



15 August 2014

Stat Report 2014/27

Sick Leave Provisions and Your Privacy

The Union was recently made aware of a memo from the CEO of Dorevitch Pathology saying they would respond to allegedly high levels of absenteeism (20% increase in the past 12 months) by threatening members with closer scrutiny and demands to reveal personal information about an illness, rather than rationally and sensibly analysing what the real source/s of increased levels of absenteeism are.

The memo from Dorevitch Pathology is misleading and makes claims that are not accurate. In reality, Dorevitch Pathology is launching a blatant attack on the entitlement of MSAV members to take personal/sick leave and is part of a calculated strategy to intimidate members to not use personal/sick leave for legitimate reasons.

It is the most appalling style of management to threaten that staff will be required to provide personal and private information about your, or a family member's, health to reduce absenteeism.

The memo is another attempt to resolve operational crisis that are spiralling out of control across most laboratories. Rather than review current staff resourcing policies, management choose to attack a demoralised workforce.

However, Dorevitch Pathology is not the only employer that is attempting to force members to reveal personal information about an illness with the Union receiving numerous enquiries about this matter.

Unfortunately, it appears that it has become a big issue as managers across a number of employers attempt to resolve operational crises through pressuring our members to not use personal/sick leave rather than review current staff resourcing policies. And it also shows that managers continue to ignore their workforce and fail to properly address onerous workloads and rostering arrangements.

This latest missive from Dorevitch Pathology, and judging by the enquiries around such issues, shows how important it is that we continue to build our "No Pay? No Way!" campaign.

And just for the record:

Whilst agreement requirements can vary in relation to providing a certificate, in most instances either a doctor's certificate or Statutory Declaration are all that is needed. You are not required to provide a Statutory Declaration, this is your choice; and you are not required to divulge personal details about your, or a family member's, health.

If you are being questioned over your medical certificates for long periods of absences please contact the Union for advice.

-- Paul Elliott

MSAV Assistant Secretary

Just Briefly: Eastern Health Pathology

A meeting has been sought with senior management of Eastern Health to address workload and staffing issues arising from the opening of the new Box Hill Hospital, which is scheduled to open on 29th September.

The meeting will also be used to address concerns about the failure to backfill staff on maternity, annual and long service leave.

Once the Union has met with senior management we will let members at Eastern Health know the outcomes, and proposed ways of addressing workload and staffing issues.

The Real Story about our Professions



The We Are Union campaign wants to make sure that Victorian voters get the real stories from workers about what's at stake if the Napthine Government is returned in this year's election.

The Union has a great opportunity to contribute to these stories and we want to make sure our stories and voices are included.

If you're interested in contributing your real story about how the Napthine Government is making your working life more difficult and damaging our healthcare system please contact Alex Schlotzer on 9623 9623 or at alexs@msav.org.au or you

can tell your story at: http://www.therealstory.org.au/tell_your_story

In the meantime check out the latest worker's story:

Cost cutting in health isn't sustainable

"I used to work as a medical scientist in pathology. But I moved on because all I saw was cost cutting while being told everything would be more 'sustainable' and more 'efficient'. And now all I see is more of my colleagues being made redundant despite soaring workloads."

Read Jimmy's story at: <http://www.therealstory.org.au/health-cuts>

Frequently Asked Questions about Maternity and Parental Leave

We've been receiving a number of enquiries regarding maternity and parental leave, especially around the notice period before taking leave and what happens with returning to work after maternity or parental leave. So here we provide some general information regarding some of the most frequently asked questions about maternity and parental leave.

The National Employment Standards (NES) contains legal entitlements to unpaid parental leave. The NES can be supplemented by your EBA which often makes determining the notice requirements and right to return from maternity leave difficult. The EBAs also contain provisions for paid maternity leave. In many cases, maternity leave is only available where a female employee has more than 12 months continuous service with the employer. In the public sector, previous service with another public sector employer may count as service. The entitlements of casual employees are even more complex.

How much notice do I have to give that I want to take maternity leave?

You need to give at least ten weeks' notice of the expected date of birth and at least 4

weeks' notice of the intended starting date of maternity leave.

Can I extend my maternity leave beyond 12 months?

Yes, you have the right to request the extension of the period of maternity leave by giving the employer written notice of the request for extension at least 4 weeks before the end date of the leave. The employer must respond in writing within 21 days, and can only refuse the request on reasonable business grounds. If your request is refused, the employer must include details of the reasons for refusal in the written response.

Can I go back to work part time?

YES. You have a right to request that you return to work on a part time basis from maternity leave, so that you can effectively meet your responsibilities as a parent, until your child is school age. The employer can only refuse the request on reasonable business grounds.

Note: This does NOT mean that you have to give up your substantive full time position in order to go part-time while your child is under school age.

Can my role be changed while on maternity leave?

NO. You must be allowed to return to your substantive classification. If your substantive position no longer exists, relevant organisational change provisions will apply that is, consultation with you and the Union must occur before any proposed change is implemented.

If you have any questions, contact the office on 9623 9623 or enquiry@msav.org.au.

VPA Annual General Meeting and Professional Development

This year's Annual General Meeting for the VPA and the next Professional Development seminar will be held on Wednesday 17 September 2014 at the Treacy Centre in Parkville.

The topic for the professional development seminar is "The diagnosis and management of sleep disorders", which will be presented by Associate Professor Gerard Kennedy.

Save the Date: Wednesday 17 September from 12.30pm for the next Professional Development session and the VPA Annual General Meeting.

To register your interest for the VPA PD and AGM please contact Alex at alexs@msav.org.au

No Pay? No Way!

Join the campaign! Download & use one of our graphics for your email signature to help raise awareness of our campaign.



OR



Training for Job Reps: Campaigning Skills & Enforcing our Agreements

The next Job Reps training session will be held on **Friday 26 September from 10am to**

3pm.

The training session will cover the basics of organising and campaigning, using the “No Pay? No Way!” campaign. The training session will also go through the process for identifying breaches of our Agreements and the ways in which the Union can enforce our Agreements.

This training session will suit all Job Reps, whether new or experienced.

Job Reps in the Public Sector can attend training days and activities organised by the Union without losing pay if the training is on a day you would normally be rostered to work. If you are a Job Rep in the Private Sector please contact us as not all Private Sector agreements allow for paid leave for Union training.

If you are attending the Job Reps training make sure that you apply for leave now.

To register for the Job Reps training, please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or email alexs@msav.org.au to register your attendance.

Worth Reading: “Freedom to be a hypocrite”

Acres of ink and gigalloads of bytes have been spilled in recent times over “free speech.” Sadly, the debate has mostly been self-serving. Much of it has been driven by right-wing voices opposed both to vilification laws and to a now-defunct proposal to strengthen the press complaints system. Left-wing voices, while less prominent, have focused on gags on public servants and moves to stop grant funds being used to advocate for policy reform.

Balancing liberty of expression with civility and equality is not simple. True conservatives emphasise the need for respectful debate and defend the concern for reputations embodied in defamation laws. Progressives fret about power, and the need for marginalised voices to have an equal share of the stage. Small “I” liberals want to leave things to the marketplace and see the internet as a liberating agent. These are all principled positions. Freed of posturing, most people would agree we need to find some balance among them.

Read the full article by Graeme Orr in Inside Story at: <http://inside.org.au/the-freedom-to-be-a-hypocrite/>

Worth Reading: “It's The Economy (And Its Effect On The Poor), Stupid!”

Another day, another gaffe by Treasurer Joe Hockey.

Recent months have seemed like the Joe Hockey comedy show, from celebratory cigars during the budget to the less-than-noble revelations of his recently-launched biography.

Yesterday added another item to the hit parade of blunders, pratfalls and goofs, as Hockey was caught out trying to explain why the Coalition’s fuel excise increase wouldn’t be regressive.

Read the full article by Ben Eltham in New Matilda at: <https://newmatilda.com/2014/08/14/its-economy-and-its-effect-poor-stupid>

Your Union is on Facebook

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Get Active! Help change Victoria!

Here's what's happening in the campaign this week:

Sunday, 17 August – Carrum Downs Street Stall. We'll be at Carrum Downs talking to the local community about how the Napthine Government have let Victorians down.

[Volunteer for this event now.](#)

Monday, 18 August – Bellarine Phone Bank. We are Union volunteers will gather at Geelong Trades Hall to make calls to union members in the electorate of Bellarine to find out the most important issues to them.

[Volunteer for this event now.](#)

Tuesday, 19 August – Frankston Station Leafleting. Join Paramedics, Firefighters and Nurses at Frankston station leafleting and talking to local commuters about the Emergency Services and Health crisis in Victoria!

[Volunteer for this event now.](#)

Wednesday, 20 August – Mooroolbark Train Station Leafleting. Join Paramedics, Firefighters and Nurses at Mooroolbark station leafleting and talking to local commuters about the Emergency Services and Health crisis in Victoria!

[Volunteer for this event now.](#)

Wednesday, 20 August – Phone Bank. We're aiming to call 500 union members in marginal seats across Victoria, to speak with them about their key issues in this Victorian State Election year.

[Volunteer for this event now.](#)

Volunteer for the *We Are Union* campaign at:

<http://www.weareunion.org.au/volunteer>

Benefits for Union Members

As a union member, you can take advantage of the collective buying power of more than 1.9 million members to get discounts on a great range of products and services.

ACTU Member Connect makes sure the products and services are from companies you can rely on to deliver high-quality products with reliable customer service.

There is more information about a range of other benefits union members can access at

<http://www.memberconnect.com.au/> or you can call ACTU Member Connect on 1300 362 223.

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.



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