

**OFFICIAL STATEMENT
NO JOB, NO PLAY/PAY LEGISLATION**

During the 2016 federal election, despite our policies clearly stating otherwise, the Health Australia Party (HAP) was falsely represented by the media as being 'anti-vaccination', an issue that is polarising for many.

While HAP believes that its initial position was unambiguously clear, in an effort to avoid further confusion, we make the following statement.

The HAP supports 'informed consent' - a cornerstone of medical ethics. We feel that any diminishment of 'informed consent' is an extremely slippery slope, and history validates this important principle. It is in the best interest of all medical consumers that all medical products and procedures must be subject to informed consent. According to the Australian Immunisation Handbook, "Valid consent can be defined as the voluntary agreement by an individual to a proposed procedure, given after sufficient, appropriate and reliable information about the procedure, including the potential risks and benefits, has been conveyed to that individual". For consent to be legally valid, amongst other things, "It must be given voluntarily in the absence of undue pressure, coercion or manipulation". By denying access to early education or financially coercing individuals into vaccination, there can be no informed consent. It is for this reason that the HAP opposes both the No Job, No Play and Pay policies.

Our opposition to the No Play legislation was echoed by the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties Inc [1], who state that "the policy cannot be justified from an ethical point of view". The Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee of the Parliament of Victoria (SARC) also expressed concern that the No Play legislation may breach the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and advised that Parliament should consider "a less restrictive alternative" approach [2]. Despite this, their position appeared to be ignored by the Victorian Parliament.

Our position on the No Pay policy is further echoed by the Victorian Law Institute [3], The Royal Australian College of Physicians [4] and various doctors and health practitioners, social justice and healthcare organisations. The overwhelming majority of published submissions also opposed this legislation.

Furthermore, the HAP rejects the 'pro/anti' position as being a largely false construct pushed by industry to force an 'all or nothing' approach, when in reality there are a range of intermediate positions as there is with all medical procedures and treatments.

HAP would also add that the United States judicial system and the World Health Organization acknowledges that there is 'no such thing' as a vaccine that is entirely safe and effective, and adverse events are a real issue that must be factored into a responsible

policy. The current Victorian Health Minister claims "there are no risks in vaccinating", clearly contradicting global best practice and the manufacturers own product inserts. In addition, Australia is one of only three developed countries that does not have a vaccine injury compensation scheme, further reinforcing the inequity of the legislation.

HAP demands that Australian citizens receive world best practice in the provision of all healthcare services. All products and procedures must be properly scrutinised for safety and efficacy, and research and the resulting policy must be free of the influence from vested interests. This cannot be truthfully said to be the case in respect to the No Jab, No Play and Pay policies, and HAP will continue to champion best practice, transparency, and the fundamentals of medical ethics such as informed consent.

Lastly, contrary to the incorrect portrayal of HAP by the media during the federal election, the HAP has no intention to restrict access to vaccination for any individuals. HAP supports freedom of choice in healthcare, and that includes the choice for individuals to seek the use of their preferred method of allopathic or natural medicine.

References:

[1] "No Jab, No Play" Legislation Policy Paper, Victorian Council for Civil Liberties Inc
https://libertyvictoria.org.au/sites/default/files/No-jab-no-play-vic-bill-policy-final20151113_0.pdf

[2] Alert Digest No. 12 of 2015, Reports to Parliament, Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee of the Parliament of Victoria, Australia Alert Digests 2015, ISBN 978-1-925345-04-9, ISSN 1440-2939
http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/sarc/Alert_Digests/Alert_Digest_No_12_of_2015.pdf

[3] Senate submission 318 No Jab, No Pay - Law Institute of Victoria
<http://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=10aa564b-44df-4447-b2e0-28fa4c3e7f76&subId=405011>

[4] Senate submission 344 No Jab, No Pay - Royal Australasian College of Physicians
<http://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=006ce194-7966-43c6-9a0b-8e8debed1b18&subId=405114>