

# HACSU 2016 VICTORIAN PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH EBA CAMPAIGN



**Contact HACSU 1300 651 931**  
**hacsu.asn.au**  **facebook.com/hacsu**

# Welcome to the HACSU 2016 EBA campaign book

**HACSU is the only union specifically for mental health professionals in Victoria. We are a specialist Union, for a specialist profession.**

HACSU believe that through proper remuneration and conditions for staff, the mental health sector will attract and retain the best possible workers, and thus provide the best quality mental health services.

be fighting for better services, staffing and safety.

In this booklet you can find out more about what we are fighting for, as well as information about the EBA and why it's important to be a HACSU member.

In April 2016, the Victorian Public mental health Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) will be renegotiated and HACSU will



## MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

HACSU has a long and proud history of fighting for mental health workers. For over 100 years, HACSU has consistently advocated for improved wages, working conditions and service delivery in our mental health services across Victoria.

Today our mental health services should be world class, but chronic underfunding and constant cuts limit the capacity to deliver quality services. Key issues we are facing include underfunding and increasing service demand, inadequate staffing levels, increasing caseload and workplace safety. HACSU members campaign for what they believe in, which puts us in the position to make a difference for the 1 in 4 Victorians experiencing mental illness.

If we can combat these issues, the Victorian public mental health service will see huge improvements in quality service delivery.



**SPECIALIST PROFESSION  
SPECIALIST UNION**



I'M MARCHING ON 20 AUGUST BECAUSE  
CUTS TO MENTAL  
HEALTH HURT OUR  
CHILDREN, FAMILIES  
& WHOLE COMMUNITY

[hacsu.asn.au](http://hacsu.asn.au)

# What is an EBA?


**An enterprise bargaining agreement or EBA is an industry wide agreement between employer and employees which sets out the terms of employment including wages and conditions.**

Employees who work in public mental health are covered under an EBA called the Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement.

This EBA covers staff working across mental health services in nursing, allied health, management and administrative and support staff.

Instead of mental health professionals being included in general agreements i.e. general nursing, general allied health, HACSU has fought to maintain a mental health specific EBA.

This has allowed HACSU to protect the specialist skills needed in psychiatric services and fight for conditions specific to the nature of mental health services and staff.



THIS EBA COVERS STAFF  
WORKING ACROSS  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES  
IN NURSING, ALLIED  
HEALTH, MANAGEMENT  
AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND  
SUPPORT STAFF.

# How is an EBA formed?

**HACSU industrial team, including the State Secretary, Assistant State Secretary, Lead Organiser and Senior Industrial officer negotiate with the employer on behalf of members during a process called collective bargaining.**

Employees will have more power in negotiations if they are represented collectively as a union, rather than negotiating individually. Workplaces with strong union membership will see greater outcomes in EBA bargaining.

The employer will issue a Notice of Employee Representation Rights (NERR), notifying staff that the EBA will soon expire, Industrial officers at the HACSU office will act as a bargaining representative for the Union members.

Union officials will meet with members to gather information

about improving workplace conditions.

This information is compiled into a log of claims and served to the employer representative.

HACSU industrial officials, along with legal representatives will then negotiate with the employer to achieve the best possible outcome. When there is a dispute between the employer and employees about a claim, the Union will put pressure on the employer by taking protected industrial action.

Negotiations continue until both parties reach an agreement.

A proposed EBA will be put forward by the employer and employees can vote yes or no if they agree to the proposed EBA.

If the EBA is voted no, then negotiations continue.

The Public Mental Health Agreement is usually renegotiated every 4 years.

HACSU is able to achieve better outcomes in mental health because of our industry specific membership.

## Is the employer represented?

**Yes, the employer is represented by the VHIA, industrial relations consultants and other legal staff.**



# What role do members play in EBA bargaining?

**Union members play the most important part of any EBA campaign.**

Membership numbers, activity and involvement are crucial in achieving the best possible EBA. Members fight hard to have their voices heard by putting pressure on the Government and employers by taking protected action, speaking to their colleagues and the community, and rallying.

Industries and workplaces with higher union membership numbers achieve much better wages and conditions than industries or workplaces with little to no union membership.

# What is industrial action and how are employees protected during this process?

**Industrial action is a means to pressure an employer to settle a workplace dispute.**

Going on strike is a well-known type of industrial action, however it is a last resort for HACSU. There are many different ways to take industrial action including, paperwork bans, temporary stop work action, delaying or refusing to perform certain parts of work.

Employees are protected to take industrial action under the Fair Work Act. There is a legal process the Union will follow to see that any industrial action is lawful.

# What have we achieved in previous EBAs?

**All wages and conditions in the current EBA have been achieved by the work of union members.**

Every four years when the EBA is renegotiated, HACSU members work hard to build on what was achieved last time. The Victorian public mental health agreement has the best wages and conditions of any mental health provider in Victoria. This can be attributed to the hard work of the many HACSU members. Some of the many wins we have secured in our EBA include;

- \* above award wages
- \* penalty rates and shift allowances
- \* psychiatric Nurse classification
- \* qualifications allowances
- \* clinical nurse educator roles
- \* training positions (for training in mental health community teams)
- \* four wheel drive cars and satellite phones for rural teams
- \* mental health specific professional development
- \* representing the mental health sector as a whole (not just nurses)
- \* clauses specific to high dependency Units (HDUs)
- \* professional development for Psychiatric Services Officers
- \* consultation Liaison Nurses
- \* carer consumer workforce (we are currently seeking to include the peer workforce in the EBA too)
- \* clauses to deal with workplace violence
- \* claims for occupational health and safety to map designated working groups and health and safety representatives



## What are we fighting for this time?

HACSU surveyed over 500 members, and visited over 150 workplaces in the public mental health sector to talk about what we need to campaign for in this round of bargaining. Better services for clients, greater staffing number and improved safety were the three main concerns raised by HACSU members.

**SERVICE,  
STAFFING,  
SAFETY is the  
2016 HACSU  
EBA Campaign!**





# SERVICE

**HACSU represents thousands of mental health workers in Victoria. As a union HACSU reflect the values that our members hold. This is why quality service provision is important to HACSU.**







**Quality service provision relies on the skill and capacity of the workforce.**

Through EBA bargaining, HACSU is able to help improve workforce capacity (and thus improve service delivery) through staffing profiles, training and skill development, improved classifications and new and additional positions.

In the last round of EBA bargaining, HACSU successfully won the inclusion of consumer/carer consultants in the EBA as well as many other great wins.

Victoria now has the only EBA in Australia to include this position.

Previously, HACSU has also fought for and won the development of the nurse educator position, increased wages, CPD payments, specialist classification descriptions and much more.

All of these contribute to improving services for people with a mental illness.



# STAFFING

**In an environment of increasing demand and acuity, staffing levels and caseload management is pivotal in the delivery of quality service provision.**

**Members who completed HACSU EBA campaign survey indicated that improving staffing levels and workload were a major priority for the 2016 EBA bargaining round.**

Over 54% of respondents said that their workload was either heavy or excessive. Appropriate workload and staffing are critically important for not only service delivery, but safety for staff and clients. The detailed claims have been developed by members to carefully address the realities of managing workloads within the day-to-day work of mental health practitioners.

## Comprehensive Staffing Profiles for mental health



Psychiatric bed based units are characterised by the fluctuating needs and complexities in patient presentations. It is widely acknowledged that the mental health sector is experiencing an increase in patient acuity, as this occurs, skills, knowledge and response capacity of the staff team is critical in safely meeting the needs of patients within the unit.

HACSU is campaigning for comprehensive staffing profiles for each unit and the ability to quickly increase capacity to account for the unpredictable and fluctuating needs of mental health care.

Proper unit staffing profiles are about the whole treatment team which consists of nurses, health professionals and support staff.

These teams provide a comprehensive skill mix to meet the needs and complexities of mental health inpatient and residential units.

Comprehensive staffing profiles don't only need a whole team approach, but authority to self-manage staffing levels.

This means, that the ability to increase staffing levels must be placed in the control of the clinical

staffing team, as opposed to off-site managers. Off site managers are unresponsive and focused on resisting requests, ultimately leading to unsafe staffing levels.

In the 2016 negotiations HACSU are campaigning for;

- A minimum 24/7 staffing/patient ratio of 1:2 in high dependency units (HDU), where beds are not occupied in the HDU, nursing staff would be used to better manage the clinical outcomes in the unit.
- A comprehensive staffing profile for the unit that includes the nursing, allied health and support staff which are backfilled.
- The clinical team on shift to have the authority to replace staff and secure additional staff when acuity and safety risks are present.

### Community Mental Health

Workload remains a problem for community treatment teams as well, among our significant claims to deal with the problem we are seeking that the volume and inconsistency of documentation is reduced and workloads for community clinicians is managed via a maximum allocation of 50% of ordinary hours towards direct clinical work and reportable activities.



# SAFETY

Workplace violence (WPV) in the mental health sector has long been accepted as part of the job.

**World first research conducted by HACSU in conjunction with the Centre of Psychiatric Nursing at Melbourne University, found that working in mental health was one of the most dangerous jobs anyone could do. This research has changed the way we think about workplace violence today.**



This research has led HACSU to develop the Critical Incident Hotline and app, where members record incidents of violence and abuse with the Union.

HACSU then use this data to lobby for increased awareness and action around violence in mental health.

The mental health sector has already begun to see the result

of HACSU's work, with a \$10 million grant from the Victorian Government, and WPV taskforce, being dedicated to tackling WPV in the mental health sector.

HACSU Assistant State Secretary, and registered mental health nurse, Paul Healey represents HACSU on this taskforce.

HACSU's 2016 EBA log of claims seeks to develop a workplace

environment and policy that will work to prevent violence and support staff experiencing WPV.

Some specifics include a WPV impact statement to be included in all workplace restructures and change proposals. Mandatory employer WPV reporting, WPV audits and a system to ensure MPV prevention practice and policy is and sufficiently funded.

# JOIN THE CAMPAIGN AND BE A PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER!

## Why should I join a mental health specific union?

HACSU is the union that understands mental health.

We don't only fight for wages and conditions. We fight for better mental health services.

HACSU recognises that quality service provision comes from the sector as a whole.

That's why HACSU represents everyone who works in mental health.

HACSU could not achieve outcomes specific to the specialist mental health staff or quality service provision if it just looked out for one part of the workforce.

HACSU was formed over 100 years ago as the union for workers in the historic mental asylums.

Over time this work has been recognised as specialist and workers have stuck together as a union to maintain wages and conditions specific to mental health.

As a specialist union, HACSU is able to provide specific knowledge and services to achieve the best outcomes.

This knowledge allows us to be able to propose solutions and influence outcomes when there is a problem.

**Check out page 7  
to see a list of what  
we have achieved  
for the mental  
health sector.**



**SPECIALIST PROFESSION,  
SPECIALIST UNION**

# Ten reasons to join HACSU

## \* **PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE**

Professional indemnity insurance is a form of liability insurance that protects you at work. It is a necessary insurance for anybody working in a health sector industry, especially those who work with vulnerable people. HACSU's insurance provides members with the peace of mind knowing that you will always be covered.

## \* **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

It is only when we work together that we can achieve great outcomes in our EBA

## \* **INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATION**

Have a meeting with the boss? Get representation and support from the people who know your rights and built your EBA.

## \* **INDUSTRIAL ADVICE**

Confused by some of the 258 pages on your EBA? Have a question or need some advice? Get on to HACSU assist who provide over the phone and email industrial advice and assistance.

## \* **ONGOING COLLECTIVE INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT AND CAMPAIGNING**

Collective workplace matters don't stop at an EBA, get continued support at work from HACSUs industrial team.

## \* **FIELD ORGANISERS**

HACSU field organisers work out are out of the road holding workplace meetings, battling with management and providing members with support and representation in your workplaces.

## \* **DELEGATE STRUCTURES**

HACSUs strong network of delegates provide grass roots support and knowledge to represent members concerns, ongoing matters, and individual grievances at work.

## \* **INDUSTRY ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING**

HACSU advocates and campaigns for the continued improvement of resources for people with mental illnesses and disabilities. HACSU use political influence and campaigning to lobby on important matters such as cuts to health care, privatisation and the NDIS.

## \* **OTHER FINANCIAL BENEFITS**

HACSU members can take advantage of heaps of great benefits including discount movie tickets, discounts on Coles and Woolworths gift cards, discount legal advice through Slater and Gordon and much more.

## \* **BE A PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER**

**Join HACSU and you'll join thousands of Victorian mental health professionals who recognise and fight for the specialist needs of the mental health workforce.**



# WHO'S GOT YOUR BACK AT WORK?



## HACSU DOES!

**Record critical incidents of violence at work with HACSU  
via the hotline 9340 4132 or via the app which you can  
download from the google play store or [www.hacsu.asn.au](http://www.hacsu.asn.au)**

HACSU use your reports to collate data and research around  
OH&S in mental health services. This data is crucial in developing  
better workplace safety for mental health workers.



# Keep your eyes on the ball with HACSU online learning



HACSU online learning offers comprehensive and high-quality online continuing professional development courses. HACSU membership entitles you a free ePortfolio where you can track and record all your CPD activities, huge discounts on courses and free access to the online resource library.

**VISIT [WWW.HSU-CPD.NET.AU](http://WWW.HSU-CPD.NET.AU)**

**take advantage of free member registration, heaps of discounts including \$100 unlimited CPD per year.**

# Memberships costs

CLASSIFICATION	USUAL HOURS WORKED	FORTNIGHTLY	4 WEEKLY	QUARTLEY	SIX MONTHLY
Mental Health and AOD–Nurses, Health Professionals, Psychologists & Direct Care.	Greater than 48 hours per fortnight	\$23.90	\$47.80	\$155.40	\$310.70
	Less than 48 hours per fortnight	\$13.90	\$27.80	\$90.40	\$180.70
Non Direct Care, Administrative, support and ancillary staff.	Greater than 48 hours per fortnight	22.70	\$45.40	\$147.60	\$295.10
	Less than 48 hours per fortnight	\$13.20	\$26.40	\$85.80	\$171.60

## HACSU Membership pays for itself

### INCREASE FROM THE 2012-2016 EBA\*

\$17,963 PEN Level 1 Year 8 (no meds or senior's allowance)  
\$20,287 PRN Grade 2 level 9  
\$24,019 Social Worker/Occupational Therapist Grade 2 Year 4  
\$10,711 Clerical Worker B Year 5  
\$16,599 PSO Level 2 Year 5

*\*Figures are based on the cumulative wage gains for a full time worker over the life of the agreement. Figures cover salary, sign-on bonus and CPD allowance.*

# Remember all membership fees are tax deductible!

**Membership can be paid via direct debit. To Join HACSU, fill out the membership form and return to**

**POST** PO Box 206 Carlton VIC 3053

**FAX** 9650 8122

**SCAN** and **EMAIL** to [hacsu@hacsu.asn.au](mailto:hacsu@hacsu.asn.au)



# Join HACSU Today

## ABOUT YOU

I am of aboriginal OR Torres strait Islander descent: Y ☐ N ☐

Male ☐ Female ☐

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Workmail (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

## ABOUT YOUR WORK

I also work as a private practitioner: Y ☐ N ☐

If yes, what is your annual income? \_\_\_\_\_ (HACSU can provide Professional Indemnity Insurance for private practitioners whose income is less than \$45,000 per annum)

I am a Casual: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a Permanent: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title / Classification: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Home / Work Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you work more or less than 48hr per fortnight? More ☐ Less ☐

## PAYMENT

### Direct Debit

Please debit me: Fortnightly ☐ 4 weekly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Half Yearly ☐ Annually ☐

I (name) \_\_\_\_\_ authorise for the direct debit payment authorise Health and Community Services Union (HSU Vic No. 2 Branch) Direct Debit User

No.017325 to arrange for funds to be debited from my/our account of the financial institution identified below and as prescribed below through the Bulk Electronic Clearing System (BECS).

Account name \_\_\_\_\_ Account number: \_\_\_\_\_ BSB: \_\_\_\_\_

I The Debit User to verify the details of the abovementioned account with my/our Financial Institution. 2. The Financial Institution to release information allowing the Debit User to verify the abovementioned account details.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit Card:** Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐

Please charge me: Quarterly ☐ Half Yearly ☐ Annually ☐

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This material has been produced by The Health and Community Services Union.  
Authorised by Lloyd Williams.

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**VIOLENCE HOTLINE; 9340 4132**

Violence app available on the google play store, or for iphone download  
from <http://www.hacsu.asn.au/app/index.html>

