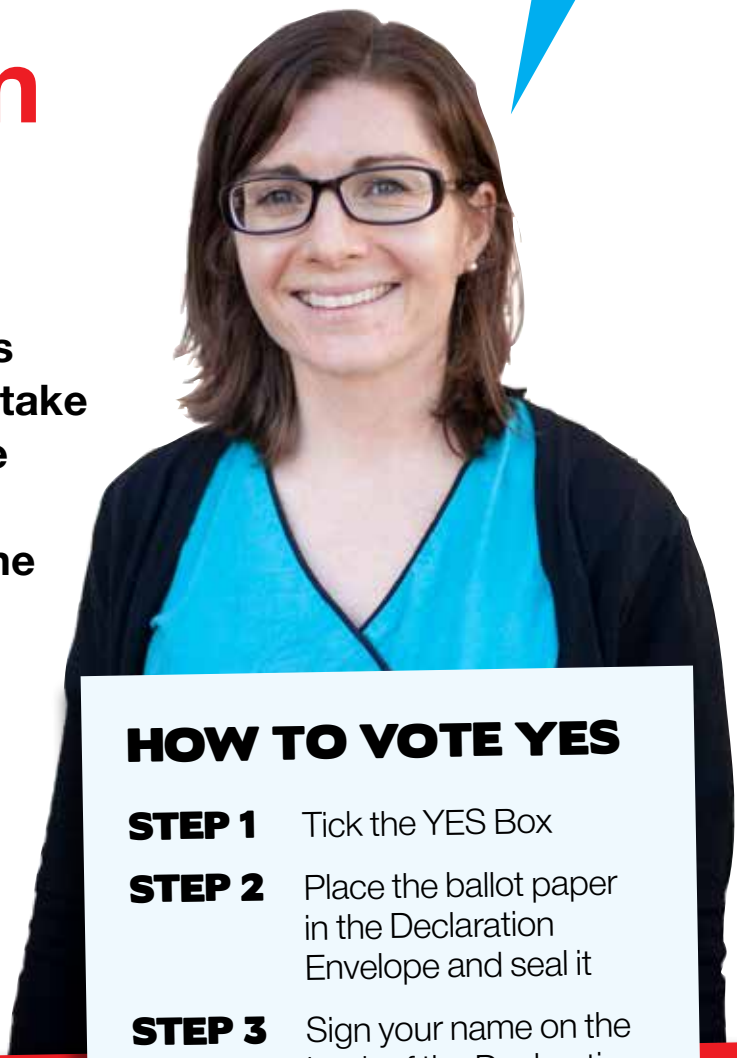
VAHPA Public Sector Bargaining

ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Vote YES for improved pay and conditions

Protected Industrial Action



DID YOU KNOW...?

On Thursday evening, 28 April, a mass meeting of VAHPA members voted to take protected industrial action around the failure of management to provide an Enterprise Agreement that works in the interests of patients and allied health professionals alike.

You will soon receive a ballot paper from the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). If you want to see improvements in your Wages and Conditions you will need to **vote YES.**

HOW TO VOTE YES

STEP 1 Tick the YES Box

STEP 2 Place the ballot paper in the Declaration Envelope and seal it

STEP 3 Sign your name on the back of the Declaration Envelope

STEP 4 Place the Declaration Envelope in the Reply Paid Envelope

STEP 5 Post the Reply Paid Envelope ASAP

VOTE YES ON YOUR BALLOT

& RETURN YOUR BALLOT PROMPTLY

ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS dedicated expert professional

VAHPA

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OVERVIEW OF BARGAINING

VAHPA spent many months in 2015 surveying the membership to enable us to get a clear understanding of what is important to you at work.

This information was used to craft your 'log of claims'. In early September 2015 your claims were served on the Victorian Hospital Industrial Association (VHIA) and your employer.

VAHPA sought to commence formal bargaining early so as to avoid delays in finalising your new Agreement and thereby avoiding the issue of outstanding backpay. Disappointingly, our requests were ignored.

On 22 December 2015, VAHPA held a rally on the steps of the Treasury Building in a bid to force the Andrews government to commence formal bargaining. The response was prompt; we were at the bargaining table within days.

Since then we have been in talks with the VHIA and the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHS) on a regular basis. We have also met with Industrial Relations Victoria (IRV) and relevant Ministers where necessary.

While we have agreement on a number of important items, the vital issues of your career structure and of your wages remain unresolved.

Every VAHPA member employed in the public sector was invited to the mass meeting on Thursday evening 28 April to talk through the bargaining and our next steps.

At that meeting it was decided that the time has come to apply to the Fair Work Commission to take protected industrial action.

VAHPA MASS MEETING

VICTORIAN TRADES HALL COUNCIL

28 April 2016

"VAHPA is committed to achieving a fair and reasonable outcome for public sector Allied Health Professionals during this round of bargaining. This outcome must include addressing serious and problematic educational and workload issues, as well as attraction and retention issues, in public sector allied health.

VAHPA calls on the Andrews government, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Public Hospitals to facilitate this outcome by working constructively with VAHPA to reform our antiquated classification and career structure and to rectify the manifest wage disparity that sees VAHPA covered Allied Health Professionals disadvantaged and patient care diminished.

VAHPA members do not enter into protected industrial action lightly but believe that the situation is now so dire that industrial action is in the interests of patients, Allied Health Professionals and all Victorians.

The meeting directs VAHPA Secretary, Craig McGregor, to apply to the Fair Work Commission for Protected Action Ballot Orders for relevant individual Public Health Services for which VAHPA has been negotiating enterprise agreements."

Moved: Margaret Hollingdale
Seconded: Fiona Gallery

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

"Talks have been positive in a number of areas, however at this stage we see no indication that the hospitals or the state government are prepared to address our claims on workload issues, our antiquated career structure or the matter of wage disparity. VAHPA members, it is time for us to take a stand!"

VAHPA Secretary Craig McGregor

What is a Protected Action Ballot?

Taking industrial action during bargaining for a new enterprise agreement is part of the bargaining system of the Fair Work Act 2009. Taking “protected” industrial action means that the action is entirely lawful and members taking the action are protected from their employer suing them, sacking them or otherwise victimising them.

What is the process?

To take protected industrial action, VAHPA must first apply to the Fair Work Commission seeking approval to conduct a Protected Action Ballot.

Once approved, Fair Work Commission will pass the matter on to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). The AEC will then ask all relevant VAHPA members, via a ballot, whether you authorise the specified forms of industrial action.

Your ballot paper should arrive in your mail box (at home) in the coming weeks. We will provide more information on the timeline once we have clarity from FWC and the AEC.

How does the ballot work?

For a protected action ballot to be successful it must pass two tests:

1. Over 50% of members must participate in the ballot
2. Over 50% of members who vote in the ballot must vote ‘yes’

Please note, we must leap these hurdles for each employer. That is, for example, over 50% of VAHPA members at Melbourne Health must vote and over 50% of those voting must vote yes.

What happens if the vote doesn’t get up?

If the vote is not successful we will be unable to take ‘protected’ industrial action and will have to return to the bargaining table on weakened footing—this could be seriously problematic for the campaign. It is time for all VAHPA members to stand together and demand a good outcome.

VAHPA takes all industrial action very seriously and only recommends it where absolutely necessary.

Do I have to take the actions?

The ballot paper has a single question seeking members’ support for the different types of industrial actions. Voting yes to these actions does not mean you have to take part in all or any of them.

Will my employer know if or how I voted?

No, your vote is completely confidential. Only the AEC will see your vote.

Who can take part in protected industrial action?

You need to be a VAHPA member at the time action is being taken to be eligible to take part in any action.

What sort of actions are we talking about?

A list of actions endorsed by VAHPA members will form part of your ballot paper. It is important to note that these actions have been chosen by VAHPA members (at the mass meeting and via our online survey) to have maximum impact on the hospitals and the government but minimum impact on patients.

CODE BLUE

"Allied Health Professionals are vital to the provision of healthcare. Our career structure must fit the contemporary healthcare environment and provide us with rewarding and fulfilling jobs. This is a great opportunity to fix things, but we must take action now."

Thomas, Allied Health Professional

Your yes vote gives us the option of taking legally protected industrial action.

VAHPA

IT'S TIME TO JOIN...

Authorised by Craig McGregor VAHPA Secretary