



Stat Report 2021/11

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Cutting emissions in health care

The need to urgently address climate change is self-evident. We know that climate change is already having an impact on our health and well-being. We also know that climate change, if left unchecked, will have an existential impact on the future of our planet and the lives of billions of people globally. Right now, we're already seeing in our daily work the impacts climate change is having on the health and well-being of people. Evidence of more illness and disease associated with climate change, particularly extreme weather events, continues to grow, and includes increasing mental health issues arising from a greater burden of distress, stress and anxiety.

We know that climate change will alter vectors for a range of diseases which means potentially more diseases not seen in places like Victoria has emerged as a critical issue. It may also mean that future pandemics could be much worse than COVID-19, which has killed over 3 million people globally to date. As a Union that believes in science, we know that unless we take urgent action to address the drivers of climate change, we will suffer the worst consequences of runaway climate change.

The health sector contributes approximately 7% of Australia's emissions, which is why it is important that we contribute to work to ensure our work limits the impact of climate change. The Union is actively involved with campaigns to cut emissions in the public health care sector and expand use of renewable energy, along with supporting and promoting efforts to reduce waste. However, it is worth pointing out that several Victorian health services are actively working to increase use of renewable energy along with the Victorian Government programs that seek to increase renewable energy for hospitals and other health care facilities. A case in point is the Regional Health Solar Program, which expects 8.6 megawatt-peak solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays will be installed across 73 regional Victorian health facilities generating more than 11 gigawatt-hours of renewable energy per year.

The Union supports campaigns that encourage hospitals to consider the source of consumables within hospitals to ensure they are sourced more locally where possible. There has been a greater appreciation within the health sector for reducing food miles by sourcing more locally produced food, as well as reducing the amount of food waste that is produced. There are greater efforts being made to reduce the reliance on single-use items wherever possible and cutting down on the amount of plastic used in hospitals and other healthcare settings. Several hospitals are actively working to reduce water waste; greater thought is being given to what is put down drains and a concerted effort is being made to consider the chemicals used in areas like cleaning and sanitising, and medical pathology.

In the midst of a broad range of claims to improve wages and conditions of employment in the public sector enterprise agreement we have included a claim to have provisions added to the agreement which we hope will give members a more powerful voice to influence hospital operations in a way which will reduce carbon emissions.

One area that is not receiving as much attention as it should is the need to have a national plan to address climate change and its impact on health and our healthcare systems. The Union is working with the Climate and Health Alliance to ensure that Australia has a nationally coordinated plan to protect the health and well-being of Australians against the impacts of climate change. Just this week, the Union agreed to be a signatory to a national letter from the Climate and Health Alliance that calls for the Australian Government to commit to the decarbonisation of the healthcare sector by 2040, and to implement a National Strategy on Climate, Health and Wellbeing for Australia.

We are also strongly supporting the upcoming School Strike for Climate on 21 May to help keep the pressure on our governments to take more ambitious action on climate change and end our reliance on fossil fuels sooner. Furthermore, we support the Healthy Futures campaign which asks our super funds to divest from fossil fuels and invest in renewable energy and their emerging technologies. There are a range of ways you can make your voice heard about ensuring Australia and our institutions do more to end our reliance on fossil fuels.

This week we conducted a series of meetings for members in the Public Health Sector to discuss the progress of our negotiations for a new agreement. We have made some progress on a range of our priority claims, which is of course good news, but there remain a number of claims where progress has been too slow. Importantly, there has been no offer made on wage increases which holds us back from securing an understanding of when wages would be back paid from. This is a major sticking point and one that is generating a significant amount of frustration as employer representatives continue to demonstrate a lack of willingness to value and recognise your work and contribution to the delivery of world-class health care for Victorians.

This Sunday, 2 May, we celebrate May Day which is workers day in Australia and across the world and has been since 1886. This year May Day will include not just demands for stronger rights at work but also calls on our government for an independent foreign policy; the humane treatment of refugees and migrants; and support for Australia's First Nations peoples. We encourage members in Melbourne to attend the May Day march from 1:30pm at Trades Hall (corner of Lygon and Victoria St, Melbourne) with the march expected to start at 2pm.

Our team is back in the office providing advice, assistance and representation for members. If you need to contact a staff member, please contact us through our enquiry email at enquiry@msav.org.au or via telephone on (03) 9623 9623.

In solidarity
Paul Elliott
Secretary



Positions not backfilled?

Let us know

Union Round Up

Annual Leave Entitlements

Over the last several weeks, we have received an increase in inquiries from members in the public sector about annual leave, and reports that members are feeling pressured to plan leave in advance. Here's a couple of quick facts about public sector annual leave:

- Under our Agreement, annual leave needs to be taken at a time "determined by mutual agreement". If you don't agree to take your leave, you can't be forced to take it: cl 60.3
- There is no provision in our Agreement, about excess annual leave. And there is also no clause in our Agreement, which enables an employer to direct a worker to take annual leave;
- If more than 2 weeks annual leave is taken, this leave must be backfilled: cl 34.1

Having said that, employers can have respectful conversations with workers about annual leave planning. And, the Union does encourage workers to take their annual leave to generally recharge and to be happy and safe at work when they're there!

If you do feel pressured to submit leave requests, here's some advice:

- Think about when you actually want to take your leave and try not to feel pressured by arbitrary dates presented by management (such as, needing to submit a plan to use X amount of leave before the end of the financial year);
- Put this plan to your employer and have a conversation about that proposal;
- Then, when that proposal is agreed, advise your employer that you do not intend to discuss leave planning further; and,
- If you're ever in doubt, the Union is always here for support.

Whilst the above references are to our Public Health Sector Agreement our private sector agreements contain the same, or similar, provisions.

If you have any queries about your annual leave entitlements, please contact the Union at enquiry@msav.org.au

Monash Health Permanent Night Shift Allowance

Currently Monash Health employees only receive the permanent night shift allowance where they have been working only night shifts for a period of more than four weeks. This is wrong.

Monash Health has reached an agreement with the Union about the interpretation of this allowance. It has been accepted that the permanent night shift allowance will be paid where any number of night shifts are permanently rostered consecutively each week for more than four weeks. The night shifts do not need to be rostered on the same days and can be performed as part of a roster with other shifts such as day and afternoon shifts.

What is going to happen next:

1. Monash Health has agreed the permanent night shift allowance will be back paid up to four years from the date of this memo. If you think you may be eligible for back pay of the permanent night shift allowance, please contact your manager in writing by Friday, 14 May 2021 with details of the shift pattern you consider should be eligible for back pay and the relevant period(s) of time that pattern was worked.

Your manager will then review your shift patterns and if it is determined that you are eligible for back pay, we will ask you to sign a Deed of Release in relation to the back pay before payment is made. Managers will receive a further email next week with additional information in relation to setting out the information and organising the back pay with Payroll.

2. Managers are directed to apply the permanent night shift allowance consistently with the agreed interpretation.

Members at Monash Health need to come forward within 1 month to be part of the settlement the Union negotiated. Contact Heidi to ensure that you are part of the settlement at heidib@msav.org.au

Progress on Public Health Sector Negotiations

The Union has made significant progress on a range of our key claims but there remain a handful of claims where progress has been very slow going and continue to be a source of frustration for us.

There has been no offer made on wage increases which holds us back from securing an understanding of when wages would be back paid from. This is a major sticking point and one that is generating a significant amount of frustration.

We will continue to keep members informed about the progress of negotiations as we continue to work through the issues and claims that remain outstanding. If you have any questions about the negotiations or missed our member meetings for Public Health Sector members, please contact Matt at matth@msav.org.au

School Strike for Climate

The Union strongly believes in the need to urgently address climate change. We know that climate change is already having an impact on our health and well-being. We also know that climate change, if left unchecked, will have a profound impact on the future of our planet and the lives of billions of people globally.

That's why the Union is supporting the latest School Strike for Climate rally which will be held on 21 May.

We saw the devastation caused by the bushfires in 2019/20 which is a result of the changes in our climate. It is reprehensible to continue burning fossil fuels, which are among the biggest contributors to climate change, when we know the damage it causes.

Join the School Strike for Climate on 21 May to call on the Morrison Government to invest in renewable energy and First Nations solutions that care for country, not more polluting fossil fuel projects.

Details are available at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1440575416288630/>

May Day 2021

May Day is on Sunday 2 May this year. May Day has been the workers' day in Australia and throughout the world since 1886.

This year May Day will include demands for an independent foreign policy; the proper, humane, and welcoming treatment for refugees and migrants; support for Australians First Nations peoples; action on the climate change and more. Since it's May Day there will be demands for stronger rights at work and the protection of existing workers' rights.

Join us for the May Day March on Sunday (2 May). We'll assemble at 1.30 pm at Trades Hall with the march expected to start at 2pm, returning to Trades Hall to hear additional speakers.

Details are available at: <https://fb.me/e/YUNRGL3M>

COVID-19 vaccinations are now available for healthcare workers

Victorian healthcare workers are currently eligible to receive their COVID-19 vaccination. Eligible workers within phase 1 of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout includes a range of healthcare workers across health services, private practices and community settings. To confirm that you are eligible, [please see the list on the Commonwealth Government's website here](#).

Bookings can be made by phoning 1800 675 398. Clinics are available in convenient locations across Victoria, and the locations of our high-volume vaccination clinics [can be found here](#).

Depending on your age, you will be provided with either the AstraZeneca vaccine or the Pfizer vaccine.

- If you are under 50 years of age, you are now eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine by booking at a State vaccination clinic.
- If you are aged 50 years and over, you can now access the AstraZeneca vaccine through a State vaccination clinic or a local general practice.

You are eligible for the vaccine regardless of your visa status.

You can find a letter of eligibility to be used as proof of status when attending your vaccination appointment [on our site here](#).

If you have any concerns about your health and getting the COVID-19 vaccine, please speak to your general practitioner or other health professional.

For more information visit: www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine

Test Isolation Payment

The Test Isolation Payment announced by the Premier remains available to those members to make sure that no one is forced to choose between providing for their family and doing the right thing in getting tested and staying home.

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/employee-isolation-payment-covid-19>

This information is accessible along with other important information in a number of languages.

- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/arabic>
- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/chinese>
- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/dari>
- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/farsi>
- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/hindi>
- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/khmer>
- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/punjabi>
- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus/vietnamese>

Membership Fees and Invoices

Members paying union fees by manual annual subscription will be receiving the upcoming renewal subscription invoice for the 2021/2022 FY early June 2021 via email. Members who have not yet paid the current 2020/2021 FY subscription, or haven't received an invoice, please contact Anastasia on 9623 9623 or anastasiap@msav.org.au to receive another one or to pay by credit card over the phone. Members can also log in to the membership portal to make sure all contact details are correct. Please email Anastasia if you require another activation link emailed to you.

Members who have had changes in their work hours or have returned to work from maternity leave, or from a period of being stood down please contact Anastasia to update your subscription rate, in order to maintain the correct coverage for Professional Indemnity Insurance purposes.

Members paying by Direct Debit will receive tax receipts for the current FY early July 2021. Payments for the 2021/2022 will continue as usual. Members can update their payment details, when necessary, via the membership portal. Any changes to work hours, please contact Anastasia on 9623 9623 or anastasiap@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. [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.

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>

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: More people die in winter than summer, but climate change may see this reverse

"Climate change not only poses enormous dangers to the planet, but also harms human health. In our study published today, we show some of the first evidence climate change has had observable impacts on Australians' health between 1968 and 2018.

We found long-term heating is associated with changed seasonal balance of deaths in Australia, with relatively more deaths in summer months and relatively fewer deaths in winter months over recent decades.

Our findings can be explained by the gradual global warming associated with climate change. Over the 51 years of our study, annual average temperatures increased by more than 1°C in Australia. The last decade (2011 to 2020) was the hottest in the country's recorded history.

If we continue on this trajectory, we're likely to see many more climate-related deaths in the years to come."

Read the entire article by Ivan Charles Hanigan, Alistair Woodward and Keith Dear in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/more-people-die-in-winter-than-summer-but-climate-change-may-see-this-reverse-159135>

Worth Reading: Here are 9 ways we can make it easier for Australians to get the COVID-19 vaccine

"Between vaccine supply issues, confusion about the role of GPs, and changed advice for AstraZeneca, the Australian COVID-19 vaccine rollout is well behind schedule.

How can we make it easier for the majority of Australians who want to be vaccinated? Especially given all Australians over 50 years of age are eligible to be vaccinated from May 3 next week.

There are tangible things we can do now to help people understand the benefits and possible risks of COVID-19 vaccination, and get the vaccine quickly as soon as they're eligible."

Read the entire article by Carissa Bonner and Rachael Dodd in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/here-are-9-ways-we-can-make-it-easier-for-australians-to-get-the-covid-19-vaccine-159219>

Worth Reading: Demand for rare-earth metals is skyrocketing, so we're creating a safer, cleaner way to recover them from old phones and laptops

"Rare-earth metals are critical to the high-tech society we live in as an essential component of mobile phones, computers and many other everyday devices. But increasing demand and limited global supply means we must urgently find a way to recover these metals efficiently from discarded products.

Rare-earth metals are currently mined or recovered via traditional e-waste recycling. But there are drawbacks, including high cost, environmental damage, pollution and risks to human safety. This is where our ongoing research comes in.

Our team in collaboration with the research centre Tecnalia in Spain has developed a way to use environmentally friendly chemicals to recover rare-earth metals. It involves a process called “electrodeposition”, in which a low electric current causes the metals to deposit on a desired surface.

This is important because if we roll out our process to scale, we can alleviate the pressure on global supply, and reduce our reliance on mining."

Read the entire article by Cristina Pozo-Gonzalo in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/demand-for-rare-earth-metals-is-skyrocketing-so-were-creating-a-safer-cleaner-way-to-recover-them-from-old-phones-and-laptops-141360>

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](#)

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.