

Stat Report 2023/04

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Health Services dropping ball on backpays

Implementing the new Public Sector Agreement has seen elements like the payment of back pay and the employment of more psychologists and pharmacists continuing to be sources of major frustration.

We are increasingly frustrated by the number of public Health Services who are incapable of paying members what they are owed in back pay.

It's now three months since the new Agreement came into force, and it is bewildering that public Health Services have not yet finished processing backpays. In some cases, we are being told that back pay will not be finalised and paid until late March and early April.

Instead of pledging to do a better job and get the back pays sorted out faster, we're being given excuses about difficulties with payroll software or that other agreements came in adding to administrative delays.

Health Services have known that there would be back pay arising from the new Agreement.

They've had more than enough time, approximately 12 months since the heads of agreement was signed, to prepare and get ready to determine and process back pay.

It is extremely frustrating for us that some members have not been paid their back pay. It is also not helping that these same Health Services seem incapable of communicating with their own staff about when back pay is expected to be paid.

The Union certainly encourages members that have not yet been paid their back pay to contact their Health Service's chief executive officer. Let them know you are frustrated you haven't been paid your back pay but be sure to be polite about it.

At the same time, the Union is dealing with Health Services who continue to think they can delay what they will implement from our Agreement.

Aside from the situation surrounding back pay, the other most pressing issue is the failure by Health Services to begin advertising for psychologist and pharmacist roles.

We remain bewildered by Health Services' refusal to begin recruiting more psychologists and pharmacists. It is part of our agreement, and we expect health services to comply with our agreement. Frankly, there is no choice. Just like the issue around back pay, this is another issue that Health Services knew was coming.

They understood, or so we thought, that inclusion of additional psychologists and pharmacists was to address workload issues.

With the recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, the need for more psychologists to treat the growing number of people presenting with mental health needs is very clear.

It is also difficult to understand why Health Services have not begun recruiting for more pharmacists.

There is a clear shortage in pharmacists, with work during the bargaining process revealing the very real shortages in pharmacist numbers and the failure of most Health Services to meet the recommended pharmacist ratios developed by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists Australia.

The excuse we are given is there is a lack of funding, or they that have to prepare business cases to justify recruiting more psychologists and pharmacists.

Frankly these excuses are boring and don't stack up.

Since the Victorian Government signed off on the increases in psychologist and pharmacist numbers, there is no reason to hold up recruiting. Health Services will have the funds, but they have to start the process of recruitment.

It is also troubling from a public health point of view.

Our public Health Services need more psychologists to deal with the rapid increase in Victorians needing assistance with their mental health and mental health care. More pharmacists are needed to ensure they can safely care for patients and administer the care of patients leaving hospital, along with the fact that more is being expected of pharmacists.

By failing to recruit more psychologists and pharmacists, as required under our Agreement, Heatlh Services are locking in extreme workloads, putting the health and safety of members at risk.

Having such massive workloads has an impact on your own health.

It can lead to exhaustion, depression, and greater levels of job dissatisfaction, which ultimately impacts on the quality and quantity of work being done.

We will continue to press Health Services and the Department of Health about these issues, however, in the meantime please let us know if you have not received your back pay and/or if you have seen advertising for psychologist and pharmacist roles for your health service.

As always, should you need our support with a workplace matter, please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au or through the Member Portal.

In solidarity Matt Hammond Secretary



Union Round Up

Have you received your additional 4 weeks paid parental leave?

As part of the new Enterprise Agreement, the Union negotiated an increase in paid parental leave from 10 weeks to 14 weeks!

Other changes include, you only have to work for 6 months to qualify for paid leave and superannuation will now be paid on both paid and unpaid parental leave.

These changes came into effect from 21 December 2021.

Have you received your backpay 4 weeks? If not, please get in touch with the Union now by emailing enquiry@msav.org.au and we will provide you support.

Help promote the new Public Health Sector Agreement

The Union has designed and printed posters and leaflets to promote the new Public Health Sector Agreement.

You can help let your colleagues know they have a new enterprise agreement as well as the many new benefits they get from it.

By promoting the new agreement, you're reminding colleagues who aren't members of the Union about the work the Union does. And more importantly, you're letting your colleagues know that the new agreement was won by the work of Union members.

You can help by putting up posters and leaving leaflets in your tearoom.

Please contact Alex on 9623 9623 or at alexs@msav.org.au to arrange to have materials delivered to you.

Promoting the Union in your workplace

The Union is stronger with more members. Having more members means we have a more powerful voice. One of the best ways of increase the Union's membership is through members like you.

Putting up posters in your workplace, sharing STAT Report with colleagues and mentioning they have a Union that advocates for them, lobbies for them and provides professional industrial advice and assistance are great ways of helping the Union grow its membership.

We can help you with posters, social media content and more or if you want to suggest an idea for material that would work for your workplace, contact Alex on (03) 9623 9623 or at alexs@msav.org.au

Union's Reconciliation Action Plan

The Union affirms our commitment and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture. However, the Union wants to do more by developing a reconciliation action plan.

The management committees of both the MSAV and HSU 4 Branch in their June 2021 meetings very proudly adopted resolutions of support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart and support for an Indigenous voice to our national Parliament to be adopted as a constitutional reform.

If members who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are interested, please contact us so that we can develop our reconciliation action plan together.

Please contact Alex if you're interested at alexs@msav.org.au



International Women's Day and WRAW Fest 2023

On Thursday 8 March, millions of women around the world will unite to recognise International Women's Day. UN Australia's International Women's Day theme for 2023 is 'Cracking the Code: Innovation for a gender equal Future'

"Our gender equal future is only possible with more women in leadership, financially empowered and able to fully participate - a future where all women are safe and free from violence, at the heart of decision making for inclusive, educated and innovative communities." Simone Clarke, CEO UN Women Australia

The importance of women in STEM in innovating and designing new technologies that close the digital gap cannot be under emphasised.

For more details and information: https://unwomen.org.au/get-involved/international-womens-day/

The Women's Rights at Work (WRAW) Fest 2023 kicks off on 8 March to coincide with International Women's Day.

We Are Union Women is hosting 10 free online and face to face events addressing valuable and important topics affecting all women in the workplace.

They have organised topics ranging from Superannuation to Psychosocial Hazards at work.

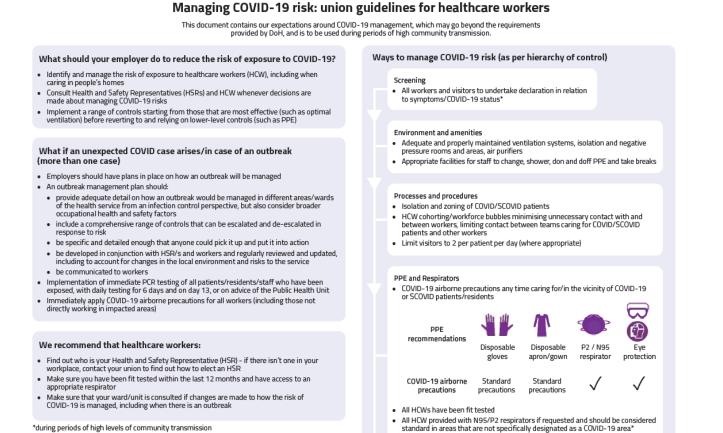
We would love to hear if you're thinking of joining any of these discussions or events, please contact Lyzz if you're planning to attend at lyzzj@msav.org.au

For more details about what's on at WRAW Fest 2023 visit: https://www.weareunion.org.au/wraw23

Managing COVID-19 risk: Union guidelines for healthcare workers

The Union has become increasingly concerned that in the wake of the pandemic no longer being a major focus, the Department of Health and public Health Services have dropped the ball when it comes to Personal Protective Equipment and COVID-19 related safety measures in workplaces.

That's why we have worked with other health unions to develop guidelines (below) for members to manage the COVID-19 risk in their workplaces.



Last updated February 2023

· Visitors are provided with an N95/P2 respirator when coming into facility

Members can find a PDF version of these guidelines on our website here.

Even though it seems our society has moved on from the pandemic, we know all too well that the pandemic is not over and there remains significant risk of infection, especially for healthcare workers.

If you are experiencing issues with managing the COVID-19 risk in your workplace, or having problems accessing Personal Protective Equipment, contact the Union as soon as possible at enquiry@msav.org.au

Professional Development Entitlement

We strongly encourage members to take your entitlement to professional development leave each year, so that you can maintain, improve and broaden the knowledge and expertise within your profession.

But some of you may be wondering what your Professional Development entitlement is.

You are entitled to 5 days of paid Professional Development leave each year. This pro-rata for part-time workers. All psychologists and pharmacists are entitled to additional 2 days leave for professional registration requirements. Unfortunately, this isn't pro-rata for part-time psychologists and pharmacists.

You should also know that your Professional Development leave is cumulative over 2 calendar years.

It's at your discretion how you decide to use your leave. You can use it to attend a conference, seminar or workshop, or you can use it for research or home study.

If you take Professional Development leave during a rostered day off like a weekend, after hours or on an accumulated day off, you will be provided with Time off In Lieu of the period of the course.

Your employer must respond within 7 days of receiving your request. However, you must make an application in writing at least 6 weeks prior to the proposed leave date. If you intend on doing home study, you need to include details of the relevance of the study to your employment in your application.

While this general advice is for Public Sector members, many private sector agreements and the Community Health Sector agreement contain provisions about Professional Development.

If have any queries about your Professional Development entitlement, please contact the Union at enquiry@msav.org.au

Women & Leadership Australia Scholarship

Women & Leadership Australia (WLA) supports women at all levels across all sectors and industries. Their leadership programs bring together a focus on applied learning with the latest in leadership theory and practice. We believe that advancing gender equity, especially in leadership, is central to creating a more fair and inclusive society.

Through their Industry Partnership Framework, they work with hundreds of Australian associations and professional bodies to increase awareness and action around gender equity.

Scholarships of \$1000-\$5000 per person are available for women in the Health Sector.

To encourage more women to increase their impact at work and step into leadership roles across the Heath Sector, WLA is offering scholarships for four leadership development courses.

Applications close on 17 March 2023. To apply or to find out more click here: www.wla.edu.au/industry/health

VPA PI Insurance includes cover for Private Practice

One of the benefits of joining the Victorian Psychologists Association is that membership includes Professional Indemnity Insurance.

The VPA always works to ensure members have the best possible Professional Indemnity Insurance. To keep up with changes in the insurance landscape, we've changed our coverage provider and policy.

One of the biggest changes, and one that we're really excited about, is that our **new policy covers members** working in private practice!

The new policy includes some important changes, including:

- The new policy now includes cover for private practice, where the private practice income does not exceed \$100,000 per annum
- Complaints to AHPRA, coronial inquiries, investigations etc are covered with maximum legal costs of \$100,000
- The policy includes cover for claims of 'Abuse' including sexual harassment, provided that the insurer will not pay where the accused is found to have committed the abuse. It covers legal costs of up to \$500,000
- All other complaints of professional malpractice leading to 'bodily injury' the definition of which includes mental anguish, mental injury is covered for up to \$2,000,000, including legal costs and compensation.
- There is run-off cover for 7 years, as required by AHPRA

Don't worry, the new Professional Indemnity Insurance policy meets the Psychology Board of Australia registration requirements and AHPRA's requirements for insurance coverage.

As a member you get access to **professional advice** and assistance with workplace issues, **representation** in the negotiation of workplace agreements, **advocacy** for the profession, and, among other things, Professional Indemnity Insurance.

By maintaining your VPA membership you will always be covered whether you work in community, public or private practice.

The VPA delivers members fantastic value. Share this great news with your colleagues so more of Victoria's psychologists can be covered at work.

Covering private practice is a major change we're proud and excited about! It's another way we're keeping members covered at work.

The new Professional Indemnity Insurance policy is provided by Tego, a specialist healthcare indemnity underwriter.



COVID-19 Data Watch

Given there is no regular reporting of COVID-19 numbers in the media or actively circulated by the Department of Health, the Union has decided to provide members updates on COVID-19 numbers as published by the Department.

The data is updated and published each week on Friday mornings. Below is the latest data as published Friday 3 March.

Cases

3,016 (-0.9%) total cases for the past week	2,734 total active cases
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Current cases in hospital

104 (+3%) cases in hospital (7-day rolling average)	4 cases in ICU (7-day rolling average)
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Total tests and total cases

3,314 PCR tests (7-day rolling	346 positive RAT tests (7-day	1,218,240 total cases from PCR
average)	rolling average)	

Members can find the data here: https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/victorian-coronavirus-covid-19-data

Subscribe to The New Daily



The Union is pleased to provide all members with a free subscription to The New Daily an online news service.

This news service is Australian owned, which aims to provide fair and balanced coverage of major events across Australia and around the world.

Delivered to your email box every morning you will be provided with the top stories of the day.

https://thenewdaily.com.au/subscribe/

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 or lodging a support request through your Member Portal here.

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, <u>contact us to move your membership payments to a 'non-working' subscription rate of \$8.26 per month</u>.

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.

Campaign Corner

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.



See how you can get involved and ways you can help green your workplace. **Visit https://www.healthyfutures.net.au**

Unions for Yes Campaign

Later this year, Australians will vote on a change to our nation's constitution which seeks to enshrine a voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to our national Parliament.

After over 65,000 years of continuous culture, it's time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are recognised in our 122-year-old constitution.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want recognition in a practical form by having a say on issues and policies that impact their lives.

The Voice to Parliament is an important change that will make Australia fairer and better and Australian unions, including yours, are proud to be campaigning in support of a Yes vote.

The management committees of both the MSAV and HSU 4 Branch in their June 2021 meetings very proudly adopted resolutions of support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart and support for an Indigenous voice to our national Parliament to be adopted as a constitutional reform.

Find out why the Voice to Parliament is so important at WRAW Fest's "Unions for Yes keynote presentation with Lara Watson" on 18 March from 10am to 11am. Details and registration: https://www.weareunion.org.au/wraw fest yes

Want to do more? Get involved at: https://www.weareunion.org.au/voice-campaign

Organise for Equality

To make real change - the kind of change that can't be swept under the rug when the news cycle moves on - we need distributed, organised women campaigning together.

Distributed organising activates a network of self-starting supporters/campaigners in multiple locations, which can spread across geographical boundaries, interests and cultural groups. It draws on the initiative and energy of volunteer organisers to start groups and lead teams.

Help organise for equality by signing up at https://www.weareunion.org.au/o4e

SafetyNet Journal

Interested in Occupational Health and Safety issues? Want to find out what's happening around Victoria?

Subscribe to SafetyNet Journal to get all the latest news and information about OHS in Victoria. You'll also get informed about the latest training opportunities and conferences too.

Sign up at: https://www.ohsrep.org.au/safetynet

HACSU Tasmania – Aged Care Petition

Southern Cross Care Tasmania are trying to sack over 170 Enrolled Nurses, Leisure and Lifestyle and Food Services workers across Tasmania through a restructure and redundancies.

Southern Cross Care are trying to justify these changes by blaming Federal Government reforms following the Aged Care Royal Commission. But families know that's not true. It's not about quality care, it's about SCC's bottom line.

Their claims have even been publicly refuted by the Federal Aged Care Minister, Mark Butler, who has already intervened to urge SCC to reverse their decision.

But even Federal Government intervention has not been enough for SCC to see that they need to put families, residents, and workers first.

We need the community to call on the CEO and the Board to resign and make way for management that cares about older Tasmanians.

Let's stand up for quality care, not corporate greed. We need to stop this disgraceful behaviour spreading to aged care providers around the country.

HACSU Tasmania have a petition to put pressure on Southern Cross Care – please sign and share: https://www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/stop-the-household-model-at-southern-cross-care

You can also share their posts from their Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/HACSUTasmania

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: Corporate profits fuelling inflation, research finds

"New research points the finger at excess corporate profits as a core driver of inflation and says there's scant evidence of a wage-price spiral in the Australian economy.

Numbers crunched by the Australia Institute's Centre for Future Work reveal businesses have bolstered prices well above elevated expenses for labour, materials and other inputs and contributed much more to inflation than wages.

The inflation rate hit 7.8 per cent in the December quarter, with surging inflation prompting nine interest rate rises from the Reserve Bank to take demand out of the economy."

Read the entire article by Poppy Johnston in the New Daily at:

https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/2023/02/24/corporate-profits-fuelling-inflation-research-finds/

Worth Reading: 'Security and comfort in retirement': Preserving the success of super

"In the mid-1980s when the ACTU launched its campaign to reform the nature of superannuation and spread it to all workers, the prime objective was simply to make a meaningful and lasting improvement to working people's welfare.

It aimed to do it in a manner that would not automatically translate into higher consumption given the prevailing economic problems of high inflation and a chronic balance of payments deficit.

A subsidiary goal was to address the then-incipient problem of an ageing population.

Superannuation was not in those days a rational component of a comprehensive retirement income system."

Read the entire article by Garry Weaven in The New Daily at: https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/2023/02/22/super-preservation-savings/

Worth Reading: 31 years after the advent of compulsory super, the government is about to decide what it's for. The answer will matter

"Today Treasurer Jim Chalmers released a consultation paper on "Legislating the Purpose of Superannuation".

This is a long-awaited piece of work that has been the subject of ongoing discussion since it was recommended by the Rudd government's Financial System Inquiry in 2014.

A subsequent bill introduced by the Morrison government failed to obtain agreement and lapsed in 2019.

The 2020 Retirement Income Review, of which I was a panel member, also agreed an objective was required to "anchor the direction of policy settings, help ensure the purpose of the system is understood, and provide a framework for assessing the performance of the system"."

Read the entire article by Deborah Ralston in The Conversation at: https://theconversation.com/31-years-after-the-advent-of-compulsory-super-the-government-is-about-to-decide-what-its-for-the-answer-will-matter-200264

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

<u>Medical Scientists Association of Victoria</u> | <u>Victorian Psychologists Association Inc</u> | <u>Association of Hospital</u> Pharmacists

Union Member Benefits

As a Union member you get access to some great benefits.

Motor vehicles, rental cars, cameras, computers, travel, accommodation, entertainment, wine, gift cards, jewellery, insurance and health products are just some of the categories covered with great deals for union members.

Getting access to UnionShopper discounts is free to all members of the MSAV, VPA or AHP – that means you!

Visit UnionShopper and sign up.

*Member Benefits has wound up with UnionShopper being the preferred provider of discounts for union members. Members who used Member Benefits will have to sign up at UnionShopper

Please note that UnionShopper is not run by the MSAV, VPA or AHP



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.