



## Stat Report 2015/27

### Government review of pathology services and contracts must be widened

The Medical Scientists Association of Victoria (MSAV) is calling on the Andrews Government to widen its review of pathology services and contracts at Latrobe Regional Hospital to ensure all public hospitals with private pathology providers are enforcing contract terms to deliver world-class quality pathology services. And that it open the review to consider the range of services and contracts for other services organised by public health services and Health Purchasing Victoria.

The review at Latrobe Regional Hospital is only the tip of the iceberg.

A 2011 Auditor General's report into procurement practices in the public health sector was very critical of failures in basic contract governance and made specific recommendations about annual reviews to monitor contract compliance. FOI information recently obtained by the Union shows that these recommendations have been ignored.

Once the Government starts taking a closer look at the pathology contracts at other public hospitals that have privatised pathology services they'll find the same problems. And we suspect this is happening in other disciplines where the tendency has been to outsource services.

It's vital that the Government investigate privatisation in the face of organisations that bid at the lowest possible price to undercut its competitors but ultimately it is the community left being undercut as services are cut back, professional staff are sacked and quality healthcare is diminished.

It will be terrible for the community if the hospital's management allows quality health standards to decline for the sake of protecting a private contractor's profits. The community must be guaranteed that the hospital's management and board won't turn a blind eye to contract failures like the management at Latrobe Regional Hospital

The question for the management of any public health service is: are they prepared to front the community with hand-on-heart and promise that they will enforce contract requirements?

### Pathology petition gaining strong momentum

The Union's campaign to highlight the growing crisis in pathology services is gaining strong momentum as members continue to sign the petition. With over 150 signatures so far we're making progress on reaching our target of 1,000 signatures.

The continued cuts to healthcare by successive governments has resulted in many public pathology laboratories being contracted out to private providers only interested in making profits.

As a result of this race to the bottom, pathology standards set out in contracts with public hospitals are not being met with quality standards declining and turn-around times for some tests being allowed to increase.

You know like we do there are critical pathology tests being stripped out of local laboratories and sent to factory laboratories that can be several hours away in some cases. And usually includes the loss of well-paid local jobs and highly qualified staff.

The loss of local pathology testing can put other services at risk like the emergency department, obstetrics and paediatrics and oncology services. And it can have a devastating impact on public hospitals in regional Victoria, putting at risk their capacity to treat patients locally.

The Union is calling on the Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy, and the Andrews Labor Government to end the contracting out of pathology services; and ensure local public hospitals have fully functioning pathology laboratories staffed with a sufficient number of properly qualified scientists.

With already over 150 signatures we need your help to get to next milestone of 200 signatures. It will help us on our way to 1,000 medical scientists signing the petition so that the Government can't ignore our voice on this critical health issue.

[Download the petition and get your colleagues to sign it.](#)

After you've filled up a page with signatures make sure you send the petition back to us at:

Level 1, 62 Lygon St  
Carlton South VIC 3053



## Union welcomes Family Violence Leave for Victorian public sector employees

This week the Andrews Labor Government announced that Victoria would ensure that public sector employees are entitled to family violence leave. The Union welcomes this announcement and is encouraged by this step in the right direction to ensure people experiencing family violence can access support when they need it.

The Union is also encouraged that by providing family violence leave, our members will know they are supported at work and will be able to attend to important matters without the stress of

worrying about their job. And it ensures people experiencing family leave are able to maintain their financial independence.

As the news coming out of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence continues to stun the state, this is a great piece of news that will make a real difference to supporting people experiencing family violence.

And just as importantly, this will also help the Union in making claims to include Family Violence Leave in agreements for members working in the private sector.

## New Membership Feature on our Website

As a member of the MSAV, VPA Inc or AHP, you can now update your personal details without having to email or call the Union. By visiting our website and clicking on "Members" you'll be taken to the secure section of our website to update your details.

If it's the first time you're logging on you'll need to generate a password. This is different to signing up to our website to participate in our forums. And we've done this to make sure your security is protected.

And you can also help us get more members by letting your colleagues know they can sign up online – no need to download a form – just click on "Join" and fill out the details.

## Nominations for AHP Committee of Management and Annual General Meeting

The Association of Hospital Pharmacists' Annual General Meeting will be held on 24 September at 1.30 pm at Sunshine Hospital (PBL Room 6, WHCRE Building), 176 Furlong Road, St Albans.

### **Notice of Nominations for AHP Committee**

Notice is hereby given to all Members of the Association of Hospital Pharmacists that nominations for election to the AHP Committee are now open. To be eligible to nominate you must be a financial member of the AHP.

The positions that are open for election are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- 2 x Committee Members

Candidates must have two (2) financial members support the nomination.

To obtain a nomination form please email to the Returning Officer: [enquiry@ahpv.asn.au](mailto:enquiry@ahpv.asn.au)

Nominations must be received by the Returning Officer in writing no later than 5pm on 7 September 2015. Completed nominations can be sent to:

The Returning Officer  
Level 1, 62 Lygon St  
Carlton South, VIC, 3053

## MSAV & HSU#4 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given to all members of the MSAV and HSU#4 of the Annual General Meeting for the MSAV and HSU#4.

The Annual General Meeting will be conducted on 9 September at 6pm at the DownTowner on

Lygon, 66 Lygon St, Carlton South.

## VPA Professional Development Seminar

### Turning Psychological Practice into Research

The VPA's next Professional Development Seminar and its Annual General Meeting will be held on 16 September starting at 12pm at the Treacy Centre, Parkville.

#### Seminar Overview:

Associate Professor John Farhall will be the keynote speaker for the next VPA professional development session on 16 September on the topic, *Turning Psychological Practice into Research*. As well as John's keynote address, this session will include project presentations by members from a range of practice areas. We will conclude with a problem-solving panel, for which others who have experienced the pleasure and pain of turning practice into research will join John.

#### About Associate Professor John Farhall

Dr John Farhall holds a joint appointment as Associate Professor at the School of Psychology and Public Health at La Trobe University and Consultant Clinical Psychologist at North Western Mental Health. His role aims to build bridges between the public mental health services and university research and training. His primary interests are in innovations in mental health care, psychopathology, therapy for psychotic disorders and evidence-based practice. His research is centred on understanding psychotic disorders, including evaluating and disseminating evidence-based psychological treatments for people who have psychotic disorders and understanding the disorder processes those treatments seek to address. His research experience includes multicentre large scale randomized controlled trials, qualitative studies, postgraduate and Honours student projects, unfunded projects in mental health services and local routine evaluations.

#### Seminar Program:

12.00 - 12.30 Registration and Lunch

12.30 - 1.00 VPA Annual General Meeting

1.00 - 2.00 Keynote Address: Associate Professor John Farhall 'Turning Psychological Practice into Research'

2.00 - 3.00 Members' Projects: Session One

3.00 - 3.20 Afternoon Tea and Networking

3.20 - 4.00 Members' Projects: Session Two

4.00 - 4.30 Problem-solving panel (Associate Professor John Farhall + others)

Contact the Union on 9623 9625 or at [enquiry@vicpsych.org.au](mailto:enquiry@vicpsych.org.au) to register for this PD, to submit your project to present at the PD or if you have any questions.

### Worth Reading: Society's safety net

"When you work in a public hospital it takes a great deal of denial, repression, alcohol or convoluted self-justification to remain dispassionate about bad public policy. The hospital is society's safety net, and it hovers 2 centimetres from the ground. If you have no bed, no shoes to stop your feet from getting all cut up and infected, no food, no medicine, no one to help you get to the toilet, if you want to die and have fallen through the chasms between our community resources, it is the grand old public hospital that will take you in."

Read the entire article by Karen Hitchcock in The Monthly at:

<https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2015/august/1438351200/karen-hitchcock/society-s-safety-net>

### Worth Reading: Paid Parental Leave: Abbott Thinks

## Australian Women Deserve 1 Day

“IF the Abbott Government has its way some new parents will lose 18 weeks government-funded paid parental leave, while other parents will have their entitlements drastically reduced.

It’s a radical U-turn on a policy that only recently brought Australia into line with nearly every other country in the world – yet the Australian Parliamentary Committee tasked to review the decision will spend just one day considering the proposal.

Once the Abbott Government’s top priority – Tony Abbott went to the 2013 election with a “rolled gold” parental leave policy of 26 weeks paid leave at replacement wages – the issue of paid parental leave is now being swept under the carpet.”

Read the entire article in Working Life at: <http://workinglife.org.au/2015/08/13/paid-parental-leave-abbott-thinks-australian-women-deserve-1-day/>

## Worth Reading: Senate rejection of union oversight bill sets up potential double dissolution trigger

“The Senate has narrowly voted down for a second time a bill that would impose greater oversight on union officials, potentially setting up a double dissolution trigger for the government.

The [fair work \(registered organisations\) amendment bill](#) was rejected for the second time late on Monday night after the independent senators Jacqui Lambie and Glenn Lazarus, and the Motoring Enthusiast party senator, Ricky Muir, sided with Labor and the Greens in blocking the amendments. The final vote was 33 for, 34 against.

If passed, the bill would have set up a new registered organisations commission, a body tasked with imposing tougher penalties on dodgy union officials by bringing their reporting and transparency obligations in line with company directors. That would have meant that union officials who had breached their duties could face stronger civil and criminal penalties.”

Read the entire article by Shalailah Medhora in The Guardian at: <http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/aug/18/senate-rejection-of-union-oversight-bill-bizarre-and-illogical-says-eric-abetz>

## 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](#)

## 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.

Australian Unions Member Benefits 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 Australian Unions Member Benefits on 1300 362 223.



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## New Australian Unions Member Benefits app

Over the last month Australian Unions launched some new and exclusive Member Benefits - did you see our recent email telling you about this? If not, check your inbox! Search for "Lifestyle Rewards" for your login code.

Our program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards - for JB Hi-Fi, Rebel Sport, Dick Smith, iTunes and My Fun (which includes 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. If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now](#).

## 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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