



Stat Report 2022/11

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Digging into the Victorian Budget

The Victorian budget has been released but with the federal election in full swing, it has barely received much attention.

In the last STAT Report, I made mention of some headline issues arising from the state budget. Now we've had more of an opportunity to dig deeper into the budget there are a few important items within this year's state budget.

The Union is very happy to see increases in funding for mental health again in this year's budget. This is significant additional funding. However, there has been criticism levelled at the government about the amount of funding being directed to capital works.

It's worth acknowledging that there are significant barriers to delivering mental health care.

However, this budget is putting funding towards more acute mental health beds, and towards upgrading existing facilities. There has also been a greater emphasis on delivering mental health care in regional, rural and remote Victoria.

This demonstrates a significant investment in mental health care over the last few budgets. This budget also ensures that there is dedicated funding for increasing the psychologist workforce.

According to budget papers, funding has been put aside for an additional 300 psychologists and 100 psychiatry registrars, which is specifically identified in boosting the mental health workforce.

Delivering on the expansion of the mental health workforce is yet to be seen and a question the Union has put to the health department.

There is an increase in general funding for Allied Health. However, there is no easily identifiable increase in funding being specifically directed towards increasing the Allied Health workforce.

Funding for reforming public pathology was maintained in this budget, which was originally included in last year's budget. This is important because it reinforces the importance the Victorian government is putting on public pathology reforms.

Unfortunately, there is no new funding allocated to hospital pharmacists or the pharmacy workforce beyond what was included in last year's state budget.

However, it is worth noting that the funding allocated for expanding the workforce from last year's budget is continued through in this year's budget.

One of the interesting elements arising from the budget is the attempt by the Victorian Government to provide people with paid sick leave if they are in precarious employment like casual and contract workers. However, the pilot will only be limited to selected industries.

Public Sector Bargaining

I'm very pleased to report that we are very, very close to finalising the drafting of the new agreement. We only need to finish a couple of clauses. There has been a tremendous amount of work put into the drafting to make sure that what we agreed is reflected in the agreement.

As you know, the devil is always in the detail.

We know it has been a frustrating experience for members and we share in your frustration. However, we are confident that the draft agreement will be presented to the Victorian Government cabinet for approval. Once it's been approved by the Cabinet, it will go out to members to vote on.

I also want to take this opportunity to remind members to take care of yourselves. We know the pandemic is ongoing and that there continues to be a staggering number of people being infected. It means that workloads are incredibly high.

Taking meal and rest breaks and leaving work when your shift is over are important to maintaining your mental and physical health. Undoubtedly, many members will feel the strong urge to do more and work longer hours.

It's vital that members don't do unpaid work.

By taking your meal and rest breaks, refusing to do unpaid work and leaving work when your shift ends means you will be at less risk of making mistakes that could impact patients or put your employment at risk.

As always, if you are experiencing issues at work, make sure you contact us by calling on 9623 9623 or emailing us at enquiry@msav.org.au

In solidarity
Paul Elliott
Secretary



Union Round Up

Forensicare – Bargaining Update

With the Mental Health Agreement now drafted, the path is clear for the Forensicare Agreement to be completed.

The parties have raised concerns that drafting is taking some time, and that we want to accelerate this process to try and get it finished as soon as possible.

We have now scheduled meetings every 2 days to try and finalise drafting within the next couple of weeks.

Any questions, please contact Lisa at lisaa@msav.org.au

New Agreement at Wyndham Clinic

Congratulations to members at the Wyndham Clinic who have voted up the new agreement. With the positive vote, it now goes to the Fair Work Commission for approval.

Once it has received approval from the Fair Work Commission it will come into force. Rest assured the Union will inform members as soon as it has received approval.

If you have any questions, please contact Heidi at heidib@msav.org.au

Public Sector Bargaining and Maternity Leave

Numerous members have contacted the Union over the last few weeks about their maternity leave entitlement as bargaining for a new Public Sector agreement continues.

The Union's advice is that members should apply for their current existing leave entitlement of 10 weeks and once the new agreement is in place, to apply for the additional 4 weeks. Health services will not be able to refuse as the maternity leave entitlement is part of the Union's heads of agreement, which back-dates pay and leave entitlements to December 2021.

If you have any questions, contact the Union at enquiry@msav.org.au

Contacting the Union

Members can ring the Union to seek support, advice and assistance with workplace issues.

MSAV: (03) 9623 9623

VPA: (03) 9623 9625

AHP: (03) 9623 9624

As always members can raise workplace issues by emailing the Union at enquiry@msav.org.au

Membership Issues – Experiencing hardship?

Non-Members

For non-Union members who work in workplaces across our coverage; **we will give advice immediately over the phone if they join.**

In the spirit of supporting health workers through this unprecedented time we hope you might have a quiet word to colleagues who are not members and suggest that there has never been a more important time to join a Union. Let them know that it is as simple as going to our website and [clicking on the 'JOIN' link](#).

Members

If you are in the unfortunate position of being stood down or forced on to unpaid leave, [contact us to move your membership payments to a 'non-working' subscription rate of \\$8.26 per month](#).

Psychologists: If you need help at work you need the VPA Inc.

If you are a psychologist and not in the VPA, you are taking unnecessary risks with your reputation and career. [You can join quickly and easily here.](#)

Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements

The VPA routinely assists members over issues such as harassment and bullying, under classification, organisational re-structuring, incorrect calculation of leave entitlements and health and safety. In addition, it negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

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: Beyond angry protesters and inked arms, there's this First Nations story of the Southern Cross – one of unity and belonging

"Can the Southern Cross represent Australian identity? Waved by a proud athlete or an angry protester, inked into skin or stuck to a car window, these five stars condense different aspirations, identities and histories into a recognisable symbol.

Yet such symbolism is inherently contested: from the Eureka Stockade to protests over COVID-19 vaccine mandates, or from the coat of arms to the eponymous Sydney train station, Australians have projected differing values and narratives of belonging to this constellation.

Warwick Thornton's 2017 film *We Don't Need a Map* wrestles with racist usage of the Southern Cross, playing on a growing disquiet among many Australians who have come to associate the Southern Cross with bigotry. But Thornton also explores Indigenous narratives about the Southern Cross, suggesting the symbol can never be contained within a single defining narrative."

Read the entire article by Samuel Curkpatrick, Sarah Bacaller and Wanta Jampijinpa Pawu in *The Conversation* at: <https://theconversation.com/beyond-angry-protesters-and-inked-arms-theres-this-first-nations-story-of-the-southern-cross-one-of-unity-and-belonging-181161>

Worth Reading: COVID vaccination recommendations evolve over time. Who is due for which dose now?

"Over the last year, COVID vaccination recommendations have been updated regularly. So it can be difficult to keep track of how many vaccine doses you and your family members need.

This may seem confusing, but it is actually a good approach to take when navigating a pandemic, especially when the virus keeps changing. Let's look at the current Australian recommendations and why vaccine advice needs to evolve over time."

Read the entire article by Nicholas Wood in *The Conversation* at: <https://theconversation.com/covid-vaccination-recommendations-evolve-over-time-who-is-due-for-which-dose-now-181779>

Worth Reading: The end of coal is nigh. The next government must tell the truth

"The full tragedy of the Coalition's climate change campaigns is becoming clear, and it's the exact opposite of what it predicted.

We don't have too much renewable generation, but not enough, and still way too much coal.

The recent quarterly report from the Australian Energy Market Operator shows that electricity prices are rising and the grid is becoming unstable because of coal-fired generation.

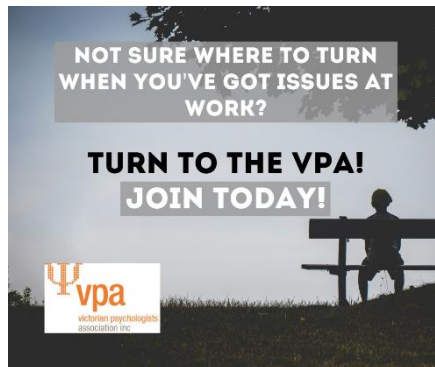
In fact, Australia's fleet of coal-fired power stations is failing, and it's happening too soon, before it can be fully replaced with cheaper, more reliable, solar and wind, and for that we can blame the Liberal and National parties."

Read the entire article by Alan Kohler in *The New Daily* at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2022/05/12/coal-end-alan-kohler/>

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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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.