

# ONE UNISON VOICE



Newsletter of Salisbury Health Branch

June 2021

## Building Back Better? Or is there Trouble ahead?

As I write this article we are hopefully facing the return to near normality at the end of the month with a much reduced risk of illness and death from Covid-19. After the pain and anguish of pandemic, and the measures designed to suppress the spread of the virus, there does now appear to be the imminent prospect that, in this country at least, we may get life back to where it was before last February, fairly soon and fewer people's lives and welfare will be at risk. The vaccine is mainly to thank for this, and the work of our colleagues and others in getting the shots administered to millions has been quite remarkable.

However, the vaccine programme has brought some troubles of its own, and we have seen some non-NHS employers take a hard line to try to force their employees to have the shots. I believe that

UNISON's approach to this has been the correct one; to encourage colleagues to take the vaccine, but to recognise and respect the fact that it is a personal choice and that people should be supported rather told by their employer to take it, or face the sack. The levels of voluntary take up of the vaccine are thankfully so high that any reasonable employer, in my opinion, should not need to force the very few people who refuse into taking it, because sufficient levels of immunity amongst staff and vulnerable patients now exist to make such action practically unnecessary given the risks involved.

The soon to be post-pandemic UK now faces a choice and I do hope that our government and key decision makers go down the right path. We could really be building back much better by -

- investing in our NHS and its staff,
- Creating a national care service,
- Decent sick pay for all,
- Greater flexible working options, such as

homeworking for those who can and want to do it,

- Good welfare provision.

I do fear though that with the current government, emboldened by their big majority and by recent election results, will go down a path that will cause suffering -

- lack of investment in the NHS, now facing a massive backlog, and pay restraint,
- Social care continuing to struggle with a lack of funds and with staff on poor terms and conditions of employment,
- A poor work culture where flexible working is looked upon as a burden and hassle and not a benefit to both employer and employee,
- More austerity and tough choices for those on the breadline.

If there is trouble ahead, at least you can be assured that UNISON is there for you as a support!

*By Mark Wareham  
Branch Secretary*



## There for You

Our union's welfare service, There for You, is pleased to announce that members can still apply online to the CoVid Response Fund. Members who are in financial difficulties as a result of Covid could be eligible for a grant of up to £500.

For more information go to:

<https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/financial-assistance/>

If you are unable to complete the form online, or just want to talk through your application, please get in touch with me.

Clare Christopher, Branch Welfare Officer  
E-mail—[salisburybwo@gmail.com](mailto:salisburybwo@gmail.com)

## Branch General Meeting

There will be a general meeting in the branch, to which all members are cordially invited, on -

***Tuesday 22nd June  
at 6.30pm till 7.30pm***

The meeting will be online and if you would like a weblink to attend please contact the Branch Secretary via e-mail (see page 4).

Hopefully this will be the last branch meeting to take place solely online, however we hope to be able to offer the option for people to join physical meetings online in future as our branch rules have been changed to allow for such 'hybrid' meetings. Our next meeting will be on Thursday 14th October at 6.30pm.

### **UNISON Says "Invest in Staff or the Waiting Lists Won't Shorten"**

Responding to news about the massive backlog of work that the service faces, our head of health, Sara Gorton said: "Behind these figures millions of people are waiting in agony and with huge uncertainty. With referrals at an all-time low, this is only the tip of the iceberg. The backlog is overwhelming and will take years to clear. It's a gigantic challenge facing NHS employees. But without sufficient staff, waiting lists won't shorten. Despite giving their all, health workers feel unvalued and disrespected by a government that insists a paltry 1% rise is all they're worth. Ministers are risking many staff simply walking. Politicians in Scotland get the need to invest in staff, as well as services. But the government in Westminster needs to wake up and realise that without a substantial pay rise to persuade staff to stay, the NHS is in deep trouble."



## **It's not part of the job**

Each year, across the NHS more than 75,000 staff experience physical violence and aggression.

You have the right to work safely, and to be respected by colleagues and the public. No one should suffer any sort of abuse at work.

If you experience violence and aggression at work UNISON is here to help.

Find out more at [unison.org.uk/NoNHSviolence](https://unison.org.uk/NoNHSviolence)

Not a member of UNISON? Join today at [join.unison.org.uk](https://join.unison.org.uk)

We are proud to be one of the main official sponsors of -



## WHERE ?

QUEEN ELIZABETH  
GARDENS, SALISBURY  
SP2 7TD

## WHEN?

SATURDAY 4TH SEPT 2021  
12PM - 10PM

For more info go to—<https://salisburypride.org/pride2021>

## Retired Members Seminar

I attended a virtual regional seminar on 29th April, and the information about scam trading that we received may be of interest to all members, but particularly retired members as older people do appear to be particularly vulnerable to this sort of activity. We were told that if a person knocks on your door, trying to trick or force you to buy services you do not want or have not arranged, and you ask them to leave, they will be committing a criminal offence if they do not do so, especially if you have a yellow “No Traders” sticker in your window. You should contact a company of your choice and get a written quote for any work to be done on your property. We received useful advice from -

- John Duncan, who is a retired Trading Standards Officer from Devon, who focused more on Crime & Fraud,
- Russell Saunders, a former member of the Scam Prevention Team with Dorset Council Trading Standards who focused more on Scam Awareness.

The meeting lasted about 2 hours and covered all the different ways people try to scam you - emails, phone calls, knocking on doors and mail these people have no scruples they just want you cash. Useful pointers we were given included—

- Reporting Scams Report Scams to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2030
- You can also ask for help from the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06
- The Police also want to know the movements of potential Rogue Traders. Call them on 101.
- However, if you feel unsafe in any way or if you think a criminal act is taking place, then call 999.
- Or Contact your Council’s Trading Standard for more information.

If you would like any more information please do drop me a line via the Branch Secretary (see page 4).

*By Sheila McQueen, Branch Retired Members Officer*

### Last Chance to Register for Settled Status

EU nationals have until the end of June to apply for the indefinite leave to remain scheme.

People who do not apply before 30th June could lose the right to live, work and access healthcare and education in the UK. So if this affects you, make sure to apply, and if you need any help in doing so, or with anything concerning your employment, please contact your steward, or the Branch Secretary (see page 4). We also offer a free immigration telephone advice to members through the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants. If you would like to access this, please call UNISON Direct at 0800 0 857 857.



## WHO'S WHO IN THE BRANCH

*Chair —*  
Zara Salisbury

*Secretary & membership—*  
Mark Wareham

*Treasurer, Health & Safety  
and Black Members—*Denis  
Bangura

*Women members & Labour  
Link—*Caroline Corbin

*Equality & Disabled  
members—*Mehdi Belbahi

*Welfare—*Clare Christopher

*Retired members—*Sheila  
McQueen

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e-mail—  
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nhs.net

UNISON's website -  
<http://www.unison.org.uk/>

## A Just Learning Culture (JLC)

NHS unions and national employers are advocating that all employers in the service adopt a JLC'. What is it and how might it affect you?

Basically a JLC is a different and more sympathetic approach to the management of conduct and performance. It recognises that formal processes can be more harmful than useful and that it is not always beneficial to the service, and certainly not fair on the employee, to use formal processes for certain matters. It recognises that in many cases there is more learning to be done, than punishment to be meted out and that in taking a more supportive stance and considering matters in the whole that the cost, both emotional and financial, to everyone can be reduced.

This is not to say that a JLC is a permissive culture. Such a culture of allowing intentional or serious persistent poor behaviour or conduct can be damaging and is unsustainable for the employer, and not fair on all other employees.

This culture came from initiatives in the aerospace industry that were adopted by some pioneer NHS Trusts who had particular problems and the benefits are there for all to see.

There are challenges to adopting a JLC for employers, personnel, unions and employees. But overall it is seen as being a positive step and hopefully you may be hearing more about this soon.

*Deadline date for next issue—mid-September 2021*

*Edited by: Mark Wareham*

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*The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of UNISON, the branch or the editor*

It is in all our interests that we have a strong union. The more members we have the better job we can do. Why not encourage colleagues to join? Please do give them the slip below and advise them to drop us a line.

**Everyone needs a helping hand at work sometimes.**

**Joining UNISON — Britain's biggest union — gives you a voice that's heard. So from negotiating better pay and conditions to supporting you in cases of grievance or disciplinary action, advice on health and safety or education and training, your UNISON branch is there to help. And it offers a great range of extra membership benefits too.**

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To join contact your UNISON rep

See above

UNISON *direct*

Or call the UNISON recruitment hotline **0800 0 857 857**

**UNISON**  
*Salisbury Health Branch*