



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the HP Stronger Together campaign?

The HP Stronger Together campaign is an effort by HP union members to create a new collective agreement that will determine our wages and conditions for the next three years. Union members from the QPSU and LHMU have put in a log of claims with Queensland Health for things that we believe Queensland Health HPs will need to provide quality Health services. Most of these have been rejected by the department. Now union members are focusing on collective activities to make Queensland Health acknowledge the importance of things like a fair wage increase, career progression, and incentives for those who work in rural and regional areas. We must show our commitment to these things publicly as union members in order to get Queensland Health to listen.

What can we do to be involved?

There are three things you can do to be involved – join the QPSU if you're not already a member, attend a campaign meeting at your workplace, and take part in collective action that shows Queensland Health that you are committed to a better deal.

Why do we need to act now?

Because Queensland Health is determined to attack pay and conditions - putting us worse off in three years time and undoing a lot of the hard work that union members have put in to get better pay and progression arrangements as part of the HP stream. We have a limited period that we are allowed to take collective action to make Queensland Health change its mind about the HP agreement. That is why we need to take strong action to get the department to take HPs' concerns seriously.

This is an important time to decide whether wages and working conditions for HPs in Queensland Health go forward or backwards.

What about the last HP agreement?

Union members have worked for literally hundreds of hours to get Queensland Health to keep its promises that it made at the beginning of the first HP collective agreement. Even though Queensland Health created the HP stream after pressure from union members to get better pay and progression, it is clear that they have never considered it to be a high

priority. Queensland Health management have dragged out every stage of the HP negotiations process, taking every possible opportunity to introduce delays and roadblocks to stop the rollout of the HP agreement progressing. This attitude from Queensland Health has been very damaging to the rollout of the first agreement, which is why union members are so determined to make sure the new HP agreement does not go backwards in terms of conditions and pay.

Why is it important to be a member of the union?

Union members have won things like the pay rises and other industrial entitlements through standing together. We have the opportunity to make the government pay attention to the real, urgent needs of HPs in Queensland Health – things like pay, better progression arrangements, and better conditions that lead to better lives for workers and better health services. But the department will only listen to union members if they are strong and active, and if they represent the majority of workers at their workplaces. If workers aren't prepared to support the HP Stronger Together campaign by getting active in their union, Queensland Health management will continue to ignore us.

Will the campaign involve industrial action?

The HP stronger together campaign is an important opportunity for Health Professionals to highlight the importance of the matters facing us by acting collectively as a union. It will be up to workers at a workplace to decide what form that action will take. The action will qualify as formal industrial action. Provided that a worker is a member of the QPSU, taking part in Take a Stand Day is legally "protected" action, which means that no disciplinary action may be taken against a person who participates.

We've included in the meeting kit some suggestions about what action you can take to support the HP Stronger Together campaign.

Can we be punished for taking part in the collective action? Will we lose pay?

As a QPSU member you cannot be disciplined for taking part of industrial action in the HP Stronger Together campaign. It is 'protected' action.

Queensland Health has the right to deduct pay for participation in industrial action, equal to the amount of time the action takes place. So, for example, if you participate in a one-hour stop work activity, you could lose one hour's worth of pay.

What happens if we can't agree on an action to take at the meeting?

It's important that we have as many people as possible agree to take part in an activity to support the HP Stronger Together campaign. If a majority of union members at your workplace agree to a particular action, that's great. Email hp@qpsu.org.au and let the union office know what activity you will be taking. You should try to reach a consensus as much as possible so that everyone feels comfortable with the activity.

The final decision will be up to union members – non-members don't get a vote in deciding what action to take. If the members at your workplace are unable to agree to taking any action, you should still notify the union office. We may be able to organise for you to attend a meeting with a nearby group of workers instead.

Can non-union members attend the meeting?

It's important for the success of the HP Stronger Together campaign that everyone who takes part is a member of the QPSU. Only QPSU members can decide what action workers will take as part of the campaign. Only members have the right to take part in industrial action. For these reasons, it's important that as many people as possible in your workplace are members of their union.

If non-union members are interested in attending the meeting, that's excellent. Because these workers, like you, are concerned about the challenges facing HPs in Queensland Health, they are more likely to join their union if asked.

There are membership forms in your kit so you can get potential members to join so they can take part in the HP Stronger Together campaign. If you run out of forms, you can get people to join online by visiting www.hpstrongertogether.com