make a donation](#) today!



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.

oil and gas.

And right now HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal,

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: 'Fever clinics' are opening in Australia for people who think they're infected with the coronavirus. Why?

"The Western Australian health minister [has announced](#) "fever clinics" are to open this week for people who think they have coronavirus symptoms.

And [in NSW](#), the chief health officer [has advised](#) hospitals set up "respiratory clinics" to deal with a potential spike in COVID-19 cases.

[Other states](#) are set to open their own versions, particularly if transmission of the virus from person to person becomes more established in the community.

So what are these clinics? And why are people being advised to use them rather than seeing their GP or going straight to the emergency department?"

Read the entire article by Gerard Fitzgerald in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/fever-clinics-are-opening-in-australia-for-people-who-think-theyre-infected-with-the-coronavirus-why-132599>

Worth Reading: A rare natural phenomenon brings severe drought to Australia. Climate change is making it more common

"Weather-wise, 2019 was a crazy way to end a decade. Fires spread through much of southeast Australia, fuelled by dry vegetation from the ongoing drought and fanned by hot, windy fire weather.

On the other side of the Indian Ocean, torrential rainfall and flooding devastated parts of eastern Africa. Communities there now face a [locust plague](#) and food shortages.

These intense events can partly be blamed on the extreme positive Indian Ocean Dipole, a climate phenomenon that unfolded in the second half of 2019.

The Indian Ocean Dipole refers to the difference in sea surface temperature on either side of the Indian Ocean, which alters rainfall patterns in Australia and other nations in the region. The dipole is a lesser-known relative of the Pacific Ocean's El Niño.

Climate drivers, such as the Indian Ocean Dipole, are an entirely natural phenomenon, but climate change is modifying the behaviour of these climate modes."

Read the entire article by Nicky Wright, Bethany Ellis and Nerilie Abram in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/a-rare-natural-phenomenon-brings-severe-drought-to-australia-climate-change-is-making-it-more-common-133058>

Worth Reading: The world's best fire management system is in northern Australia, and it's led by Indigenous land managers

"The tropical savannas of northern Australia are among the most fire-prone regions in the world. On average, they [account for 70%](#) of the area affected by fire each year in Australia.

But effective fire management over the past 20 years has reduced the annual average area burned – an area larger than Tasmania. The extent of this achievement is staggering, almost incomprehensible in a southern Australia context after the summer's devastating bushfires.

The success in northern Australia is the result of sustained and arduous on-ground work by a range of landowners and managers. Of greatest significance is the fire management from [Indigenous community-based ranger groups](#), which has led to one of the most significant greenhouse gas emissions reduction practices in Australia."

Read the entire article by Rohan Fisher and Jon Altman in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/the-worlds-best-fire-management-system-is-in-northern-australia-and-its-led-by-indigenous-land-managers-133071>

Worth Reading: Plastic pollution gets trapped on the beach

"There are trillions of pieces of plastic in and on our oceans and beaches. Yes trillions.

We know it maims and kills marine life and is a navigation hazard. It also impacts our health. But the estimates of plastic waste entering the ocean each year are 100 times greater than the total amount of plastic floating on the surface. So, where does all the plastic pollution go?

It's certainly no (teddy bear's) picnic when a visit to the beach leaves you wading through plastic to find a place to roll out your towel. A significant amount of plastic pollution from the ocean ends up stuck along our beaches.

Mostly the plastic becomes trapped in vegetation toward the back of the beach. And it doesn't discriminate, big or small, it stays trapped there. But the further back from the beach, the more there is and the bigger the pieces of rubbish."

Read the entire article by Natalie Kikken in the CSIRO Blog at: <https://blog.csiro.au/plastic-pollution-on-our-beaches/>

Worth Reading: History tells us super doesn't come from wages

"The problem with many Treasury and "think tank" economists is that they believe the economic theories they imbibed at university are models of real-world economies.

Thus, they have a reasonable chance of predicting at least broad outcomes of particular fiscal, monetary and other regulatory policies.

In fact, even the best of these theories are no more than logical constructs of what may occur if a given set of assumptions holds true.

The typical set of assumptions is not only prone to error, but usually completely omits many political, sociological and psychological forces as well as external economic events."

Read the entire article by Garry Weaven in The New Daily at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/superannuation/2020/03/12/super-wages-gary-weaven/>

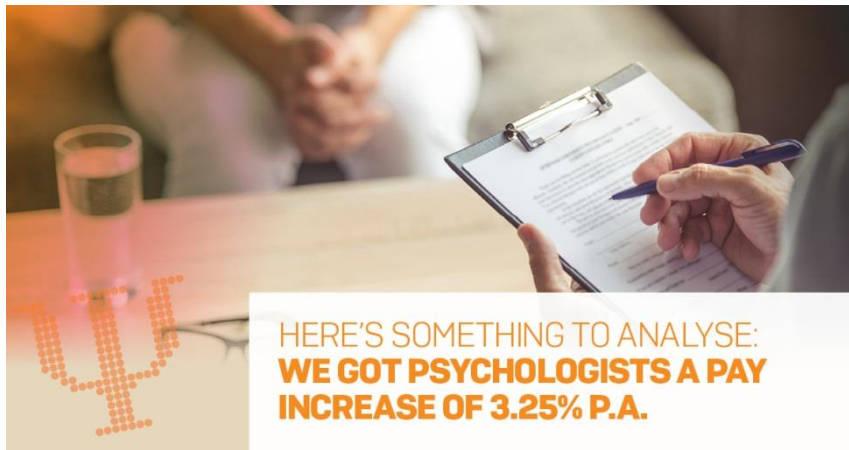
Join the Union

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](#)



HERE'S SOMETHING TO ANALYSE:
**WE GOT PSYCHOLOGISTS A PAY
INCREASE OF 3.25% P.A.**

[Share on Facebook](#)



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

[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](#)

Australian Unions Member Benefits app

As a Union member you get access to exclusive Member Benefits. The program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards including major theme parks, zoos and aquariums.
- A discounted accommodation booking site.
- A new secure member only website and smart phone app.

All this is free to all members of affiliated unions – that means you! If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now.](#)



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