

May 2019



*Northern Ireland's
largest health union*

Stand up and speak out!

Nurses are coming together to protect our health service.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Professor of Epidemiology at University College London, spoke about health inequalities and said:

“Nurses are the most trusted group of people. They treat individuals with compassion and care and have great potential to improve the health of communities through action on the social determinants of health.”

Mary Hinds, the Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals at the Public Health Agency said:

“Our nursing workforce has a critical role to play in the reduction of health inequalities.

“We support the goals of the Nursing Now awareness campaign for Northern Ireland and welcome the opportunity to shine a light on the importance of the work of our nurses and midwives, now and in the future.”



We invite you to join UNISON to win pay justice for nurses and secure safe staffing levels.

The issues facing Nurses in Northern Ireland

Closing the pay gap

***Unsafe and inconsistent
staffing levels***

Overuse of expensive agencies

Staff mental health pressures

NMC re-validation

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Issued by UNISON NI Nurses Forum

International Nurses Day

Sunday 12th May 2019

UNISON Forum Road Shows 2019

- 8th, 9th and 10th May
Royal Victoria Hospital Belfast
- 10th May Craigavon Hospital
- 13th May New Omagh Hospital
- 14th May South West Acute Hospital
- 16th May Daisy Hill Hospital
- 6th June Ulster and Lagan Valley Hospital

For more information about road shows in your area contact your branch.

Nursing Icons through history

International Nurses Day is celebrated every year on the 12th of May - Florence Nightingale's birthday. Another highly-recognised nurse is Mary Seacole, an icon for UNISON nurses.

Mary Seacole was born Mary Jane Grant in 1805 to a free black Jamaican woman. Her mother ran a boarding house for British soldiers and sailors in the capital city, Kingston. During the Crimean War Mary was concerned about the welfare of soldiers she had known in Kingston.

She travelled to recruitment offices in London in an attempt to support the nursing efforts of Florence Nightingale who was in Turkey. Mary was rejected by at least four of those offices due to discrimination.

Mary then made her own way to Turkey where she set up the British hotel at her own cost. She provided food and care for the soldiers. Mary often went onto the battlefields and her courage and nursing skills were celebrated.

Mary Seacole is an icon for UNISON women. She was a woman who did not give up in the face of discrimination or hardship. Her story needs to be kept alive to inspire future generations of UNISON women.

UNISON represents the whole nursing family, including nurses, midwives, health visitors and healthcare assistants. *We are also the largest NHS trade union representing student nurses!*

Nurses Forum leaders are visiting workplaces across the health service to talk to nursing staff. We want to hear about your grievances and issues, and invite you to meet with us to discuss any concerns you might have.

We have a large network of branch representatives and national and regional officers who are committed to providing you with help and support when dealing with problems at work. We are dedicated to campaigning for a better deal for nursing and midwifery students.

We work together to make sure our members' concerns are heard – whether it's about pay, safe staff levels, recruitment and retention, agency staff, discrimination or the future of our NHS.



Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale

Nursing News

There are an estimated 5,000 nursing vacancies in Northern Ireland, with almost 900 vacancies in the Belfast Trust alone.

Andrea Sutcliffe Chief Executive and Registrar at the NMC has said:

“These are challenging times for health and social care with high vacancy and turnover rates. By proposing a new way for even more people to get back to work after a break, and reducing the cost of the overseas test, we can enhance the numbers of professionals with the right skills coming onto our register. These are people we know are committed to providing the best and safest care possible.”

Proposed additional routes for nurses to return to work after a career break has also been proposed.

Danny Mortimer, Chief Executive of NHS Employers, said:

“We know NHS organisations will need to continue to recruit more nurses from outside the UK as well as increase the UK supply. The openness of the NMC during the last 18 months to deliver changes to their processes has been welcomed by employers.

However, the additional burden of new post Brexit rules, which compel EU nurses to apply for the EU re-settlement scheme, adds an additional challenge to the problems of recruitment and retention.

Branch News

Causeway Branch held a Nurses Forum Road Show

Causeway Branch held a very successful **Nurses Forum Road Show** on the 11th of March. Those who came talked about the pressures of work and reliance on agency staff. Since this, staff have been raising more issues with management, which the Branch have been able to pick up and deal with.

Northern Health Branch are working in a new group to look at AFC nursing terms and conditions which currently are not being fully implemented. We are discussing new guidelines for the allocation of additional shifts for nurses, without having to resort to agency staff. We are also co-chairing a new group to address bullying and harassment issues, investigation process reviews and policy awareness sessions.

The Royal Victoria Hospital Branch have reported increased recruitment of new member. There has been an increasing number of nursing staff leaving for employment in health elsewhere. There is an ageing workforce across the Trust, with increasing numbers retiring each year rather than staying in stressful jobs.



To stay up to date with UNISON NI check our website or find your Branch on Facebook.
www.unison-ni.org.uk

UNISON continues the fight for pay

All Health Trade Unions Statement on Pay

Following the imposition of the one year pay uplift on Agenda for Change Pay Bands, trade unions resolved to continue to pursue pay parity discussions with the Department of Health (DOH) and HSC employers. Our aim continues to be the inclusion of health workers in the AFC Refresh framework agreement now in place in England, Scotland and Wales.

While DOH has agreed to facilitate and participate in discussions with trade unions and employers on a pay uplift for 2019/20 and 2020/21, the Department continues to refer to the absence of a Minister as a restriction on what might be achieved. The yearly application of funding for devolved government, whether functioning or not, is also cited as another restriction.

Trade union side have consistently challenged this approach and argued that health workers in Northern Ireland must have access to more than a year on year pay uplift as available to workers in other parts of the UK Agenda for Change Refresh framework.

We are committed to pursuing a fair and decent outcome for our members. The pay gap is expanding, recruitment and retention issues are growing and safe staffing consequences are becoming more visible.

We have all agreed to an effort to push forward to deliver for our members. To that end we have committed to a series of meetings over the next two months with the DOH and employers to try and reach acceptable outcome.

Success depends on the ability of the Department and the employers to ensure that those holding the finances both here and at the Treasury recognise their responsibility to health workers in Northern Ireland and do the right thing... PAY THEM!

Three simple ways to
Join UNISON today:



Call us on

0800 171 2194



Join online at

www.unison-ni.org.uk



Ask your UNISON rep
for an application form

**To get the contact
details of your
Branch contact:
028 9027 0190**

Do you know?

-Experienced nurses in NI earn £797 less than England and Wales and
£1,427 less than Scotland.

-Specialist nurses in NI earn £1,156 less than England and Wales and
£2,097 less than Scotland.

-Newly qualified nurses in NI earn £1,419 less than England
and £1,875 less than Scotland.

Nurse shortages are estimated at over 2,000 in the public sector with the same
estimated in the independent and private sector. Any wonder the DOH stats show
that 21% of newly qualified nurses leave Northern Ireland?