

Agenda for change

Early Implementers newsletter

HC/117/03

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LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

This is the fourth issue of the Agenda for Change Newsletter, providing feedback to UNISON members on the latest information emerging from the twelve Early Implementer Sites.

UNISON has held its fifth meeting of Early Implementer Lead Activists and Officers and a summary of current developments is set out below.

RECRUITMENT

A number of EI Sites are participating in a recruitment strategy, involving activists in all departments and carrying out face-to-face recruiting. This approach has provided an opportunity to communicate with members and to recruit more activists to meet the increased workload of Agenda for Change. Special Agenda for Change recruitment packs are being circulated to these sites.

Guys/St. Thomas and South West London/St. George's branches recently spent a week visiting all of their trusts' sites giving every member of staff a pack, and engaging with members, potential members and activists. West Kent Branch will be visiting sites in their trust in December. Early feedback is positive and we will keep branches informed of progress.

The packs will soon be available for all health branches to support their local recruitment strategies.

WHAT CAN NON-EARLY IMPLEMENTER BRANCHES DO?

Whilst the EI process continues, there is important work that non-EI branches can do now. This would be of value to branches whatever the outcome of the second ballot. It would be time well spent and would in no way pre-empt the important decision that UNISON members are to take in next year's ballot. Important tasks to be undertaken include:

- Updating Job Descriptions
- Developing a clear and practical recruitment strategy
- Identifying members/activists willing to be involved in the work that Agenda for Change would generate if implemented
- Build a profile of your employer by looking at current employment arrangements, job titles, how staff are graded, their terms and conditions, etc.
- Prepare for the Knowledge & Skills Framework (KSF) by undertaking a review of your appraisal and personal development plan (PDP) system and thinking about which groups of staff you may wish to pilot for KSF.

Branches should contact their Regional Head of Health to discuss their plans and to obtain supplies of the recruitment packs (see circulars HC/113/03 and HC/116/03 for details).

UNISON TRAINING

UNISON Job Evaluation Training: The materials for the one-day activists' training course are currently being finalised. The course is designed to provide a basic knowledge of the principles of job evaluation and an understanding of the job matching process. Course materials and practical activities will be available for use by Regional Educational Officers, Regional Officers and branch officials in the near future. It is hoped that the course will give activists a clearer idea of what being involved in job evaluation at local level would entail, and encourage members to put themselves and branch colleagues forward to be part of the process.

In addition, UNISON training courses are being developed on:

- Advocacy skills
- Job Matching skills
- Conditions of Service/Local Negotiations

JOB EVALUATION

The materials for the official NHS Job Evaluation Working Party training for Job Analysts, Matchers and Evaluators have been reviewed and revised. Trainers (appointed via the Strategic Health Authorities) will be receiving intensive training and accreditation between January and March 2004. This will cover all aspects of the scheme and the roles of Matcher, Evaluator and Analyst. The training will then be rolled out to the rest of the service from a Strategic Health Authority level.

It has been confirmed that all training will be accredited via a higher education establishment. Those delivering the training will be accredited at tutor level.

There are ongoing discussions about retrospective accreditation for those currently delivering training and undertaking JE roles in the EI sites.

MATCHING & PROFILING

EI sites continue to make progress in the job matching process. More national job profiles have been agreed and an up to date list will be published shortly. It is expected that some of the locally evaluated posts within the EI sites will be used to produce further national profiles. UNISON has identified the following occupational areas which still require national profiles:

- Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Pharmacy
- Finance
- Medical Technicians
- Health Care Assistant
- Ambulance Technicians
- Occupational Therapy

A complete list of all published job profiles can be found at

www.doh.gov.uk/agendaforchange/jobprofiles.htm

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS FRAMEWORK (KSF)

All sites have identified pilot groups and efforts are being made to raise awareness of KSF. A series of road shows have taken place at West Kent involving approximately 500 staff, while Aintree has run four training sessions for around 80 staff and has employed a KSF Implementation Researcher to assess the quality of the training. Herefordshire PCT is running 22 road shows across 9 sites in the Trust. Avon & Wiltshire have set up a KSF outline development group, and at Papworth, workshops are being run to produce KSF outlines.

The James Paget Trust ran a series of road shows throughout November and has secured funding for a computerised Personal Development Plan (PDP) system. It is incorporating KSF into the PDP system. KSF Leads have all been trained and are currently working on KSF outlines.

East Anglian Ambulance, North East Ambulance and Papworth have all put in bids to their local Workforce Development Confederations/Strategic Health Authorities to assist in the funding of KSF.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Appeals procedures

Guys & St. Thomas, Aintree, South West London & St. George's, West Kent and Herefordshire have all agreed appeals procedures. Both South West London & St George's and Guys have agreed to add a further, informal appeal stage to the matching process which aims to reduce the potential number of grievances that could be lodged.

Recruitment & Retention Premia (RRP)

Herefordshire Primary Care Trust has reached agreement on a protocol for the use of national and local RRP. Under this protocol the level of premium payable will be set locally on assimilation for the nationally agreed groups (Appendix I of the Proposed Agreement). The value of the RRP will be based on the difference between the maximum of the new pay band and the highest point being paid on the old scale.

There are discussions throughout all the sites around when to use long and short term national RRP, and on the levels payable.

Unsocial hours:

West Kent, Central Cheshire and North East Ambulance have all agreed that staff working up to 5 unsocial hours per week, will receive a 5% supplement. Herefordshire PCT have agreed that staff working more than _ but less than 2 unsocial hours will receive 2% enhancement, while those working between 2 and 5 unsocial hours per-week will receive 5% supplement.

Also under the agreement at Herefordshire PCT, it is accepted there will be a "norm" for a post. However it is accepted that individuals work flexibly and have their own pattern of working. Therefore for those employees that fall outside of the "norm" for their team, the manager will determine the reason and then:

- Accept that it is legitimate to have such a difference (ie the person is the only member of the team to work permanent nights); or
- Accept there were reasons why the outcome was skewed (ie significant absence such as maternity leave) and agree with the individual to adjust the percentage, or commence another review period.

On-call payments

Both North East Ambulance and Herefordshire PCT have agreed that employees who are called into work during a period of on-call will receive payment for a minimum of two hours (including travelling time.)

Annual leave

North East Ambulance has agreed that employees can carry over up to 10 days annual leave for this year.

Herefordshire PCT has agreed that for the purposes of calculating annual leave entitlement, NHS service may include time spent in a relevant role in organisations other than the NHS, i.e. GP Practices, Social Services, and Nursing Homes.

A REMINDER OF WHERE THE EARLY IMPLEMENTER SITES ARE:

James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust
Guy's & St Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust
City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Trust
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust
Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
S West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
West Kent NHS & Social Care Trust
Herefordshire NHS Primary Care Trust
Central Cheshire Primary Care Trust
North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust
East Anglian Ambulance NHS Trust

USEFUL WEBSITES:

See the UNISON Agenda for Change web pages for regular updates, advice and information -

www.unison.org.uk/a4c

It's also worth checking out the following sites which provide information and guidance for employers on the importance of adopting a Partnership approach to Agenda for Change:

www.doh.gov.uk/hrinthenhs/staffinvolvement

www.modern.nhs.uk/agendaforchange