Bupa EBA campaign update 16

Post your vote today!

1. Have you posted your YES VOTE back?

If you haven’t already, get your YES VOTE in today’s post!

The optimal time to return your ballot to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has passed, but you still have a chance to make the count.

A successful ballot requires half of the ANMF Bupa membership to participate in the ballot. More than 50 per cent of those who vote, must VOTE YES.

A successful YES vote will tell Bupa that you reject its disrespectful wage offer with no other improvements. More importantly you will be telling Bupa that safe minimum staffing levels and skill mix and a realistic wage rise comparable with Bupa’s competitors are important to you.

The ballot closes at 10am, Tuesday 12 September.

2. Didn’t get a ballot?

If you are an ANMF member employed at Bupa and you didn’t receive a ballot, the AEC has advised you can call to check you are on the eligible roll and make an appointment to vote in person on Monday or Tuesday morning (before 10am).

The Australian Electoral Commission is located at 2 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne (corner of Exhibition Street). To make an appointment, call Returning Officer Natasha Lean on 9285 7116.
3. Why ANMF recommends a YES vote

ANMF is recommending members vote YES in the ballot to be able to access your legal right to take protected industrial action to achieve a fair outcome.

Your last pay rise of 1.75 per cent was in April 2016. **Your wages are between 5.5 and 6.5 per cent less than Bupa’s major competitors.** Bupa’s offer of two 2.5 per cent wages rises still leaves you way behind your colleagues who are doing the same work for nursing home providers including BlueCross, Arcare, Aged Care Services Australia Group and Royal Freemasons.

The fact that **Bupa pays some of the lowest aged care wages in Victoria** is out of step with its Australian and New Zealand operations reporting a £344.4 million ($566.9 million) underlying profit in its 2016 annual report.

In the event of a successful YES vote, ANMF members meetings across Bupa nursing homes have authorised the union to schedule protected industrial action to achieve a fair outcome that reflects your claims.

4. Aged care industry records a $1 billion profit for the first time

The **Australian aged care sector recorded a $1,063 million profit in 2015-16**, according to a new Federal Government report.

The Aged Care Financing Authority (ACFA) says the total profit for the sector increased by 17 per cent from $907 million the previous year.

The average profit per resident per year (known as EBITDA*) increased from $10,222 to $11,134.


*EBITDA is Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation and enables comparable profitability between companies and industries.*

5. Senator Derryn Hinch proposes mandated minimum aged care ratios

Victorian Senator Derryn Hinch has proposed the **introduction of mandated minimum aged care ratios**.

Senator Hinch’s private member’s bill – the Aged Care Amendment (Ratio of Skilled Staff to Care Recipients Bill 2017) – aims **to improve resident care by addressing the aged care law’s failure to define what constitutes ‘appropriately skilled and qualified staff’**.

There are no mandated staffing levels in private for-profit or not-for-profit nursing homes. Victorian public sector nursing homes have legislated minimum nurse resident ratios.

In his speech in Federal Parliament on Thursday 8 September Senator Hinch said ‘The passage of this Bill would be an important step in moving towards an aged care system that is more focussed on the protection of the elderly than on profit margins of aged care facilities.’ You can [watch Senator Hinch’s speech on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/events/855181122257963/).

ANMF has welcomed the proposal and the debate about aged care ratios on a national level which would address understaffing and improve resident care. [Read the ANMF media release](https://anmfvic.asn.au/newsroom/press-releases/5-senator-derryn-hinch-proposes-mandated-minimum-aged-care-ratios/).

In a recent ANMF survey, **92 per cent of Victorian aged care nurses and personal care workers said they were being asked to care for the same number of residents with less staff or less hours**. You can still add your comments to the [national ANMF survey](https://anmfvic.asn.au/involved-in-research/survey-results-national-anmf-survey/).

If you have any concerns contact the ANMF Information Line or your ANMF Organiser on 9275 9333.
Your wages are in the bottom 10 per cent of Victorian aged care providers despite Bupa reporting a £344.4 million (AUS$566.9 million) underlying profit from its Australian and New Zealand operations in 2016.

Similar providers BlueCross and Aged Care Services Australia Group pay their nurses and carers between five and six per cent more than Bupa. These providers have agreed to a 10 per cent wage increase over four-year agreements plus other improvements.

Under Bupa’s most recent offer of five per cent over a two-year agreement, with no other improvements, your wages will fall further behind.

ANMF has rejected this disrespectful offer and successfully applied to the Fair Work Commission for a protected action ballot.

This ballot is not a vote to take industrial action. You are ONLY voting to have the legal right to take all or some of that action at a later time if required to progress your claims.

If you don’t receive a ballot paper by XX August contact the Australian Electoral Commission Returning Officer ????? ???? on XXXX XXXX or email XXX@aec.gov.au

Inquiries contact your ANMF Organiser via records@anmfvic.asn.au or call 9275 9333.

This is your chance to strengthen your collective bargaining ability to improve wages, staffing levels and conditions.
FAQS

Vote YES in ANMF’s Protected Industrial Action Ballot for BUPA members and return to the Australian Electoral Commission via post ASAP.

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 (“the Act”). Taking “protected” industrial action means that the action is entirely lawful and members taking the action are protected from the employer suing them, sacking them or otherwise victimising them.

To take protected industrial action, the ANMF must first apply to the Fair Work Commission seeking approval to conduct a Protected Action Ballot. The Fair Work Commission has approved the issuing of the ballot.

This will be a ballot of ANMF members at all Bupa facilities across Victoria to determine whether ANMF members support the taking of specified forms of industrial action. This is conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) as a postal ballot.

Why is it so important to vote in the Protected Action Ballot?

Before taking protected industrial action, the ANMF must hold a ballot of its members to ensure members support the taking of specified forms of industrial action. This is conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) as a postal ballot.

All members of the ANMF should vote in the Protected Action Ballot. For the ballot to be successful a majority of members on the Ballot roll must vote and vote YES.

If you vote ‘yes’ in this ballot, you are only voting yes to allowing ANMF members to take legally protected action at a later time. Any decision to take action will only be determined after an ANMF members’ meeting.

Why is it so important to vote YES to the question in the Protected Action Ballot?

The ballot has a series of questions seeking members’ support for different types of industrial action. It is important that all members vote YES to all questions.

The ballot must be supported by a majority of members who participate in the ballot. It is therefore important that all members vote YES, and that you encourage all members to vote.

Do I have to actually take all the action?

If you vote YES to the ballot questions it does not mean that you will actually have to take all of the actions set out in the questions. You may only be asked to take action that is relevant to your area of work. If you vote YES you are simply approving the possibility of taking action and being legally protected. You are not being asked if you will take the action: you are being asked if you approve the ANMF organising such action.

Bupa says it is now offering a five per cent wage rise in 12 months, isn’t that reasonable?

No, it’s not. Despite Bupa’s £344.4 million (AUS$566.9 million) underlying profit profit its nurses’ and carers’ wages are in the lowest 10 per cent of all Victorian private aged care groups.

You haven’t had a pay rise in 16 months. Your last pay rise was 1.75 per cent in April 2016. You’re already earning up to six per cent less than your colleagues at similar groups such as BlueCross and Aged Care Services Australia Group which are paying 10 per cent wage rises over four-year agreements. You’re not being offered catch up pay or back pay, your wages will fall further behind and there are no improvements to staffing levels or skill mix to provide better resident care. And you’ll have to do this all again in 2019.