

UNISON FOR SOCIAL CARE WORKERS

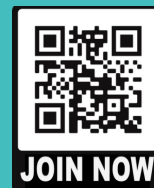


August 2023

IF YOU NO LONGER WORK IN SOCIAL CARE OR IF ANY OF YOUR CONTACT DETAILS HAVE CHANGED PLEASE UPDATE YOUR DETAILS THROUGH OUR MEMBERSHIP TEAM: NI-RMSTEAM@UNISON.CO.UK

FEEL FREE TO PASS ON THIS INFORMATION TO YOUR COLLEAGUES AND CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO JOIN A UNION.

THEY CAN JOIN UNISON ONLINE: WWW.UNISON-NI.ORG.UK/JOIN-UNISON OR SCAN THE QR CODE.



JOIN NOW

UNISON is the largest trade union in the health & social care sector fighting for the rights of our members and challenging companies in areas such as pay, non-payment of the minimum wage; zero-hour contracts; terms and conditions; training; scheduling and length of homecare visits, travel time; safe staffing in care homes and other health & safety concerns.

THIS NEWSLETTER INCLUDES UPDATES ON:



1. WHO ARE MY UNISON LOCAL ORGANISERS?



2. FREE UNISON COURSES COMING UP



3. RECENT SUCCESS STORIES



4. WORK PERMITS & SPONSORSHIPS



5. ADULT SOCIAL CARE REFORM



1. WHO ARE MY UNISON LOCAL ORGANISERS?

James Large & Orlaith McCarthy are the UNISON local organisers for the private social care sector.

If you work in a private nursing home or for a private homecare company, feel free to contact them to discuss your UNISON membership benefits, workplace issues, or if anyone who is not yet a member of UNISON wishes to join, please get in touch.

James Large j.large@unison.co.uk 07985290816

Orlaith McCarthy o.mccarthy@unison.co.uk 07904295219



2. FREE UNISON COURSES COMING UP

Here are a few examples of courses coming up in our education programme that will be of particular relevance to members working in social care:

Makaton: Baby and family signing 1st September

Cruse: Bereavement by suicide awareness 6th September.

ADHD awareness 18th September

For the full programme visit <https://unisoncollegeni.org.uk/courses/> or scan here:

Email educationni@unison.co.uk to register. Please give us your membership number if you know it.



SCAN ME



3. RECENT SUCCESS STORIES

- We have addressed an issue of members not being paid for **mandatory training** at a large residential and nursing home employer.
- Following UNISON's intervention some members working for a large provider of domiciliary care have had their **pay rate increased**.
- Achieved payment for **travel time** for members working for a particular provider of domiciliary care.
- Secured representation on the **Social Care Collaborative Forum** alongside representatives from Department of Health, social care providers and other key stakeholders.
- Following representations to the Department of Health all care home operators were **re-issued** the code of practice for international recruitment with further work ongoing to address **exploitative practices**.

We understand the pressures currently facing domiciliary and home care workers, by working together through your union we can achieve change. **If you would like to find out more about improving work for you and your colleagues please get in contact with us.**



4. WORK PERMITS & SPONSORSHIPS

UNISON members on work permits – call for info

We have been getting queries from members on work permits who have decided to leave their employer/sponsor before the end of their contract. This can be a stressful and complicated situation and members have been facing huge bills from their employer. Whilst some costs are eligible to be repaid through repayment clauses there are a number of costs which **must not** be reclaimed from international recruits. These include but are not limited to the:

- agency fee;
- immigration skills charge;
- sponsor licence fee;
- certificate of sponsorship;
- cost of the interview process;
- expense costs must not incur any interest on the amount reclaimed; and
- employers should provide the option to repay the costs or expenses through a monthly repayment plan.

Often employers will recoup money based on a sliding scale, depending on how long the work permit holder has worked for them. However, some employers have tried to exploit the situation and demand exorbitant amounts that go well beyond any reasonable compensation!

If you have been in that situation, we would like to hear from you. We also want to get a comprehensive picture of what repayment clauses employers have put in their work permit contracts. If you are affected by this or have any relevant information, please contact **Nathalie Donnelly: N.donnelly@unison.co.uk**

Remember that your UNISON membership also gives you access to immigration advice – call **0800 0 857857** for the UNISON Direct immigration weekly phone help line or contact Nathalie for an appointment on the immigration advice clinic.



5. ADULT SOCIAL CARE REFORM

The Department of Health is leading a piece of work that includes the reform of adult social care. An essential element of any reform must include improvements in pay, terms and conditions across the workforce.

A Social Care Fair Work Forum was established by the Health Minister in 2021 following campaigning by UNISON, with the aim of improving terms and conditions and tackling the issue of care workers receiving some of the lowest wages in our society. We have been pressing the Department of Health to bring the Forum together and progress its work.

A Social Care Collaborative Forum has recently been created and UNISON has also secured a position on this forum to raise the voice of our members and call for improvements to pay, terms and conditions. Look out for future updates.