



Stat Report 2017/12

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Union responds to the Federal budget

This year's federal budget is a mixed bag depending on where you stand in Australian society. Unfortunately it appears that if you're not a millionaire or the CEO of a major multinational then there's not too much to celebrate.

But as has been widely reported one of the better outcomes from this year's federal budget is the lifting of the Medicare freeze. The announcement sounds exciting but before we start popping champagne corks we have to remember that the lifting of the Medicare freeze will be done over time. And at this point in time the only freeze to be lifted is the Medicare rebate for GP visits. While this is an important step to making healthcare more affordable, it still means that people are paying growing out-of-pocket costs to get pathology and radiology tests done.

And there still remains a slavish commitment to supporting private health insurance companies through continued subsidies. This is despite growing evidence that private health insurance is delivering a lot less than originally claimed with difficult or complex health situations still being dealt with in the public health system.

But generally there are positive outcomes for healthcare in the federal budget but unfortunately it does nothing to increase the ability of our public hospitals to deliver critical clinical services. And while increased funding to medical research is welcome, it is difficult to see how research outcomes will be implemented as the State and Federal governments fail to properly fund medical scientists.

The increase to the Medicare levy to fully fund the National Disability Insurance Scheme is welcome. There are significant increases in funding to support the NDIS including funding toward mental health services. But as with anything from the Turnbull Government we will have to dig through the detail before we can fully give this initiative the thumbs up. There has also been a general increase in funding to mental health but there is concern that the funding doesn't necessarily link up with funding priorities and initiatives outlined by the State Government. While there could be some duplication the fact that additional funding has been provided to mental health is welcome but again will depend on the detail.

Another very good outcome from this year's budget is that paid parental leave has not been touched and remains intact. This is a great outcome which means that parents will be able to get the time they need to bond with their child and allow time to get into the swing of a new child in the household along with dealing with things like childcare.

It's also good to see the Government seeking to make medications more affordable with new drugs being added to the PBS. Unfortunately as with some of the other measures, the devil is in the detail and it will take some time to dig through the details. But while adding new drugs to the PBS is welcome, the Turnbull Government hasn't reversed its decision to make common, over-the-counter pain and headache medication prescription only, which will ultimately increase the cost of these medications.

One of the worst aspects of this budget is that it failed to do anything about climate change or protecting our precious environment.

But despite the promises from the Treasurer and early leaks suggesting this budget would be less terrible than the last couple, this federal budget guts higher education, fails to make housing more affordable and does little to secure the future for public health, education or embracing future industries and jobs.

Update on Public Sector bargaining

Despite much of the work being completed the Union is still waiting to have the draft agreement considered by the government and approved to be put out to vote.

While it's incredibly frustrating that we are still waiting, the good news is that we're closer to getting the agreement finalised. It also means that it hopefully won't be long before we'll be asking you to vote for the new agreement but we will make sure a detailed explanation of all of the changes in the new agreement is distributed.

Until then, we're keen to continue to share with members the details of the agreement and what we've been negotiating. Please get in touch with us and let us know when it's a good time to meet with members in your workplace by calling 9623 9623 or via email at enquiry@msav.org.au

Industrial action at Monash IVF

Management at Monash IVF are ramping up their rhetoric in order to intimidate members out of taking industrial action. We're hearing reports from the laboratory in Hawthorn that members are being told they will be stood down if they take industrial action; that people won't be able to see patients if they're wearing a badge and have told people they are not allowed to talk about the EBA or negotiations in the workplace.

This is happening at the same time that management put out another bad offer. It's very clear that Monash IVF continues to ignore the fact that without scientists they can't help couples realise their dream of having a family.

They still think paying you up to \$11,000 per year less than your colleagues at other IVF clinics is fair and reasonable. And Monash IVF still wants to have no disciplinary procedures, which means management can arbitrarily take disciplinary action without recourse for scientists.

That's why the Union is strongly recommending that you vote No to management's offer.

Not all IVF clinics pay equally



Mona\$h IVF

To help make sure this bad offer doesn't get up it's important you talk with your colleagues about your reasons for why you're voting No and to ask them to vote No. There's nothing illegal about you talking about the EBA or negotiations – in fact management telling you stop discussing the EBA and negotiations is actually illegal.

In response to the continued failure by management to make proper offers, the Union has initiated industrial action. We've initiated action so you're protected when wearing a union t-shirt or badge in your workplace to support the action. We're also strongly encouraging you to reconsider doing over-time especially where it impacts on your work-life balance.

The best way to show management that you want a better offer right now is to vote No to the latest bad offer; tell your colleagues why you're voting No; add one of our graphics to your email signature and start wearing a badge.

You can download campaign materials from our website at: <http://msav.org.au/monash-ivf/>

If you want more information or have questions please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or email enquiry@msav.org.au



Clinical Labs to close microbiology lab in Bendigo

The Union fears that Bendigo Hospital will have to cease offering its full range of clinical services as Clinical Labs announces it is cutting scientific staff, closing the microbiology pathology lab and downgrading its pathology laboratory accreditation status and services.

This move by Clinical Labs will see up to four scientists with a collective experience of approximately 100 years lose their jobs. The Union believes the decision by Clinical Labs will immediately compromise the quality of care patients receive at Bendigo Hospital given it will no longer have a microbiology pathology lab.

Having fully functioning pathology laboratories is as important to maintaining a hospital's key clinical services as an ambulance is to maintaining emergency services. It's clear that Clinical Labs has little regard for the safety and well-being of patients in Bendigo and the region with its belief that Bendigo Hospital doesn't need to have a fully functioning microbiology pathology lab.

It's simply not good enough that patients in Bendigo are not being given the highest quality of care because a private pathology provider has now walked away from delivering a critical pathology service. When it comes to things like diagnosing infectious diseases, waiting for a test result to come from Melbourne could have serious adverse effects for patients.

Essentially the business decisions of Clinical Labs, a for-profit pathology provider, are dictating the quality of care in Bendigo.

The Union is calling on Bendigo Hospital and Health Minister, Jill Hennessy, to assure the community that vital microbiology pathology services will continue in the hospital and that private

pathology providers like Clinical Labs are barred from being awarded pathology contracts at any public hospital in the future when this is the how they treat Victorians.

Scientists at Barwon Health – sign the petition

Australian Clinical Labs is trashing critical scientific positions to achieve better profits.

That's why we've asked all of our scientist members at Barwon Health to sign a petition calling on the Health Minister Jill Hennessy, Christine Cousens MP and CEO of Barwon Health to urgently intervene to ensure that the dangerous decline in pathology quality standards is reversed and that the Barwon Health laboratory is restored to a world-class pathology service for the Geelong community and treated as a crucial clinical service not something to be down-sized and outsourced.

Australian Clinical Labs is proposing further cuts to the scientific workforce at the pathology laboratory in Barwon Health. Patient safety is at risk as pathology test turn-around-times continue to grow delaying patient diagnosis and treatment. And with every job lost fewer clinical services can be delivered at Barwon Health.

It's up to us to keep the pressure on the Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy and Barwon Health's CEO to ensure that declining pathology standards are reversed and the cuts to the scientific workforce stop. **Please make sure you sign the petition we sent you on 10 May.**

So far we're only asking scientists and scientific staff to sign the petition to ensure that our petition carries the strongest possible weight as the experts in delivering pathology services.

Your confidentiality is guaranteed. We will not share your personal details with anyone other than those named in the petition.

Together we can take a stand to reverse these cuts – make sure you sign the petition.

If you need more information or want to discuss this with someone, contact the Union on 9623 9623 or via email at enquiry@msav.org.au

Changes to Victoria's health complaints system

The new [Health Complaints Act](#), introduced in Victoria this February includes a [Code of Conduct](#) for general (non-registered) health service providers and [Complaint Handling Standards](#).

The Health Complaints Commissioner is running a seminar at their city office to explain what these changes mean for health service providers.

What: New Standards for General Health service Providers

Date: Tuesday 20 June 9.30am - 11am

Where: Level 26, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne

Register now on their website at: <https://hcc.vic.gov.au/training-events/events>

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.](#)

Here's a 'real-life' case where the VPA has acted on behalf of VPA members.

When a patient of a major public health service committed an act of serious self-harm, Psychologist 'D', who had seen the patient many months previously, was subjected to disciplinary proceedings concerning her clinical notes. After enduring unfounded allegations by the employer, the psychologist decided to resign. VPA was able to negotiate on her behalf to obtain an attractive severance package in recognition of the injustice to which she had been

subjected.

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, the VPA negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

[Check out 7 more reasons to join the VPA Inc.](#)

Oh the places you could go with Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA!

Need a holiday? It's Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA raffle time!

[Buy your ticket online](#)

The annual raffle raised over \$80,000 last year. Your support is vital in keeping Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA independent, effective and strong and helps build unions and social movements.

As well as knowing your money goes to great things, you'll be in the draw for some terrific prizes.

[Buy your ticket online](#)

FIRST PRIZE: Take the holiday of your dreams with an \$8,000 travel voucher.
Can be used on domestic or international travel through Flight Centre stores.
Can be used to take one big holiday or a number of smaller trips.

SECOND PRIZE: Ride off into the commuter sunset on a fabulous Gazelle bicycle (valued at \$2,499). Dutch-made, the Ultimate S8 is a sporty trekking bike with a lightweight aluminium frame.

THIRD PRIZE: Escape into a world of books with a \$500 book voucher from Abbey's Bookshop, an Aladdin's cave of words and pages! Abbey's has been an institution for book lovers since 1968.

How to buy your tickets:

- [Buy online](#)
- [Download and complete this form](#) [PDF]; or
- FREECALL 1800 888 674, fax (02) 9261 1118 or email office@apheda.org.au

If you have supported our raffle in the past, please keep an eye on your letter box for a book of tickets that our volunteers will be sending out to you this week.

So, spread the word and help us raise more than \$100,000 this year.

Support Family Violence Leave for all workers

Survivors have suffered for too long behind closed doors. We all have a part to play in ending violence: it's time that employers played theirs. Tell employers that everyone has the right to paid days away from work if they are subjected to family violence.

Make your voice heard: <http://bit.ly/FDVLeave>

Stopping Gendered Violence at Work

Far too often women are attacked, harassed and threatened in their workplaces. And it needs to stop. That's why the Union is fighting back against gendered violence in the workplace – it's a

very serious occupational health and safety issue.

Gendered violence is like a disease in our workplaces. Working women's experience of violence at work indicates that the problem of gendered violence is endemic in our workplaces.

Sign up to support the campaign at: <http://www.unionwomen.org.au/stopgv>

Support the 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.

Join us in asking HESTA and FSS to divest from fossil fuels at www.healthyfutures.net.au/divest.

Do you need access to Domestic Violence services?

If you're experiencing domestic violence and need help, here is a list of Victorian services which may be able to assist you.

[Safe Steps \(formerly Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria\)](#)

[Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria \(FVPLS\)](#)

[Centre Against Sexual Assault \(CASA\) Forum](#)

[Community Legal Centres](#)

[Court Network](#)

[Domestic Violence Victoria](#)

[Elder Rights Advocacy \(ERA\)](#)

[Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service](#)

[inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence](#)

[Men's Referral Service](#)

[No To Violence](#)

[QLife Australia](#)

[Seniors Rights Victoria \(SRV\)](#)

[The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence](#)

[Victoria Legal Aid \(VLA\)](#)

[Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency](#)

[Women with Disabilities Victoria \(WDV\)](#)

[Women's Housing Ltd](#)

[Women's Information Referral Exchange \(WIRE\)](#)

[Women's Legal Service](#)

[Women's refuges](#)

Worth Reading: How urban bushland improves our health and why planners need to listen

"Urban bushland has health benefits beyond being a great place to go for a walk. It filters our air and water, helps cities avoid extremes in temperatures, and is linked to lower rates of chronic

disease.

But these and other health benefits are virtually never accounted for in local and state land development processes.

Urban planners need to consider these health benefits when making decisions about the future of our cities."

Read the entire article by Pierre Horwitz, Alison Reid and Carmen Lawrence in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/how-urban-bushland-improves-our-health-and-why-planners-need-to-listen-72876>

Worth Reading: Medical scientists report on the impact climate change is having on health

"As a climate scientist, I spend time and energy studying how fast the Earth is warming and what is causing the warming. This knowledge helps us predict what the future will look like. But, what most people are interested in is, "how will it affect me?"

Some impacts we are pretty clear about, like the impacts related to sea level rise, increased storms and heavy precipitation, and increased drought and heat waves – particularly the impacts these events have on the economy. But climate change will affect us personally as well (by personally, I mean our physical person).

In fact, climate change is already affecting personal human health around the world. This subject was the focus of a summary report just published by the Medical Society Consortium. What I really liked about this report is that it breaks down some of the key impacts by region. Unfortunately, the report is limited in scope to the USA. However, the general conclusions and trends can be illuminating for people outside the USA as well."

Read the entire article by John Abraham in The Guardian at: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-per-cent/2017/may/05/medical-scientists-report-on-the-impact-climate-change-is-having-on-health>

Worth Reading: The multi-billion-dollar subsidy for private health insurance isn't worth it

"Almost 20 years after the 30% subsidy for private health insurance was introduced, premiums [continue to rise](#) every year. This comes at a cost to the federal budget – which was [forecast at A\\$6.5 billion](#) in the 2016 federal budget from the subsidy alone.

Meanwhile, consumers continue to view private health insurance as poor value for money. It would be sensible for the government to face evidence the subsidy is bad and costly policy, as health bureaucrats and commentators predicted long ago."

Read the entire article by Elizabeth Savage in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/the-multi-billion-dollar-subsidy-for-private-health-insurance-isnt-worth-it-76446>

Join the Union

Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Are you doing longer hours at work? Join the Union for work pain relief!

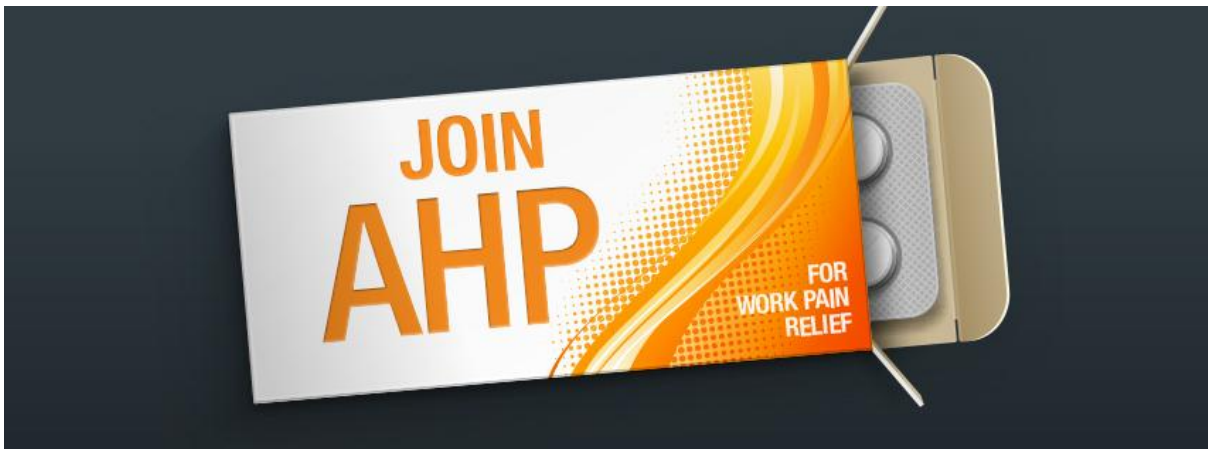
To protect our professions and stand up for our rights at work we must strengthen our collective voice and strengthen our bargaining position by increasing our membership. And you can help right now by sharing one of the images below through Facebook.



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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 your login code.

Our program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards including 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.](#)



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