



Yorkshire Ambulance Branch

September  
2016

## Branch Secretary's update

## Newsletter

September has been a busy month in many ways, a huge positive came from UNISON Nationally in the form of an agreement to provide a long awaited Band 6 job description for Paramedics, along with a method of supporting new paramedics in their role.

Rota negotiations are still ongoing throughout Yorkshire and are hopefully nearing the final stages, with a package being presented to members to accept or reject.

PTS issues are still in the forefront with auto planning, amongst others, being a continuing problem. The formation of a new PTS/111 JSG should allow for a more effective progression route for issues which can not be resolved locally. Regular PTS reps meetings are to be organised locally and across YAS to increase communication with members.

Please take the time to access the security alerts portal, featured on page 6. This is accessed via the YAS intranet and gives important security information updates to members.

As ever, if you feel there should be items included in your newsletter then please contact us at [unison@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:unison@yas.nhs.uk).

*Kevin Fairfax*

## Rota update

UNISON have now completed all of the station rota meetings across Yorkshire, feedback had been collated and fed back to management. There are some areas of concern where cover has been slashed according to the ORH figures, mainly in North and East coastal areas and parts of Kirklees and Wakefield CBU. RRV cover has been reduced across most of Yorkshire however in many cases the displaced RRV appear to be accommodated on DCA rota's at their station/cluster.

These concerns are subject to ongoing discussion, at the end of negotiations there will be a full package presented for members to vote upon which will include rota's and slight changes to some policies.

These negotiations have been conducted by staff side jointly— GMB and UNITE representatives have been involved at each meeting throughout the process—alongside Trust management.

Please contact [unison@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:unison@yas.nhs.uk) with any queries or concerns.

# National Paramedic banding update

As I'm sure many of you are aware, discussions nationally have been taking place for a number of months over various ambulance issues, not least Paramedic banding.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service is in a slightly different position to other Trusts as due to the hard work of members and a strong campaign led by UNISON we now have a process for Paramedics to move into Band 6 with no cap, however there is a caveat in the agreement to adhere to any national agreement that comes forward, which is why we are watching developments so closely, and why we ask members to not take their eye off the ball.

A review of the national Job Evaluation profiles for Ambulance Services, by the National Job Evaluation Group (JEG), recognised that the current band 5 and 6 national profiles needed updating. At the NHS Staff Council Executive meeting on 14 September, it was agreed to publish a new band 6 paramedic profile along with technical guidance from JEG to help local matching panels evaluate their current paramedic roles.

As part of this agreement, the employers and trade unions have agreed to a future piece of work to look at how we can support Newly Qualified Paramedics entering the service. This means looking at how they would be deployed, the level of autonomy and supervision they would have and how a preceptorship programme would better support them into employment. If appropriate, as part of this review we will look at a new role profile for a Newly Qualified Paramedic entry level at band 5.

There is still a lot of work nationally to be done in order to move things forward; however I can assure you that UNISON Yorkshire Service will continue to fight your corner for the best possible outcome both locally and nationally.

## Safer Responding

The safer responding SOP has now been in operation since February, replacing the previous loner worker policy. This SOP applies to any operational member of staff who responds to incidents either on a DCA or RRV.

The SOP uses the National Decision Making model to assess potential risks involved when responding to an incident. This is an interactive process between the responder and EOC, achieved by sharing and evaluating information and allowing the responder to make a dynamic risk assessment **prior** to attending scene.

A group, consisting of management and staff side meet regularly to review Datix and re-evaluate the SOP based upon these.

UNISON urge members to continue to Datix any incidents, equally if there are instances where the model has worked well please could these be forwarded to [unison@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:unison@yas.nhs.uk)

## Day for a day for training

An issue that has been frequently raised by members is around owing hours after attending trust training course (doesn't include CPD in own time). UNISON has worked hard to push the unfairness of this issue, and members often have no choice but to attend, they shouldn't then be penalised and made to work an extra shift to clear the deficit.

The new Staff Management of training hours standard operating procedure that was agreed at this month's JSG should do away with this problem and guarantee consistency across the Trust. Members are encouraged to read the new SOP, and any problems please do not hesitate to get in touch with your local convenor or area secretary for clarity and support.

## Hub and Spoke

The plans around the development of Hub and Spoke are moving forward, with reviews of various sites taking place. In the Doncaster area plans are at a more advanced stage than most with a site being identified with a final business case being in place and a site at Middle Bank being examined. In the very early stages are plans looking at how Bradford station, Leeds station and Manor Mill can be further developed to support future hub and spoke capability. We have asked for details to be presented at the next JSG to explain what model of make ready system the Trust plans to pursue, with UNISON pushing to ensure that whichever model is decided on, it is an in house team rather than private enterprise.

## Apprentice scheme

UNISON has been pushing for its apprentice members to be treated fairly with regard working any overtime hours (usually end of shift), and requested that they should be paid in line with Agenda for Change (A4C). The difficulty that this threw up was around how apprentices are paid, as there is no specific A4C band, however the trust has now agreed that apprentices should not be disadvantaged and miss out on potential extra pay that they have worked for. It has been agreed that apprentices will be paid any overtime that they work at pay band 2, obviously at time plus one half for any hours worked over 37.5 per week.

## Holiday Pay claims

These pay claims are ongoing with a high uptake from members. Please remember to forward any addition annual leave hours to [M.Campbell-Kealy@unison.co.uk](mailto:M.Campbell-Kealy@unison.co.uk) using 'holiday pay claim' and your membership number in the subject bar.

# Equality update—BME Survey

Unison is in the process of presenting a survey for BME staff to complete, the idea in developing the survey is to identify how staff feel, how YAS & Unison deal's with issues around race and equality as well as other race related issues. This will also give Unison an idea on what progress if any staff feel that YAS has made on issues that BME members of staff have raised over the last 2 years.

Unison would like all BME members of staff to respond to this email so an up to date mailing list can be designed, it would allow Unison to keep in direct contact with BME members.

Unison is also in the development stage of a self-organised group or SOG for BME members, any interested members are urged to contact on the details below if they wish to participate. The purpose of the group will be to highlight issues around equality, raise awareness as well as give BME staff support from Unison in tackling these issues together.

The issues of inequality is a decades olds one throughout society, only by working together will enable us as a Union together to tackle issues around equality. Unison well aware of numerous issues that have arisen around equality, as a trade union we have a responsibility to all members, the issues around inequality and discrimination are some of the core values that Unison considers unacceptable and will flight to eradicate these issues from our lives.

**The survey is anonymous, so please feel confident around sharing your experiences and thoughts in regards to any equality related issues.**

Unison would like to encourage any member of staff who experiences any unacceptable behaviour, bullying or victimisation to raise these issues with their Unison representative contacts can be found on the main Unison YAS webpage [www.uyab.co.uk](http://www.uyab.co.uk).

Any issues around equality BME members of staff can raise concerns with Islam Faqir Unison Lead Equality & Diversity [islam.faqir@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:islam.faqir@yas.nhs.uk) [Unisonequality@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:Unisonequality@yas.nhs.uk) 07498 918114

## Disability survey update

the survey highlighted how staff felt they were being treated unfairly around disability related issues and absences. In some cases members were being put under extreme amounts of stress as a result of being progressed through the sickness policy with no apparent adjustments or understanding. The survey highlighted a lack of awareness and appreciation of the member's situation when it came to reasonable adjustments being made for anyone who could be considered under the Equalities Act 2010.

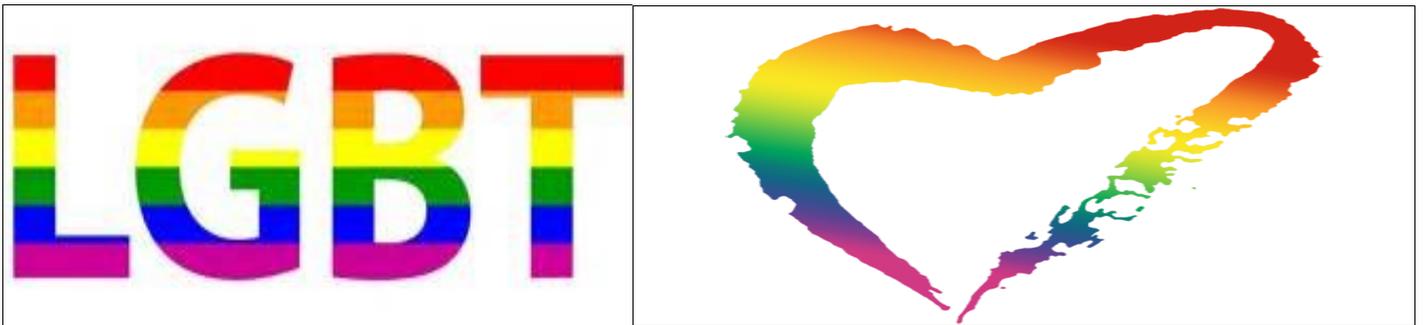
Following on from the survey the Trust stated they were open to discussions on a way forward to include changing policy and offering guidance to managers on these issues reiterating the Trust was positive about disability related issues and its staff.

To date there has only been one meeting and nothing else since, the issues around disability and the anxiety caused are serious issues which UNISON members experience daily.

UNISON will keep pushing for changes and urge members who feel that their disability is not being dealt with correctly as well as any other issues around disability issues to ensure they contact UNISON for advice and representation where needed.

It has now been almost 8 months since the disabled survey UNISON conducted was presented at JSG, You are considered disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities, examples can include an obvious physical disability or unseen issues such as diabetes or thyroid issues to the extent of any condition which affects your day to day ability to carry out normal daily activities.

Please use the following contact details to get in touch around any disability or equality related issues:  
[Islam.faqir@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:Islam.faqir@yas.nhs.uk) [unisonequality@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:unisonequality@yas.nhs.uk)



## ‘Rainbow Star of Life’ Ambulance

You will hopefully have seen the ambulance that Yorkshire Ambulance Service’s LGBT Network arranged to be decorated for Leeds Pride. The ‘Rainbow Star of Life’ ambulance has been approved to stay in service for six months with the intention of raising awareness of LGBT issues, and also promoting inclusive working practices in general.

UNISON Branch Committee are writing to let you know that we fully support this project and would like to encourage our members, and staff in general, to learn more about this initiative. UNISON are frequently asked to support staff who feel threatened, devalued or unrecognised in the workplace, and this project is one example of our service trying to prevent these things from happening.

I am sure there will be some mixed reaction to having a vehicle operating in this livery. We hope you enjoy sharing in celebrating this project, but if you have concerns, discuss these with your colleagues, your UNISON Rep or contact the LGBT Network directly.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service is the first service in the country to launch such a project and we hope you will join us in fully embracing it.

UNISON’s LGBT lead is Abigail Stanley, please contact her at [lgbt.unison@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:lgbt.unison@yas.nhs.uk)

# Security Alerts Portal

The Security Alerts Portal provides a secure means of sharing key information about individuals who may present a risk to staff and can be accessed by all eligible staff, via the Apps page on Pulse.

Access to the portal is strictly controlled to those staff who may come into contact with these individuals in the course of doing their job.

If an 'Access Denied' message appears and you feel that you need access to these alerts, a request for access should be submitted to the Local Security Management Specialist.

The site outlines very clearly that all information published within the Security Alerts Portal (including images) **MUST NOT** be copied, printed, downloaded, forwarded or shared in any way.

Alerts have been risk assessed to enable staff to focus on the most significant Alerts first, if their time is limited. The risk assessment process is as follows:

<b>RED</b>	<b>High Risk to YAS Staff</b>	<b>The Individual / Threat is currently known or thought to be in the Yorkshire region.</b>
<b>AMBER</b>	<b>Moderate Risk to YAS Staff</b>	<b>The Individual / Threat may not currently be known or thought to be in the Yorkshire region, but has a history of visiting Yorkshire.</b>
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>Low Risk to YAS Staff</b>	<b>The Individual / Threat may not currently be thought to be in the Yorkshire region, but has the potential to travel to Yorkshire.</b>

Staff are encouraged to read the published Alerts and then look out for notifications of new Alerts, which will be published in Staff Update

Any queries relating to this or any security related matter, please contact Helen Carter, Local Security Management Specialist, \* [helen.carter@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:helen.carter@yas.nhs.uk) or ( 07717 361648.

## STAY INFORMED - STAY SAFE

# PTS

There is not much to report on PTS this month, we are still getting numerous complaints, both from staff in comms and operational staff, and we are continuing to have conversations with PTS management about it. It has been in use for several months now so we feel that it is time for management to provide some evidence of the improvements that it has made and to re-evaluate if it doesn't prove to be beneficial.

Clearly it is a difficult time for our members who are working in areas that have gone out to tender. The trust's tender bids have been submitted and we will let you know of any progress as we hear. On a positive note, it is our understanding that the bid is for 5 years and as such should bring some much needed stability to PTS, if successful.

For any PTS issues please contact your local representative, PTS convenor Mick Askew 07506 134110 or contact [unison@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:unison@yas.nhs.uk)

## UNISON Stress Protocol

UNISON is currently reviewing its Stress Protocol as too many cases are going to Thompson's solicitors that have no chance of a success in court. It is very difficult to pursue these types of cases in courts as there so many hurdles to overcome and, in a nutshell, the courts are firmly on the side of the employer. Further details of the difficulties can be found in UNISON's Stress at work fact sheet <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2013/06/On-line-Catalogue169253.pdf> Whilst these changes will mainly affect stewards, secretaries and convenors etc. the upshot is that, as a member, your expectations will not be raised around stress related claims and you will know at an earlier stage if your claim will not be successful. Whilst this may feel quite 'negative' it has to be remembered that pursuing a claim does actually produce increased stress and worry at a time when it is least needed.

A positive side is that this will leave UNISON and Thompson's with more resource to pursue the cases which can be won and to spend more time working with employers to try to eliminate the causes of stress.

This should not stop anyone who feels they are suffering from stress, or being bullied and harassed at work, from speaking to their UNISON representatives at the earliest opportunity. There are still many things that can be done prior to the point where people believe they need to pursue the matter legally. The vast majority of cases that are successful legally are where the member has tried to deal with the issue and, as such, have made the employers aware of the situation therefore giving them a chance to put things right.



## PROFESSIONAL FINANCIAL ADVICE FOR UNISON MEMBERS



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For your FREE consultation with no commitment call John Duffy on

**07535 991722**

[john.duffy@lighthousefa.co.uk](mailto:john.duffy@lighthousefa.co.uk)

There for you (UNISON Welfare) is UNISON's own registered charity offering a unique confidential service supplying advice and support just for UNISON members and their families offering,

Financial advice

Wellbeing breaks

General advice

UNISON debt line

For more information - <https://www.unison.org.uk/>

<https://www.unison.org.uk/>

there  
for you

supporting UNISON members  
when life gets tough



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For UNISON assistance contact UNISON Direct 08000 857 857