



Stat Report 2015/07

March 4 Rallies

On March 4 the Union joined with tens of thousands of people in Melbourne to march for our rights at work, for our penalty rates and minimum wage, and for an Australia where your bank balance shouldn't dictate the healthcare you get.

It was a spectacular display of people with the march stretching for many blocks as those who gathered expressed loudly and proudly that we wouldn't accept attacks on our rights at work and on our penalty rates and minimum wage. And the 50,000 person-strong crowd was not about to accept the erosion of universal healthcare and Medicare; or that students should be slugged with a debt sentence to go to university.

Check out the coverage in The Age at: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/thousands-rally-in-melbourne-against-abbott-governments-workplace-inquiry-20150304-13uknv.html>

Or see for yourself just how big the Melbourne rally was at: <https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=546101928862770&fref=nf>



Labour Day Long Weekend

The Union's offices will be closed on Monday 9 March for the Labour Day long weekend. But don't worry we'll be open again on Tuesday 10 March.

International Women's Day

International Women's Day is the official day of the year when people around the world come together across physical and cultural divides to celebrate the rights of women and girls. And as 2015 takes shape it seems there is a lot of work to be done in Australia.

International Women's Day is particularly important this year to help highlight that the gender wage gap continues to widen with the gap now at 18.8%, a jump of 1.4% since November 2013.

You can show your support for International Women's Day by joining the rally on 8 March at 1pm at the State Library in Melbourne.

Excessive Workloads: Say No!

If you thought working through excessive workloads with insufficient staff is being professional, think again.

Unfortunately when the work keeps piling up without the staff support needed, it can create significant pressure. It can create situations where people get over-worked and neglect their own health because they have to plough through the work.

When you are stressed and overworked errors can occur and mistakes can be amplified. Stress and being overworked can lead to serious health problems leading to increased time away from work. As you will know, errors and mistakes can make a major difference in a diagnosis or treatment; or critically delay a diagnosis for urgent treatments to be established.

There is nothing professional or beneficial to patients in allowing your health to deteriorate because managements are refusing to manage staffing levels and workloads appropriately. There are no benefits to patients about having excessive workloads because managements refuse to employ sufficient staff to do the work. And there is nothing beneficial to patients about working unpaid through meal breaks and before rostered starts or longer hours in order to get normal work done, especially if leads to increasing health problems for you.

Excessive workloads are not about you and your level of professionalism; it's increasingly clear excessive workloads are about management refusing to properly manage staffing levels and workloads and ensuring the availability of sufficient staff to undertake the workload.

Remember: say No to unpaid work.

“No Pay? No Way!” campaign: What's it all about?

Over the past decade staff reductions forced through budget cuts has caused workloads to steadily increase. Health managers have long stopped thinking about how we cope with extra work.

We are just expected to do more and more work in the same amount of time. In 2015, hundreds of thousands of hours of unpaid time will be worked to cope with unreasonably high workloads. There is growing evidence of a systemic reliance on unpaid work to keep many services afloat.

And this will only increase with cuts to health spending announced in the Federal budget

As workloads continue to grow without increases in staff, the pressure is mounting on already over-worked and stressed staff.

The Union wants to use the campaign to:

- Reduce unsustainably high workloads
- Enforce Workload Clauses in our Agreements
- Have fewer members doing unpaid work
- Eliminate injuries arising from high workloads; and
- Engage more members in the work of the Union

How much unpaid work is done?

We know that members are working longer hours without being properly compensated.

From our work on the Public Sector agreement in 2011-2012, we know that 2503 members were regularly performing unpaid work. We also know that members were working on average an additional 4 hours unpaid each week.

We estimated that members were doing approximately \$19 million (\$18.95mil) in unpaid work each year.

And since 2011-12, we know that this has only become worse with many employers unwilling to back-fill maternity and long service leave positions; and the slow speed at which vacancies are filled.

Why is this campaign so important?

We know that members feel the pressure. They don't want to let their patients down and want to be 'good professionals'. This campaign is not about an unexpectedly busy day, or staying back because something out of the ordinary has happened. It is about regular unpaid work being relied upon for the day to day functioning of your service or department and the growing expectation by management that this will continue. In other words, that unpaid work has become a structural component of delivering health care services.

But the reality is that by regularly doing unpaid work members are at risk of suffering injuries like depression, anxiety and even heart attacks.

- 90% of us do some unpaid work each week
- On average, we each work 4 hours per week for free
- Management resist backfilling leave absences
- It has gotten harder and harder to get leave requests approved

The reliance on unpaid work is the single biggest factor behind the current rationale of cutting wages and jobs. It supports the employers' approach of getting more done for less. The biggest statement we can make in showing that current workloads are too high is to stop doing unpaid work.

What does it all mean to me?

High workloads and regularly doing unpaid work results in fatigue and stress putting you at risk of suffering serious injuries including depression, anxiety and even heart disease. Suffering a mental health injury, because it is invisible, can often be ignored by employers. This also cannot be underestimated as an OH&S problem.

Fatigue and high workloads are significantly increasing management actions for alleged "poor performance".

What are the most important things I can do?

Saying "NO!" to unpaid work is a very powerful first step towards resolving these important issues. You cannot be forced to perform unpaid work and your refusal is a lawful action for which you cannot be disciplined or punished. At the very least, make sure that if you do work additional hours demand overtime payment

The second step is to act collectively as union members.

Here are 5 things you can do right now:

1. Like the MSAV, VPA or AHP on Facebook & invite your friends to like the page too
MSAV: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Medical-Scientists-Association-of-Victoria/134527289921426>
VPA: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Victorian-Psychologists-Association-Inc/112496935469013>
AHP: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Association-of-Hospital-Pharmacists/137093459655302>
2. Follow @MSAV_today on Twitter, retweet updates & use #nopaynoway
3. Say “No” the next time you are asked to perform unpaid work.
4. Tell us why you’re supporting the campaign so we can share your story about why “No Pay? No Way!” is important to you
5. Share your pictures from events the Union organises on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter using #nopaynoway

Victorian Hospitals' Industrial Association and the March 4 Rally

The organisation representing health services, VHIA, sent us a curious letter. They reckon we’re misleading you all by telling you that the Abbott Government wants to attack our minimum wage, penalty rates and rights at work. We laughed pretty hard.

They were so thoughtful they thought to tell us that employers have never sought to reduce or abolish penalty rates. Talk about misleading because that’s not true. For example, in the last agreement negotiations the VHIA pursued claims to have weekend penalty rates for Pharmacists abolished and replaced with shift allowances, which would have resulted in significant reductions in pay for this group of members.

But best of all was their commitment that no employers intend to reduce or abolish penalty rates in upcoming rounds of bargaining. We’ll be holding them to that!

[See the letter from the VHIA here](#)

Productivity Commission inquiry into Australia’s industrial relations system

The Productivity Commission will be investigating the minimum wage; penalty rates; enterprise bargaining and protections for employees. And in announcing the review, the Productivity Commission has released five issues papers into the key areas of the inquiry.

There are some significant issues that will be investigated by the Productivity Commission and given the language used in the issues papers, it seems that serious attempts will be made to wind back the minimum wage, remove penalty rates and alter the bargaining processes with an emphasis on direct employer-employee negotiations or individual contracts.

However, given the breadth of the inquiry and the opportunity to raise other relevant matters, the Union will be making a comprehensive submission to the inquiry.

The Union strongly encourages all members to make their own submission to the inquiry. If

you're interested in preparing your own submission here are a few things you may wish to highlight:

- The importance of the minimum wage and penalty rates to you, your colleagues and your family
- To what extent does working nights, weekends, and holidays affect you and your family
- Whether you would be prepared to rely on individual arrangements with your employer or prefer a comprehensive collective agreement

To read the issues papers or to make a submission visit:

<http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/workplace-relations/issues>

Annual Conference 2015 – Save the date

After the success of last year's Annual Conference, the Union will be holding an Annual Conference in 2015. The Union is working on the theme and lining up some great guest speakers.

We're sure that this year's Annual Conference will be huge!

So make sure you save the date – Friday 29 May – for Annual Conference

More details will be published in future editions of STAT Report.

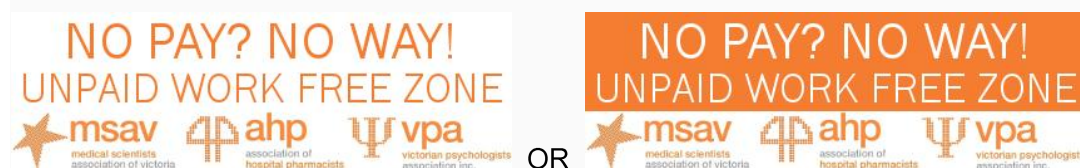
A year after ARCBS became a manufacturer

In the lead up to the first year anniversary of the Red Cross Blood Service being a so-called manufacturer, we're calling on all members to share with us their experiences of the Red Cross Blood Service in the last year.

You won't be identified but it's vital that the public know what's really happening at the Red Cross Blood Service

Join the campaign – No Pay? No Way!

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



Worth Reading: The Medicare funding crisis is an astounding lie

“After surviving the Liberal Party backbench revolt, Tony Abbott was reported as saying that when offered the option of believing a politician or a doctor, the public will back the doctor.

But when it comes to health and Medicare, what about backing the truth?

In just five weeks over a hot summer, Abbott backed down twice on Medicare changes: first,

dumping his May 2014 budget proposal to tax every patient an additional \$7 a visit; then, after a howl of protest, dumping his changes to time-based Medicare consultations, the \$20 GP tax.

However, still on the table is the \$5 optional co-payment scheduled for July 1 this year, and the four-year freeze on Medicare rebates. Confused government policy has gone from \$7 to \$20 to optional \$5 and freezes.”

Read the entire article by Henry Pinski in the Sydney Morning Herald at:

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/the-medicare-funding-crisis-is-an-astounding-lie-20150226-13o85c.html>

Worth Reading: Trans Pacific Partnership will push medicine prices up, review finds

“The proposed Trans Pacific Partnership is likely to push up the price of medicines, stop some Australians from taking their medicines and make it harder to restrict the sale of tobacco and alcohol, a comprehensive review of the deal between Australia and 11 other nations including the US and Japan has found.

The so-called health impact statement, compiled by the Centre for Health Equity Training Research and Evaluation at the University of NSW relies on leaked texts of draft chapters of the agreement Australia is preparing to seal within weeks.

Although its stated aim is to bring down trade barriers and allow mutual recognition of standards, many of its provisions deal with medicines and make it difficult for member countries to move against foreign-owned corporations.”

Read the entire article by Peter Martin in The Age at: <http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/trans-pacific-partnership-will-push-medicine-prices-up-review-finds-20150302-13sxtx.html>

Worth Reading: Abbott government scraps GP co-payment

“The Abbott government's GP co-payment has been killed off for good with Health Minister Sussan Ley telling Coalition MPs "we are not pursuing it at all".

Prime Minister Tony Abbott has made several attempts to wind back the widely loathed \$7 fee - first announced in the 2014 May budget - in an attempt to mollify public concern.

But the Coalition has failed to garner enough support in the Senate to introduce the measure which was slated to begin this July.”

Read the entire article by Latika Bourke and Dan Harrison at The Age at:

<http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/abbott-government-scraps-gp-copayment-20150303-13thxg.html>

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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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