

AMBULANCE NEWSLETTER

8 March 2016

Dear GMB Ambulance Member

You will all recall the 2015 NHS pay dispute. This dispute led by the union members in the ambulance service secured specific concessions from the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt for the ambulance service.

The concessions were as follows:

- ***In relation to Sickness/Unsocial hours allowance payment; to curtail discussions for the move away from Annex E unsocial hours enhancements. To curtail discussions around a move towards section 2a unsocial hours under A4C. To suspend immediately any further work to test, in the High Court, the national agreement on sick pay which relates to the NHS Employers and the Ambulance Service Employers view that the original agreements included the Ambulance Service Sector. This issue would instead be remitted to the wider talks on further AfC reform.***
- ***Ambulance Employers to introduce a scheme whereby they will match the value of additional pension contributions made by front line ambulance staff to enable them to take their 2015 pension unreduced at 65. For instance if the cost of this was 4%, the employer would pay 2%.***
- ***Ambulance employers to work with the ambulance unions to address current recruitment and retention issues, either through changes to use of job profiles and bandings or through application of recruitment and retention premia to job roles meeting agreed criteria.***
- ***Ambulance Employers will take forward with Ambulance unions work a specific work stream under the NHS Staff Council Working Longer Review identifying the specific challenges for front line ambulance staff of the increase in pension age and how they can be addressed.***

One of the key concessions, secured in the 2015 dispute was the threat lifted by ambulance employers to cut USH payments for staff who took sick leave. Whilst this concession was rightly welcomed by members, the unions nationally have continued with every effort to realise the remaining concessions.

The central concession secured in 2015 was the review of job profiles and the banding of ambulance staff. It's fair to say the issue of the unfair banding of ambulance staff is a decade long problem. This problem has recently been exasperated due to the recruitment and retention problems the ambulance service have faced. Aside from the recruitment and retention problems we can't ignore the fact that ambulance staff are having to take on additional and a range of varied duties. We also certainly can't ignore the fact that the roles of ambulance staff have rapidly changed in recent years with future paramedics needed to be qualified to degree level before they start their careers in the ambulance service.

All the ambulance trade unions are committed in ensuring all ambulance staff achieve fair banding for the work they undertake in the ambulance service.

Nationally we have successfully won the argument that job profiles of paramedics are out of date. The job evaluation group have embarked on an exercise to review job profiles of paramedics and this work will take place over the next few months. The trade unions also recently gave specific evidence on the ambulance service to the NHS Pay Review Body and set out the specific case for ambulance staff. We await the report from the Pay Review Body which is estimated to be released at the end of March.

Whilst all the above are key building blocks in our efforts to achieve fair banding for all staff we are rapidly reaching an impasse on the central issue of fair banding of staff. Whilst we have made the case for all staff to be banded fairly and all staffs contribution to be recognised within the ambulance service from the call handler to the paramedic, over the next few months with the agreement of the GMB ambulance committee we have agreed to concentrate our efforts on the fair banding of paramedics. The effort to concentrate on paramedics no way negates, our responsibility and indeed our commitment to all staff. We feel we now need to focus on the fair banding of paramedics in order to build the blocks for fair pay for all staff.

With this in mind we are launching a specific survey that will have an emphasis on paramedics. Everyone can complete the survey as the survey seeks to collate specific details in all areas of the ambulance service. The survey can be completed on line at: [https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GMB Ambulance Campaign Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GMB_Ambulance_Campaign_Survey) should you have any problems completing the survey please speak to your local GMB rep.

Please note whilst this is a four country survey the current efforts are being made within NHS England. The GMB is scheduling separate discussions with devolved country ambulance branches.

In an effort to work constructively with the ambulance unions the following statement has been agreed:



Joint Ambulance Trade Union Statement

March 2016

2015/16 NHS Pay Settlement for Ambulance Staff

Ambulance staff in England are still waiting for the government to deliver on the promises they made at the end of the NHS pay dispute in 2015.

We are nearly a year on from the agreement that convinced ambulance staff to end the strike and return to work.

They agreed to talk about pay and bandings for ambulance staff and look at the skills and experience paramedics currently use to get the job done, with a view to moving them to higher pay bands.

They also promised to look at the unique pressures placed on ambulance staff faced with an increasing retirement age.

Ambulance staff are still waiting. We want the government and employers to stop sitting on their hands and work with us to deliver on these promises.

The Joint Ambulance Trade Unions are calling for:

- ❖ **Fair pay for ambulance staff**
- ❖ **A safe and sensible retirement age**
- ❖ **Healthier happier staff = healthier happier patients**
- ❖ **Proper training, development and career progression for ambulance staff**

We will continue to work with employers on the agreements reached so far but more must be done to convince ambulance staff that there is a genuine will to find solutions and prevent a return to the dispute of last year.

The Joint Trade Unions are working together for the benefit of all ambulance staff and will be consulting with their members to bring this campaign to the attention of the public and politicians.

GMB

UNISON

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RCN

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GMB—EXPERTS IN THE WORLD OF WORK

It can be as simple as a new manager, or a new way of working that causes you a problem at work. Guard against that day by joining GMB now. GMB membership covers you wherever you work. Only GMB members get GMB help. **IF YOU WORK YOU NEED GMB@WORK**

Join now at www.gmb.org.uk/join or fill in the form below

then hand it to your local GMB representative, or post it—simply write FREEPOST GMB on an envelope—you don't need a stamp or any other address details.

If you have any questions contact GMB: email info@gmb.org.uk or visit our website www.gmb.org.uk

FOR GMB USE ONLY

Section

Branch number

Membership number

Date of joining

GMB membership application form PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

1 TELL US ABOUT YOU

Surname First name Title Mrs/Miss/Ms/Mr Date of birth

Home address Home phone number Mobile number

Postcode Email

We ask for your ethnic origins as part of our equal opportunities policy of improving services to all members
 Bangladeshi / Black African / Black Caribbean / Black British / Chinese / Indian / Irish / Pakistani / White / Other: Tick here if you do not wish to contribute to the GMB collective affiliation to the Labour Party

National Insurance number I agree to abide by GMB rules Signed Date

2 TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOB

Employer Your job

Address where you work How many hours a week do you work? Pay number

Postcode I give my employer permission to notify GMB of any future change of address Pay date

I authorise my employer to pass my bank details on to GMB to activate my union membership — Signed

3 PLEASE SELECT WHEN YOU WOULD LIKE THE DIRECT DEBIT TO BE DEDUCTED FROM YOUR ACCOUNT

If you are paid monthly 1st day of the month* 8th day of the month* 16th day of the month* 23rd day of the month* Last day of the month* * or next working day

OR if you are paid 4 weekly 1st Friday 2nd Friday 3rd Friday 4th Friday

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To the Manager of Bank/Building Society

Address

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Instructions to your Bank or Building Society: Please pay GMB Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with GMB and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s) Date

Name(s) of account holder(s)

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Bank/Building Society account number

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