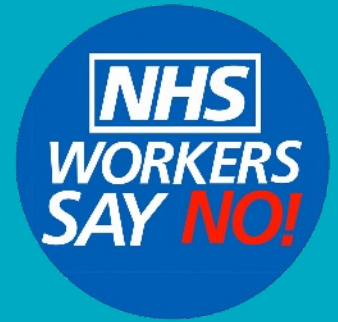


May 2023

HEALTHWORKER BULLETIN

All unions • All bands • One fight



The pay fight is not over

- RCN, Unite, and SoR reject pay offer
- RCN to ballot for further strike action
- Keep up the pressure for proper pay restoration

Unions representing a majority on NHS Staff Council have voted to accept the government's pay offer. This means Agenda for Change staff will be receiving the lump sum for 22/23 in June and the 5% backdated from April for 2024. The lump-sum will be taxable, will have National Insurance and student loan taken out of it, but is not pensionable. Most unions have issued advice on how to get the lump-sum spread out if you are concerned it will affect your universal credit and other benefits.

Despite most unions pushing acceptance to their members, the results of the pay ballots have shown that there are still thousands of union members that are unhappy with the pay deal and the fight is definitely not over - RCN, Unite, and SoR members voted to reject the deal and are not bound by the majority vote on Staff Council.

It was strike action that brought the government to the negotiating table and it was strike action that resulted in a higher pay offer for NHS staff despite the government saying there was no money. However, the long-term

issues of recruitment and retention, patient safety and poverty pay in the NHS haven't gone away and we believe we can fight on for more.

RCN are balloting members to renew their strike mandate. We recommend all members vote for further strike action. We need to achieve a 50% turnout across all trusts. The BMA's pay dispute is still live and so more action by the RCN could push the government further. Unite, whose members have also rejected the pay offer, have talked about an escalation strategy and may shortly be balloting their members.

REASONS TO STRIKE:

- ▶ Our pay has been eroded over time; it is now a 29% pay cut in real terms
- ▶ Bad pay leads to short staffing. Only 25% of shifts are staffed with the correct amount of staff. Short-staffing puts increased pressure on staff's wellbeing
- ▶ There is a direct link between patient safety and the shortage of nurses and NHS staff
- ▶ Further action will help our cause for negotiation going into 2024/25 pay round, keeping pressure on the government and keeping the issue of NHS pay alive into a general election year
- ▶ The fight for pay is a fight for the NHS itself. If we don't address the staff shortages and look after the staff left in the NHS there will be no NHS.

My union accepted the pay offer. What can I do now?

The issues in the NHS have not gone away. Union members that aren't being balloted for strikes on pay can still be involved in other wins.

Cleaning, catering and support workers at Bart's Health Trust are now directly employed by the NHS again following a successful campaign to bring them back in-house. There are several groups of outsourced staff in our Trusts including porters, security, admin and domestics, we can all be part of campaigns returning people back in-house on NHS contracts.

There are also campaigns on up-banding, claims on petrol and mileage and overtime that we can help win. Find out when your union branch meets, attend and propose a local campaign to organise around. Propose and organise cross-union meetings at your Trust.

We can help RCN members with their ballot, attend BMA and other striking unions' picket lines, keep having conversations, organise leafleting sessions and ward-walks.

If you are still angry about the pay deal, consider "dual carding" (joining a union that is still taking action if you are eligible) - but don't give up the fight in your own union!

Build now to be ready for more strikes and for the pay claims next year.

What is *Healthworker Bulletin*?

Healthworker Bulletin is a new bulletin for all health and care workers - doctors, nurses, AHPs, paramedics, porters, admin staff - produced by the NHS Workers Say No campaign.

Contact us to find out more:

Email: nhsworkerssayno@gmail.com

Facebook: **NHS Workers Say NO**

Twitter: **@NurseSayNO**

Radiographers speak out

Expressing their personal opinions to *Healthworker*, Society of Radiographers members have told us that they know members of staff being forced to leave the NHS due to the cost-of-living crisis. They felt that we as NHS workers have been pushed by union leaderships into accepting what is being advertised as an attractive short term lump sum, without much consideration for the long-term retention and recruitment of staff, and we could have won more. They felt that the government are quick to give themselves pay rises while claiming there's no money for those who were once praised so much for our hard work during the pandemic.

The SoR still reject the pay offer and have written to the Health Secretary seeking talks to avoid industrial action. "If radiography's concerns continue to be marginalised or ignored, then industrial action by our members is likely".

Dates for your diary

17 May: NHS Workers Say No fringe meeting at RCN Congress. 6pm, Tudor Room, Old Ship Hotel, Brighton, BN1 1NR

23 May - 23 June: RCN statutory strike ballot open. Don't forget to vote!

10 June: *How we fight, how we win* rank and file organising conference. Rich Mix, Bethnal Green rd. London, E1 6LA

8 July: NHS Workers Say No will have a stall at the Durham Miners' Gala

29 July: NHS Workers Say No session at *Troublemakers at Work* conference. Friends Meeting House, Manchester, M2 5NS

COMING SOON: Inaugural NHS Workers Say No conference. Watch this space!