



Stat Report 2015/31

Federal Government initiates Medicare Benefits Schedule Review

A review into the Medicare Benefits Schedule is being conducted by the Department of Health. The review will consider, according to the government, how services can be aligned with the clinical evidence and improve health outcomes for patients.

While this sounds like a great thing to do, there is a great deal of scepticism given the regular noise made by the Government about the sustainability of Australia's healthcare system; and the need to cut funding in order to make health more sustainable. There are growing concerns that this review will be used to justify further cuts to our universal healthcare system, ensuring that people who can least afford medical attention will not get medical attention when they need it.

It is important to remember that health funding cuts, of any description, will almost certainly impact on our jobs through cuts to positions and workload increases.

Unfortunately this review has failed to identify the need to review any rebates and reimbursements distributed through the private health system. Given how much public funding is poured into propping up the private health system it must be included in any review of the Medical Benefits Schedule to ensure the private health system isn't ordering unnecessary tests and procedures in the hope they prove their worth to policy holders.

The Union will be preparing a submission and encourages all members to contribute their own submission. It is vital that the voice of health professionals is heard in this process, and not just the voice of small group of hand-picked people.

Find out more about the MBS review at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/MBSReviewTaskforce>

Submissions are due by the close of business on 9 November.



State Government's Health 2040 Vision – Have your say

The Andrews Government is currently undertaking consultation on the sort of health system Victoria wants created over the next 20 years. As highlighted in last week's STAT Report, the Government identified the following challenges facing Victoria's health system including:

- An ageing population
- Lifestyle choices and behaviours that contribute to higher levels of chronic diseases
- Disparities and inequalities in health outcomes for certain population groups
- People's changing needs and expectations
- Unprecedented financial constraints

The Union will be making a submission and we are strongly encouraging members to make their own submission.

Download the discussion paper at <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthreform/>

Make sure you have your say in building a stronger health care system for Victoria which ensures that Victorians are able to access world-class health care when they need it.

Submissions are due 7 October.

You can send your written response to healthreform@dhhs.vic.gov.au or use the web-form on the Health Reform website. If you prefer, you can send your submissions directly to us to either incorporate them in our submission or attach them.

“No Pay? No Way!” – Meet with your local MP and 5 other things you can do today

“Management value budget savings over patient safety and staff welfare”

With workloads massively increasing while staffing levels continue to decline, it's vital to make sure our voices are heard. That's why it's important that you make contact with your local Member of State Parliament.

They need to hear you telling them about the growth in workloads, exploding demand for services and the difficulty and stress you experience in getting all of your work done within

rostered hours. To truly tackle this growing problem it's vital more people know about it, especially those people who can do something about it – our elected representatives.

Here are 5 things you can do right now in the next step of our “No Pay? No Way!” campaign:

1. Talk to your colleagues about workloads and saying “No” to unpaid work and unsustainable workloads. **Remember:** You can't be forced to perform unpaid work and your refusal is a lawful action for which you cannot be disciplined or punished.
2. [Sign up for our Workplace Kits](#) and help spread the word about our campaign in your workplace.
3. Let us know when you're doing unpaid work. Click [here](#) and report it.*
4. Help us identify breaches in your workplace. By helping us to identify breaches of our Agreement, you are enabling the Union to take action on those breaches and enforcing our Agreement. Click [here](#) and report breaches.*
5. Ask your colleagues to join the Union. Together we are stronger to fight back against increasing unpaid work and growing workloads.

** To report your unpaid work and breaches of our Agreement you will need to register for the website.*

Asbestos at Eye and Ear

The Union has been maintaining a watching brief on the concerns raised about asbestos discovered in the work being done at the Eye and Ear. At this point in time it appears that there are no risks to workers or patients and that all necessary measures are in place to prevent any exposure.

The Union is working with other health unions and the relevant construction unions to monitor the situation.

People's Climate March – Melbourne

The People's Climate March will be held across Australia on 27-29 November.

Over that weekend, People's Climate Marches will take place in hundreds of major cities around the world with the goal of creating a massive mobilisation to call for real action on climate change. And it comes at a crucial time when the world's leaders and diplomats are in Paris to negotiate the kind of cuts and assistance required to make deep cuts in our emissions.

The Melbourne march will be at 5.30pm on Friday 27 November.

A coalition of unions, environmental and other organisations is being built to facilitate the march.

Make sure you join our contingent to help send a message to Australian and the world's leaders that we want and must take urgent action to avoid a global climate catastrophe.

Get more information at: <http://www.peoplesclimate.org.au/>

Footy Finals, a Public Holiday and our Agreement

Wondering about the upcoming public holiday for the AFL finals, and what our Agreement says about it?

Good question! But given that it is a gazetted public holiday, the existing public holiday provisions of our Agreement apply. If you're working in the private sector please contact the Union so that we can better inform you of the provisions that apply to you specifically.

Worth Reading: Tax Debate Too Important To Be Left

To Business

“The Turnbull Government is barely two weeks old, but the new Prime Minister and Treasurer are anxious to claim the mantle of economic leadership.

Suddenly, tax reform is back on the agenda.

‘Morrison’s tabloid tax crusade’ blared the page one headline on the Australian Financial Review last Thursday.

And there is no tabloid that gets more excited about tax reform than the Fin.”

Read the entire article by Mark Philips in Working Life: <http://workinglife.org.au/2015/09/28/tax-debate-too-important-to-be-left-to-business/>

Worth Reading: The new urban divide, and how to deal with it

“In her twenties, Alice Jaques lived in pokey little student flats in inner-Melbourne suburbs like Kensington and North Carlton while she finished her doctoral research in public health at Melbourne University. Most days she walked to work.

In 2005 she married Jason Osborne, an IT professional who worked in a city bank, and they began planning a future with children and their own home. They didn’t even bother looking in the inner city. Alice’s friends told her “it would be six, seven [hundred thousand dollars]-plus for anything decent.”

Alice’s sister lived in Point Cook, a new suburb twenty-five kilometres southwest of the CBD. It was growing fast, with new shops, schools and childcare centres. The couple liked what they saw. They bought off the plan and in a couple of years moved into their four-bedroom home. They caught the Werribee train to work, and life was good.”

Read the entire article by Jane-Frances Kelly and Paul Donegan in Inside Story at: <http://insidestory.org.au/the-new-urban-divide-and-how-to-deal-with-it>

Worth Reading: Interview: How Jordan’s unions are helping Syrian refugees

“Jordan is a safe haven for more than 600,000 Syrian refugees, of whom 80 per cent are living in the country’s cities.

However, this month the World Food Programme was forced to stop food aid to almost 230,000 Syrian refugees living in Jordan as it can no longer afford to feed them. Another 200,000 refugees in the country have had their aid cut in half. This has left some Syrian families living on less than 50 cents a day.

Speaking at IndustriALL Global Union’s Women World Conference in Vienna last week, Ahlam Alterawi from the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile Garment and Clothing Industries (JTGCU) explained what unions have been doing to integrate refugees into the workforce... “

Read the entire interview on Industriall-Union at: <http://www.industrial-union.org/interview-how-jordans-unions-are-helping-syrian-refugees>

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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.

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](#).



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.

Get the most out of the Union's website

You might have noticed that the Union has a new website. The new website has a number of special features for members. These features like the Members section and the Forums, require you to have a log-in and password.

But to ensure that your privacy is protected we have created the website in such a way that you will need a separate log-in and password for the Members section and the Forums section. It might seem to be inconvenient but it does better protect you and your private information. It also means that we can be more certain about the source of a hack if such an event is ever to arise.

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