



24 October 2014

Stat Report 2014/37

Better Path Plan

Pathology is a key scientific service in delivering Victorians world-class health care.

It is complex pathology science that doctors and specialists rely on to make a diagnosis and to find treatments. Pathology is vital to help make sure that the treatment your doctor or specialist has prescribed is actually working. It's also the medical scientists in pathology that cross-match blood for life-saving transfusions.

Pathology Blood Banks keep critical clinical services such as accident & emergency, surgery and obstetrics functioning through routine and emergency periods.

Privatising pathology services has caused deterioration in the standards of pathology science for public hospitals. Delays in getting results to critical tests, which adversely impact on quick and timely clinical diagnosis or treatment, has become a permanent feature of privatised pathology services.

At every turn the Victorian Government has cut funding to the health system with little regard for the actual workforce needs of Victoria's health sector. And with the increasing attacks on budgets, and efforts by hospital managements to do more with less, more medical scientists are walking away. High turnover is now directly impacting on the standard of pathology science practised.

It's pretty simple to work out – No Medical Scientists = No Diagnosis + No Treatment

That's why the Union has developed the Better Path Plan.

Just like the Public Sector bargaining campaign used Medical Physicists to highlight the issues for members, the Better Path Plan is a mechanism for the Union to raise a range of issues that affect all of us like increasing workloads; not enough staff to handle increasing demands on services; and the continued privatisation and outsourcing of vital services.

The Better Path Plan has three components that are fundamental to restoring pathology services and ensuring pathology continues to be a strong and vital part of the healthcare of Victorians.

1. Monitor and enforce existing contracts for private pathology services in public health services like hospitals.
2. Return pathology services to the public sector where they have been privatised.
3. No new contracts to be entered into for pathology services with private providers.

The Union is calling on all candidates at this year's State Election to sign our Better Path Plan pledge to show their commitment to having world class healthcare underpinned by strong public pathology services

TAKE ACTION: Make sure our Better Path Plan is on the agenda for the State Election – send your email today: <http://msav.org.au/news-mainmenu-2/latest-news/1920-the-better-path-plan>

Latrobe Regional Hospital and Gippsland Pathology failing Latrobe Valley

The Medical Scientists Association of Victoria is deeply concerned that Latrobe Regional Hospital (LRH) is failing to ensure Gippsland Pathology, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Dorevitch Pathology, meets its contracted obligations to deliver essential pathology services on site.

Failure by Latrobe Regional Hospital to enforce its own contracts is allowing Gippsland Pathology to dictate the services it will provide rather than delivering the services its contracted to provide; ultimately leaving the Latrobe Valley community with a diminished Hospital service.

Documents provided to the MSAV reveal the pathology services contracted by Latrobe Regional Hospital require Gippsland Pathology to perform pathology testing on-site.

We know this is not happening. Gippsland Pathology has moved vital inpatient and outpatient testing off-site, immediately leading to increased turn-around times, a measure in the contract to monitor if tests are completed within strict timeframes, for essential pathology tests and results.

Latrobe Regional Hospital has refused to take any action to force Gippsland Pathology to comply with the contract and perform pathology testing in the hospital.

And with around 85% of all patient clinical diagnosis based on a pathology test of one form or another, on-time test results are an absolutely vital element to delivering world-class health care.

But while the number and volume of pathology testing is significantly increasing we have Gippsland Pathology cutting back the scientific workforce needed to ensure testing is performed at the highest possible standards.

The Napthine Government's cuts to funding are forcing public hospitals to outsource and privatise essential services, like pathology.

Unfortunately for patients in the Latrobe Valley, there are currently no alternatives to private providers who are less concerned about maintaining quality testing by qualified scientists than they do about making huge profits.

It's time the Health Minister, David Davis ensures that Latrobe Regional Hospital enforces its contracts with Gippsland Pathology so people living in Latrobe Valley can be assured they are receiving world-class health care, not substandard health care.

When it comes to enforcement of employment agreements covering its workforce, the LRH Board is fierce and uncompromising. It appears there is another standard altogether applied to a profiteering company that shows absolute contempt for legal contractual obligations.

More importantly it shows that the experiment of Local Hospital Boards has failed to deliver the health outcomes Victorians expect and the Napthine Government must end its ideologically driven push for ever more privatisation of health care.

The Christmas close down period and you

It has come to our attention that a number of employers are already trying to coerce

members into taking annual leave to cover their close down periods.

It is very clear from our public sector Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and most of our private sector agreements that there is no capacity for your employer to force you to take annual leave or long service leave for this purpose.

It is not acceptable for your employer to make arrangements about close down periods under the assumption that staff will be required to use annual leave or long service leave to cover it.

Remember: there is no requirement for anyone to agree to take annual leave or long service leave to cover regular working days over the Christmas and New Year period.

Contact the Union for assistance if you need further advice.

Last week to complete the No Pay? No Way! Survey

It is vital that we continue to gather information for our “No Pay? No Way!” campaign to help us build up our campaign for more staff and reduced workloads. And the more information we have the stronger our arguments are for staff increases and reductions in workloads.

That’s why it’s so important that you participate in the survey and let us know how unpaid work is impacting on you.

[Make sure you take our Survey this week before it closes on Friday 31 October.](#)



Show your support for the campaign by downloading & using one of our graphics for your email signature.



OR



What Gough did for Australia

This week former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam passed away. In the 1071 days he was Prime Minister, his Government achieved:

- Universal healthcare (Medicare)
- No-fault divorce
- Free university education
- Reopened the equal pay case
- Indigenous land rights
- Increased access to the pill
- Established the Family Court of Australia
- Appointed a Women’s Advisor to the Prime Minister
- Established the single mother’s benefit
- Abolished the White Australia Policy and passed the Racial Discrimination Act
- Granted independence to Papua New Guinea
- Established Triple J
- Undertook a massive infrastructure project to connect homes to sewerage

- Abolished the death penalty
- Lowered the voting age
- Established parental leave for Commonwealth employees
- Ended conscription and Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War
- Took France to the International Court of Justice over atmospheric nuclear testing
- First Western leader to officially visit China and recognise its government.
- Established the National Gallery in Canberra and the Australia Council for the Arts
- Introduced legislation to form the SBS
- Introduced national decorations known as the "Order of Australia" and scrapped the old titles of "Knights" and "Dames".
- Protected the Great Barrier Reef and introduced environmental protection legislation
- Established the Australian Legal Aid Office

This is not an exhaustive list and you can find out other achievements of the Whitlam Government at: http://www.whitlam.org/gough_whitlam/achievements

Abbott Government moves to end reporting superannuation on pay slips

Superannuation is arguably becoming an increasingly substantial component of an employee's total remuneration with the Australian Institute of Superannuation opposing moves by the Abbott Government to end the requirement for superannuation contributions to be reported on payslips.

This comes particularly in light of reports that show there are still a significant number of employers who are not meeting their Superannuation Guarantee obligations.

Since Super is workers' money, it should be included on payslips and treated no differently than including the details of take-home pay and leave entitlements.

Super on payslips allows workers to keep up to date with the Super contributions that employers are legally obliged to pay on their behalf and helps workers engage with super and keep a watchful eye on how much is being contributed towards their retirement income.

Payslip reporting is an important tool to keep employers honest and remind employees of their entitlements, and the Union strongly supports the continued reporting of Super contributions on payslips.

Share your story and stand up to the Napthine Government

It's clear every worker has been let down by the Napthine Government.

But union members just like you are standing up to the government by sharing their experiences about what budget cuts mean to them and Victoria.

Be a part of the We Are Union campaign to highlight workers' voices this election. Share your story at: http://www.therealstory.org.au/share_story

Worth Reading: "Coalition's policy bodes ill for health in free trade negotiations"

"Health is rarely a priority in trade negotiations. But recent developments in Australia suggest it is an even lower priority for the Coalition government than usual.

Over the past two decades, it has become increasingly clear that trade and investment

agreements can have significant health impacts. The [current case](#) by tobacco giant Philip Morris Asia against Australia's tobacco plain packaging laws has cast these issues into sharp relief.

The [Coalition's Policy for Trade](#), released just before the 2013 election, marks a significant shift in Australian trade policy, not only from previous Labor government but also from the legacy of the Howard years."

Read the full article by Deborah Gleeson, lecturer in Public Health at La Trobe University, on The Conversation at: <http://theconversation.com/coalitions-policy-bodes-ill-for-health-in-free-trade-negotiations-32575>

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](#)

We Are Union - Get Active! Help change Victoria!

Sunday, 26 October – Bentleigh & Mordiallic Doorknocking Blitz: Our next Bentleigh-Mordialloc Doorknocking blitz is going to be huge. Join in to help make it Australia's biggest ever doorknock!
[Volunteer now](#)

Monday, 27 October – Phone Bank at Trades Hall: Join us on Monday 27th October for the Trades Hall 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 now](#)

Monday, 27 October – 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 now](#)

Tuesday, 28 October – *Pride* Advanced Screening: *Pride* tells the incredible true story of a Welsh mining community struggling to make ends meet during the 1984 miners' strike, when hope arrives with the unlikeliest of allies – a group of gay and lesbian activists who decide to raise money for the miners. [More info here.](#)

Tickets are Free for our wonderful We Are Union volunteers (and +1s) but you may choose to include a donation once you've RSVPd.
[RSVP today](#)

Wednesday, 29 October – Kananook & Frankston Station Leafleting: Join Paramedics, Firefighters and Nurses at Frankston & Kananook stations leafleting and talking to local commuters about the Emergency Services and Health crisis in Victoria!

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.



[Volunteer now](#)

Wednesday, 29 October – Phone Bank at Trades Hall:

Join us on Wednesday 29th October for the Trades Hall phone bank! We're aiming to call 500 union members in marginal seats across Victoria.

[Volunteer now](#)

Thursday, 30 October – Mordialloc Train Station

Leafleting: Join us at Mordialloc Train Station to speak with local commuters about the Health, Emergency Services and Education crisis in Victoria!

[Volunteer now](#)

Thursday, 30 October – Bentleigh Train Station

Leafleting: Speak with local commuters about the Health, Emergency Services and Education crisis in Victoria!

[Volunteer now](#)

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.

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