

## UNISON NI B&MW e-bulletin (June - July)

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### 1. Repayment clauses

Most of our newly arrived members are here on health and social care sponsorship visas. This can leave people very vulnerable to exploitation and create terrible hardship when people are so unhappy that they want to leave their employer. Most migrants in that situation will have signed contracts that include 'repayment clauses' and find themselves faced with huge bills if they try to resign.

If you are struggling in a new workplace where you are not happy and feel unsafe or discriminated, **we want to hear from you!**

Remember that it is important to raise issues you face in your workplace with your employer as a first step:

- Make sure you raise issues in writing (email or even text / WhatsApp messages)
- If things don't improve raise an official grievance
- Keep a diary / keep a paper trail of trying to address the issues you are having.

#### **Don't struggle alone!**

Get in touch with your UNISON branch ( call 02890270190 or UNISON Direct for contact details) – or email [n.donnelly@unison.co.uk](mailto:n.donnelly@unison.co.uk) for further information and support.

Our Northern Ireland group has a Facebook page: [UNISON NI Migrant Workers page](#)

You should also join the new UNISON UK wide **Migrant Worker Network** to make sure you don't miss out on any relevant information and activities: [UNISON Migrant Worker Network](#)

### 2. Monthly Immigration Advice Clinic

Our monthly Immigration Clinics have been running again in the last two months.

The next one is on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June (fully booked)

There will be only one clinic over the summer: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> July

Please email Nathalie for bookings [n.donnelly@unison.co.uk](mailto:n.donnelly@unison.co.uk) / text-WhatsApp 07902044404

Remember that members can also access a confidential immigration advice telephone line via the JCWI / UNISON Direct helpline: Call 0800 0 857857

### 3. Black and Migrant workers regional group updates

#### **Goodbye to Pamela**

Our group was deeply saddened by the loss of Pamela Dooley. Pamela started this group many years ago. Many in the Filipino and Kerala communities will remember her and will have been helped by Pamela at some stage in these early years of the first wave of international recruitment of healthcare staff in Northern Ireland.

Pamela was still very active (both in UNISON's training programme and on the board of the Migrant Centre NI) and she leaves a huge gap. We will miss her terribly, but we also know how disappointed she would be if we didn't carry on with the work that she felt so passionate about!



#### **Information stalls coming up**

Since March this year, our group has been holding stalls in several hospitals to mark **2023 UNISON Year of Black Workers**

Upcoming Hospital Stalls:

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June** – Belfast City Hospital / Queens student building

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August - Craigavon hospital / outside the canteen**  
– 10.30 to 2.00 –  
Antrim hospital – date tbc



### **Social meet up**

Our group decided to meet up over the summer for a 'picnic in the park'  
**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July** at 12.30 at the Ormeau road entrance of the Ormeau park.

Bring your picnic and come join us!!!

[n.donnelly@unison.co.uk](mailto:n.donnelly@unison.co.uk) or check our facebook page for details (or alternative arrangements if it rains! : )

### **B&MW group activities**

Our group continues to focus on issues around immigration and work permits, as well as racism and racist discrimination.

We are invited to take part in an immigration symposium organised by London region in September. Two of our members attended UNISON Health conference. We hosted NICRE's conference on race equality legislation in May and Beverly was, as ever, involved in a number of events and seminars including NI Women parliament and a conference on racial profiling organised by CAJ.

The Executive Office have put out a consultation document on the Review of Race Relations Order (NI) Order 1997

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/execoffice/rro-public-consultation.PDF>

NICRE is encouraging BME groups and individuals to send in consultation responses.

For more information or a copy of NICRE's reply please email [patrick@nicre.org](mailto:patrick@nicre.org)

## **4. Pensions and moving back information**

Our group organised an advice session on pensions and retirement in March this year for members who were asking what would happen to their pension if they decided to retire back in their home country.

This was a very informative session and the slides from the evening and links for further advice can be found on our padlet platform:

[Activist Resources \(padlet.com\)](https://www.padlet.com)

## **5. English classes in UNISON**

Our next batch of English classes starts on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September. Please email [n.donnelly@unison.co.uk](mailto:n.donnelly@unison.co.uk) to join.

Preparation for IELTS 10.30 to 12.30

Preparation OET 13.30 to 15.30

Classes are also open to asylum seekers and refugees.

## 6. Education courses in UNISON

UNISON NI 2023 learning programme can be access on <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/753296910/4/>

UNISON College offer over 700 different course topics to our members each year. Ranging from in person accredited learning to virtual and eLearning CPD modules. We offer eLearning modules through the skills academy and Nursing Times CPD Zone. These are fully funded for all UNISON members.

Additionally, we offer learning grants, funded places on K102 Open University modules, in person and virtual sessions.

Our sessions can be booked via the app or by emailing [educationni@unison.co.uk](mailto:educationni@unison.co.uk) (to book a course please include the course name, your name and membership number if you know it.)

Our education grants, eLearning modules with Nursing times, and Skills Academy and pre-recorded lectures can be found on <https://padlet.com/caitcac8/memberlearning/wish/2427383621>

## 7. Other BME news info

A **vigil against the war in Sudan** has been organised in Belfast on Saturday: **10/06/23** - City Hall, Belfast @ 13.00 / stand in solidarity with the Sudanese community in Northern Ireland against war crimes in Sudan.

The **MAC Belfast** have been running a series of events around diversity and inclusion issues. See their website for more detail.

E.g. Still I Rise Diversity Storytelling - 18th June – 11 am

<https://themaclive.com/exhibition/still-i-rise-diversity-storytelling-books-about-home>

Outwrite: At the Table - Writing Workshop with Hilary McCollum (Prose)

<https://themaclive.com/exhibition/outwrite-at-the-table-writing-workshop-with-hilary-mccollum-novels>

Cit of Sanctuary are holding their **Great Refugee Week Picnic** in partnership with Amnesty International and various Refugee and Newcomer NGOs at Ulidia Playing Fields, Ormeau Road, Belfast on **Saturday 24 June** from 12.00 until 5.00.

The Duncairn Art Center (North Belfast) are holding a **Philippine Kultura Fest** on **Sunday 31 July**

<https://www.theduncairn.com/events/philippines-fest>

(This will be a fundraising event for the Ten Foundation -Belfast based charity looking to change the lives of poverty-stricken families in the Philippines) There will be an array of food and craft vendors, outdoor BBQ and AMAZING Filipino musicians and cultural dances!

Everyone welcome!

## 8. Join UNISON

***Do you have any colleagues  
not in UNISON?***

Encourage them to join now for advice  
and support in the workplace.

[Join UNISON Online](https://join.unison.org.uk/)



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