



Stat Report 2016/05

Public Sector Bargaining: Have your say on your EBA

Right now the Union is preparing for public sector enterprise bargaining to commence around June this year. And to make sure we're fighting for the best outcomes possible we have to know what the key issues are for you and your colleagues.

That's why the Union has created a survey to find out from you what the key issues are and what we should focus on in the upcoming negotiations. The survey takes approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete and it's a vital part of our preparations for enterprise negotiations.

[Take our EBA Survey today.](#)

It's crucial that we work together as we face a more hostile industrial landscape with the Turnbull Government threatening to attack our rights at work; and a government that has little regard for public healthcare.

[Take our EBA Survey today and let us know what's important to you.](#)

I look forward to working with you to ensure we get a great deal in 2016.

-- Paul Elliott

Queen Elizabeth Centre gutting services for vulnerable women

The Victorian Psychologists Association (VPA) is alarmed that the Queen Elizabeth Centre, which is located in the Premier's seat, is shutting down vital mental health and referral services for the most vulnerable women in Melbourne.

The Queen Elizabeth Centre provides vital mental health services, post-natal mental health care and crucial referral services for vulnerable mums and kids. Federal government funding cuts of \$123,000 and poor decisions by management at the QEC means a range of services like the Afghan Playgroup, the Sudanese Playgroup, and the MyTime Playgroup have been cut and the Music Therapy program has gone from two days a week to one day a week.

The QEC will have only one psychologist to run what is left of the programs.

The Union is particularly concerned that QEC is slashing much needed services despite having \$3 million in investments.

It is outrageous that the QEC is dumping vital mental health services for mum and kids at a time when need for such services is at their highest ever. And to have the Health Minister. Jill

Hennessy posing for happy snaps at QEC while essential programs are being gutted is appalling.

The VPA finds it entirely galling that Premier Daniel Andrews talks about protecting vulnerable women and children and yet in his own electorate the QEC is gutting essential mental health services right under his nose.

The QEC has shown no remorse in gutting these services and it looks like the management and its board have stopped caring for the very women and children that QEC was set up to help. On top of this the QEC has refused to work with the VPA to find alternative ways of delivering these vital services.

For a not-for-profit organisation the QEC seems to be more interested in investing \$3 million rather than delivering services.

If the Premier is actually serious about addressing the mental health needs of vulnerable mothers and children then he must step in to ensure QEC restores its range of programs. At the very least he should be investigating why QEC is putting millions of dollars into investment accounts instead of delivering essential mental health programs.

The QEC's decision to gut services instead of fighting for their vulnerable clientele is symptomatic of the ongoing poor management and governance of a once great community service.

Dorevitch Enterprise Agreement Negotiations Resume

Negotiations with Dorevitch Pathology management for a new enterprise agreement will resume this week.

The Union's resolve to negotiate a new agreement with decent and fair wage increases has not wavered.

A detailed report to members will follow shortly.

Hospital Pharmacists asked to Administer Vaccinations

The Victorian Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy, announced the Government's intention to implement a program to have hospital pharmacists administer certain vaccinations to people aged 18 years and older.

The Association of Hospital Pharmacists met with Department of Health officials late last week to discuss the many implications of the program for pharmacists, including issues of scope of practice, whether or not a pharmacist would be required to administer, resourcing in pharmacy departments to cope with the additional work, training, professional indemnity, and of course payments for the work.

These discussions are ongoing and the Union will report developments as they emerge.

It is important that AHP members know that pharmacy departments are required under the Enterprise Agreement to consult with the Union to discuss the impacts of this proposed change before it can be implemented.

The Union will hold meetings to discuss this proposal with members. Please contact the office to so we can organise a meeting in your hospital.

These Cuts Are Killing Us Rally

Last weekend the Union joined with hundreds of Melburnians and thousands of people across Australia to protest the ongoing cuts to Medicare including the \$650 million cuts the Turnbull Government announced over Christmas which takes away the bulk billing incentives for pathology and diagnostic imaging tests.

As we know access to pathology and diagnostic testing is vital to ensuring people are able to get the care they need when they need it. Approximately 80 per cent of all diagnoses and treatment in acute care settings are done through a pathology test. Pathology and diagnostic testing are vital in ensuring treatments are working.

Removing bulk-billing incentives for pathology tests and diagnostic imaging will make it more expensive for vulnerable people to get the tests they need done as they're forced to pay up-front out-of-pocket expenses. As a result, access to pathology services and healthcare standards will decline leading inevitably to adverse health outcomes for many patients; and a greater burden on the healthcare system.

A key underpinning principle of universal health care – Medicare - is ensuring that everyone, particularly those who for whatever reason cannot afford upfront costs, are guaranteed access to all forms of healthcare services.

These changes will heavily impact patients, and will heavily impact on private pathology providers who rely on referrals from GPs and medical practitioners and could lead to much less competition, despite claims about there being enough competition in the sector.

We'll continue to stand up for Medicare and keep fighting to protect our world-class universal healthcare system.



Paul Elliott addresses the These Cuts Are Killing Us rally on 20 February

Crisis in Public Pathology Petition

On Thursday (25 February) the Union presented our “Crisis in Public Pathology” petition to Members of Parliament to present to the Victorian Parliament.

The petition calls on Legislative Assembly of Victoria to place a moratorium on the contracting out of public services and instigate a full investigation into the procurement practices in public hospitals with respect to pathology services.

This important petition was presented to State Member for Melbourne, Ellen Sandell and State Member for the Western Metropolitan Region, Colleen Hartland, who are both deeply concerned about ensuring Victoria continues to have a world-class healthcare system underpinned by world-class pathology services.



A not-so-taxing time for the rich

The Australian tax system is tangled up in a web of subsidies, exemptions and arrangements that unfairly advantage the top 10 per cent of income earners, do nothing to drive innovation or productivity growth and hold us back from investing in nation-building.

Capital gains tax exemptions, superannuation tax breaks, negative gearing and loopholes in the tax system are available to the super wealthy, who simply do not need them.

Ironically, the better-off you are — the more properties you own, the more you can top up your superannuation savings, the more you can afford to pay for accounting services — the greater the benefit you receive.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Office, negative-gearing costs the federal budget at least \$2 billion every year. While many middle-income earners do use negative gearing, 50 per cent of this windfall goes to the top 20 per cent of earners.

A property mogul with a portfolio of six investments valued at about \$500,000 each is handed the entire annual tax paid by half a dozen aged care or retail workers. There's something deeply distasteful about a worker on \$50,000 a year funding the wealth creation schemes of millionaires.

Almost three-quarters of capital gains tax exemptions, estimated to cost taxpayers between \$4 billion and \$5.7 billion a year, are paid to the top 10 per cent of high income households on more than \$200,000 a year.

Meanwhile, of the \$35 billion per annum in superannuation tax breaks (the same amount we spend on the pension), more than half of this goes to the top 20 per cent of income earners and only \$1 in every \$200 in super concessions goes to the bottom 20 per cent.

The higher up the income ladder you go, the worse the problem gets. While the average Australian contributes tens of thousands of dollars in tax, 75 Australians who earned more than \$1 million declared an average taxable income of \$1.09.

Of 1539 large public and foreign companies operating in Australia, 38 per cent paid zero tax. ExxonMobil, Qantas and General Motors paid nothing. Last year the cleaners at Spotless paid more tax than the entire company.

With just 10 per cent of Australians now holding more wealth than the rest of us combined, we need genuine tax reform.

Leading into this election, we have a huge opportunity to unwind this net of government waste on wealthy welfare and reinvest that money in the Gonski education reforms to give our kids the support they need to reach their full potential.

If Malcolm Turnbull genuinely wants to use the tax system to drive innovation and productivity growth, he will look seriously at taking wasted resources and investing in our young people — in our future. Tackling this problem will take guts, and proposals like better targeting negative gearing and capital gains tax should be embraced. Indeed, we need more politicians prepared to put their necks out on issues that have traditionally been off limits because of vested interests.

It was disappointing that Treasurer Scott Morrison was not prepared to throw bipartisan support behind this proposal, although he did leave the door wide open on reform to negative gearing.

These exemptions and arrangements for the wealthy are expensive for us, but highly valued by powerful people and businesses at the big end of town. It is no surprise, therefore, that they are pushing with one hand for an increase in the GST to pay for more corporate and income tax cuts while with the other hand defending this raft of tax breaks.

Instead of turning off the “wealthy welfare” tap, Treasurer Morrison’s advisory panel on tax urged big business and its industry bodies to mount a PR campaign to “educate” Australians on why companies shouldn’t always pay the mandatory 30 per cent tax rate.

The government should also seriously look at a minimum average tax rate of 35 per cent for very high income earners. Modelling shows that would raise another \$2.5 billion a year.

Australians don’t need education about the tax system. They need a treasurer and a government that will stand up to vested interests and unwind “wealthy welfare”.

With just 10 per cent of Australians now holding more wealth than the rest of us combined, we need genuine tax reform.

It’s time to scale back multinational tax avoidance, stop pouring hard-earned tax dollars into the pockets of property developers and the super wealthy and design a system that serves the - majority.

If we do this we may be able to fund the commitments we so desperately need in health, education and disability.

Union endorses Healthy Futures campaign

The Union strongly believes that climate change is union business. We know that climate change threatens our health by increasing the risks of heatwaves, bushfires, droughts and storms, displacing people and straining our health systems.

And right now HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas. That’s why the Union at its last Committee of Management meeting passed a motion endorsing the Healthy Futures campaign and calling on HESTA and FSS to divest from investing in fossil fuels.

To read the full text of the motion passed by the management committees of the HSU, MSAV and VPA visit: <http://msav.org.au/uncategorised/union-endorse-healthy-futures-campaign>



Join us in asking HESTA and FSS to divest from fossil fuels at www.healthyfutures.net.au/divest. We know that if enough of us raise our voices, HESTA will do the right thing for health and help pave the way to a safe and healthy future.

Union passes resolution on Palestine

The HSU Branch Committee of Management (BCOM) at its February 2016 meeting adopted a position in support of the international Boycott, Divestments and Sanctions Campaign, a campaign formed to provide an opportunity for consumer boycotts of companies assisting in or profiting from the occupation of Palestinian territories.

The Boycotts, Divestments and Sanctions Campaign is intended to contribute to a peaceful resolution of this destructive and long-running conflict.

You can read the full Branch Committee of Management motion at: <http://msav.org.au/uncategorised/union-passes-resolution-on-palestine>

Psychologists: If you need help at work you need the VPA Inc.

If you are a psychologist and not in the VPA, you are taking unnecessary risks with your reputation and career. [Download an application form and join today.](#)

Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements

In addition to the above, VPA routinely assists members over issues such as harassment and bullying, under classification, organisational re-structuring, incorrect calculation of leave entitlements and health and safety. In addition, it negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

International Women's Day Rally

This year's International Women's Day rally will take place on Tuesday, 8 March from 5:30pm at the State Library of Victoria.

Event Details

When: 5.30pm on 8 March

Where: State Library of Victoria

Stay up-to-date with the latest about the rally and march on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/514015885426368/>

Women's Rights at Work Festival

The WRAW Festival is designed to showcase the advances that united women have made in realising their human rights at work, as well as how we can continue the fight for equality in all aspects of working life.

The Festival incorporates a robust calendar of FREE events focused on organising and

campaigning, gender equality in the workplace, domestic violence as a workplace issue and the International Women's Day march on 8th March.

The Festival runs from 6 March to 11 March. For more details about what's on visit: <http://www.unionwomen.org.au/wrawcalendar>



Annual Conference 2016

The MSAV, VPA and AHP joint Annual Conference will be held on 10 June this year.

With public sector bargaining commencing this year and a number of private sector agreements still being negotiated, this year's Annual Conference will explore some key themes in our sector affecting our workplaces. In particular this year's conference will consider in more depth how to tackle the issue of unpaid work and explore what lies behind the culture of our workplaces that indirectly encourages people to do unpaid work.

Stay tuned for more information.

Worth Reading: Three myths on negative gearing the housing industry wants you to believe

"The Labor party took everyone by surprise over the weekend when it announced it would limit negative gearing to new housing and reduce the capital gains tax discount to 25%. Proving negative gearing is no longer politically untouchable, the government has hinted its own policy may go some way in the same direction. But even then, some of the myths and half-truths peddled by vested interests have returned to haunt the debate.

[Listening to the housing industry](#) you would think that property tax concessions single-handedly drive new housing supply, keep a lid on rents and provide an opportunity for middle and low income earners to build wealth. In reality, these costly tax breaks [increase speculation activity in the housing market, reduce affordability for first home buyers and primarily benefit high income earners](#). So why have some of these myths proved so enduring?"

Read the entire article by Danielle Wood and John Daley in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/three-myths-on-negative-gearing-the-housing-industry-wants-you-to-believe-54732>

Join the Union

Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Are you doing longer hours at work? Is your workload increasing?

You're not alone.

Health services are relying on you to do unpaid work to keep many services afloat. In fact without

you doing unpaid work many services would be unable to function properly. And the evidence is showing that the amount of unpaid work is increasing along with ever-growing workloads and fewer staff to fill the gaps. Increasing unpaid work and high workloads are having a seriously negative impact on our lives.

And in 2016 we commence negotiations for a new collective agreement with the public sector.

But to protect our professions and stand up for our rights at work we must strengthen our collective voice and strengthen our bargaining position by increasing our membership.

And you can help right now by sharing one of the images below through Facebook.



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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](#)

Get the most out of the Union's website

The Union's 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.

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



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- 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.](#)

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