

# ODP

## *News from Unison*

### **Agenda for Change – trade unions consider response**

The publication of the final Job Revaluation scheme together with a range of job profiles has made the implications of Agenda for Change clearer. Together with the publication of the Proposed Agreement Handbook it is now possible to start to work out for a large number of staff what the scheme means.

Unfortunately, there are still important gaps in the published job profiles, including ODP's, and some of the press reports have been misleading. We have not reached an agreement or taken any decision to accept.

It is for that reason that UNISON has not rushed to reach a decision on whether or not to recommend the proposals. Our view is that these are radical changes that need time for consideration.

It is for that reason that the Special Meeting of UNISON's Health Service Group Executive called on January 29<sup>th</sup> deferred a recommendation. Members representing a cross section of occupations, and all regions agreed to meet

again on March 7<sup>th</sup> for further discussion.

**In addition there are still a lot of job profiles not agreed or completed including those for ODP staff.**

For Operating department staff, key issues to consider will include:

- Where will the job-profiled jobs be in grading structure?
- Where will job profiles not yet agreed or completed be?

- What about jobs that don't easily fit a job profile?
- Where does the balance lie between improvements in some aspects (eg contractual overtime) and concerns about others

UNISON will ensure that all branches are kept up to date with the latest developments and we will also post news including FAQ's on the UNISON web site at [www.unison.org/healthcare](http://www.unison.org/healthcare)

The full documents have been sent to all UNISON branches this week and all regions are arranging meetings to brief stewards.

The documents can also be downloaded from the UNISON web site as well.

### **UNISON's process**

UNISON's formal consultation will include a special conference on the pay proposals as part of the April 2003 Health Conference, and this will be followed by a postal ballot of all

members on the pay proposals. In addition, we are working with our Education Department to put together a training pack, which will ensure that our members can be fully briefed and consulted on all aspects of the pay proposals.

## **Working Time Confusion continues**

Some UNISON stewards have reported that their Trust is, at best, confused about development on working time. As reported from other Trusts, management is suggesting that any discussions on shift working will be overtaken by the 2004 end to the European Working Time Directive opt out. The facts are as follows:

- it is true that in 2004 the Junior Doctors will be covered by the Working Time Regulations and employers will need to comply.
- For other staff, some employers are currently using the individual opt-out clause for workers who wish to work more than 48 hours per week.
- By autumn 2003 the EU has to review this part of the European Directive. It is likely that the EU will rule that the 48 hour opt out should be eliminated but may also give the Government time to phase in the change. This is the only part of the Directive and regulations likely to change.

UNISON members will want to also take note of the impact of the Agenda for Change proposals on shifts, stand by and out of hours working.

**You should note that a *pdf* of the NHS Working Time Regulations Agreement is on the UNISON health service web pages.**

### **Unison news service**

UNISON now provides a very useful weekly news service to stewards and activists on more general issues affecting the public sector as well as NHS news. If you'd like to subscribe and receive it automatically, e: mail [www.unison.org.uk/news/maillinglist](http://www.unison.org.uk/news/maillinglist)

# Bursaries – concerns continue

**UNISON members continue to be concerned over the introduction of bursaries. A substantial response from members to our survey has confirmed that you believe the replacement of salaries by bursaries will harm recruitment and could discriminate against staff already working in the NHS who wish to develop their careers by training as ODP's.**

UNISON has made it clear to MP's and the Department of Health that whilst we welcome any move to improve standards of training, we see no good reason to cut the incomes and undermine the employment position of trainee ODP's.

The only reason we have been given is that the change brings the funding of ODP training in line with that of nurses – which UNISON is opposed to.

Helen Jones MP has taken up the case as have other MP's.

The Department of Health has indicated they are willing to discuss some issues, especially where students under the new arrangements are being unfairly penalised on issues such as travel costs.

We will be discussing that with the DoH in the near future. However on the core issue, the switch in funding, there is no sign of movement. We will also be approaching the Workforce Confederation lead on the issue of discrimination against existing NHS staff seeking training who may be discriminated against because they are more expensive to train.

There are reports of staff seeking to train as ODP's who already work in the NHS being asked to resign so they go onto bursary funded training. We'd be keen to hear of any examples you have like this. E:mail them to [r.kline@unison.co.uk](mailto:r.kline@unison.co.uk)

## PLEASE PASS THIS ON

**Feel free to forward this to any colleagues who are UNISON members or who might want to subscribe directly – in your lab or another.**

Issues such as Agenda for Change, and the move towards bursaries show the need to network effectively amongst ODP staff

## The Duty of Care

The web pages linked to this major new UNISON publication have been launched next week and include:

- pdf of the full publication
  - FAQ's
  - drop down pro forma letters
  - a pro forma survey to be adapted for local use
- and
- eventually examples of Best Practice where members have successfully raised issues covered in the handbook.

Training materials for stewards are also ready.

If you want to order the Handbook directly contact your branch secretary in the first instance or visit the UNISON publications service on our web site.

## Registration

**UNISON, as the main union for ODP's, will be writing in support of the application by the AODP to establish a Statutory Register with the Health Professions Council for Operating Department Practitioners. A copy of our letter will be posted on the UNISON web site at the end of this month.**

## CPD for ODP's

The AODP has launched a consultation on a CPD document. Many of you will have seen the document. If you have views you'd like us to put forward from UNISON please e:mail Roger Kline at [r.kline@unison.co.uk](mailto:r.kline@unison.co.uk)

## Discussion in Technic

Some of you will have read the editorial, articles and letters in Technic on the subject of whether the AODP should consider becoming an independent trade union. Our views are clear – and so, according to your e:mails are yours. Thanks for the response.