

National Disabled Members Conference 2016

**29th October 2016
to 31st October
2016 Brighton**

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Brighton Centre

29 Oct 2016 31 Oct 2016

Organising and Recruitment

1. Revised National Disabled Members Committee (NDMC) Constitution and Standing Orders for National Disabled Members Conference

The National Disabled Members Committee calls upon Conference to:-

1. accept and adopt the following (a) revised National Disabled Members Committee Constitution and (b) Standing Orders for National Disabled Members Conference,
2. note that these revised documents will take effect immediately following National Disabled Members Conference 2016
 - (a) Revised National Disabled Members Committee (NDMC) Constitution
 - i) Membership of the Committee shall consist of: two delegates elected from their Regional Disabled Members' Group, two ex officio disabled members seat holders of the National Executive Council, two co-opted members from the National Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Committee, two co-opted members from the lesbian gay bisexual transgender caucus at Disabled Members' Conference, two co-opted members from the National Women's Committee and two co-opted members from National Black Members' Committee and black members' caucus at Disabled Members' Conference respectively. Two co-opted members from the deaf (native British Sign Language users) caucus at National Disabled Members Conference. At least half of the members elected from each of the above constituencies must be a woman.

A post of a delegate can be job-shared but only one of that job-share team will be funded nationally to attend any meeting. If both job-share delegates attend a meeting, both will have speaking rights but only one will have voting rights.
 - ii) The National Executive Council is invited to send a further member to the Committee with speaking but non-voting rights. This member must be disabled.
 - iii) UNISON's National Disabled Members' Officer and other UNISON staff attend to support and service the Committee with speaking but non-voting rights.
 - iv) The Committee can set up working groups to undertake specific areas of work relating to its work programme.
 - v) Convenors of the Committee's working groups will be agreed by the members of the Committee with the relevant experience and knowledge.

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- vi) The Committee shall meet formally four times a year, including a meeting for a policy weekend, with provision for extraordinary meetings if business requires it.
- vii) Officer positions within the Committee shall be Co-Chairs, at least one of whom must be a woman and the Co-Deputy Chairs, and at least one of whom must be a woman. As set out in iv) the committee can appoint members of NDMC for specific areas of responsibility aligned to the NDMC work programme.
- viii) Caucus Groups will be able to appoint a liaison representative on behalf of the committee for:

Black Members

Deaf Members

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Members

Women Members

Labour Link

All of whom will be accountable to the full committee.

- ix) The officers will be elected at the first meeting of the NDMC (usually the policy weekend) following Disabled Members Conference, where the position is contested there will be a secret ballot.
- x) No person can hold the same officer post for more than two consecutive years, but can put their name forward for the same post after a year's break. Any member leaving a post after two years can put their name forward for election to any other officer post
- xi) Quorum for the meetings shall be 33 per cent of the voting membership.
- xii) Any amendments to the National Disabled Members' Committee Constitution must be submitted for consideration to the Disabled Members' Conference within the agreed timetable.

(b) REVISED STANDING ORDERS FOR NATIONAL DISABLED MEMBERS CONFERENCE

SO1 Standing Orders

1.1 Standing Orders

- 1.1 Standing Orders are the rules which say how conference must be run. They are written so as to provide every delegate with an equal opportunity to contribute.

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- 1.2 These Standing Orders are agreed by the National Disabled Members Conference.
- 1.3 Where these Standing Orders are silent on any issue, practice at National Delegate Conference will prevail.
- 1.4 These Standing Orders may only be amended by a formal amendment to Standing Orders agreed at National Disabled Members Conference by two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

SO2 Standing Orders Committee

- 2.1 The Standing Orders Committee will be made up of:
 - 1 Four members elected, by ballot if required, (as stated in SO15.1.1) at the National Disabled Members' Conference;
 - 2 two members elected by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Caucus;
 - 3 two members elected by the Black Members' Caucus. At least half the members elected from each of the above constituencies must be women.
- 2.2 The Committee will be advised by a UNISON staff member, who shall be the Committee secretary.
- 2.3 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the end of one National Disabled Members Conference until the end of the next National Disabled Members Conference.
- 2.4 At its first meeting after it takes office, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from amongst its members, at least one of whom shall be a woman.
- 2.5 The functions of the Committee shall, subject to these Standing Orders, be to:
 - 2.5.1 ensure that the National Disabled Members Conference Standing Orders are observed, and notify the Chairperson of any violation that may be brought to the Committee's notice;
 - 2.5.2 draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of Conference business, and the proposed hours of business, to be circulated in accordance with a timetable published in the official Conference bulletin;
 - 2.5.3 determine the order in which the business of Conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of Conference.

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- 2.5.4 consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by Conference and, for the purpose of enabling Conference to transact its business effectively the Committee shall:
- 1 decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with the Standing Orders;
 - 2 group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially;
 - 3 prepare and revise, in consultation with the movers of motions and amendments, composite motions in terms which, in the opinion of the Committee, best express the subject of such motions and amendments;
 - 4 refer to another representative body within the Union a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be considered there; the mover shall be informed of the reason for so doing;
 - 5 have power to do all such other things as may be necessary to give effect to these Standing Orders.
- 2.5.5 Any decisions of the Committee which are to be reported to Conference shall be announced by the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the Committee and shall be subject to ratification by Conference. The Standing Orders Committee Report, or any section of the Report, can either be accepted or referred back.
- 2.5.6 Members of the Standing Orders Committee shall take no other part in the conduct of Conference.

SO3 Motions and Amendments Pre-Conference

- 3.1 Motions, amendments and other appropriate business may be proposed for the Conference by properly-constituted meetings of the following:

Branch Disabled Members Groups

Regional Disabled Members Groups

National Disabled Members Committee

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Caucus

National Black Members' Caucus

National Women's Caucus

National Deaf (native British Sign Language Users) Caucus

National Young Members Forum

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- 3.2 Each of the above bodies may submit up to 3 motions, with no limit on the number of amendments that may be submitted, except for the National Young Members Forum which may submit up to 2 motions and up to 2 amendments.
- 3.3 Motions and amendments shall be submitted in accordance with the timetable and by the method specified in the official conference bulletin.
- 3.4 The caucus groups set out in SO.3.1 shall be entitled to meet in accordance with the National Disabled Members' Conference timetable to submit motions and amendments of concern to their respective member groups.
- SO4 Attending, speaking and voting at Conference
- 4.1 Only branch disabled delegates are entitled to speak and vote in debates at conference.
- 4.2 Representatives of the following have speaking rights only in debates:
- Regional Disabled Members Groups
 - National Disabled Members Committee
 - Black Members Self-Organised Group
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members Self- Organised Group
 - Women Members Self-Organised Group
 - National Young Members Forum
 - National Retired Members Organisation
- 4.3 The following may address Conference:
- Conference Co-Chairs
 - Co-Chairs of the Standing Orders Committee
 - Staff called to speak by the Conference Chair
 - Speakers identified in a Standing Orders report that has been accepted by conference.
- SO5 Chairing of conference
- 5.1 The co-chairs of Conference shall be members of the National Disabled Members Committee.
- 5.2 The Conference Chair decides on any procedural motions and points of order. The Conference Chair's ruling is final and binding.
- 5.3 The Conference Chair may at any time propose that Conference be adjourned for a specified period. Conference will immediately vote on this proposal.

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SO6 Voting Procedure

- 6.1 The method of voting shall be by a show of the voting card which is provided to each branch delegate.
- 6.2 If the Chair cannot make a clear declaration s/he may call for a count, or at least 20 delegates present may also call for a count.
- 6.3 The count must be completed and the result reported to Conference before proceeding to the next item of business.

SO7 Withdrawals of motions and amendments

- 7.1 A motion or amendment which is shown on the final agenda may not be withdrawn without the consent of the Standing Orders Committee, whose decision shall be reported to Conference for a formal vote on whether to accept that Committee's decision, or refer it back to them for further consideration.

SO8 Emergency motions and amendments

- 8.1 Emergency motions and amendments are those items of business which are submitted after the relevant scheduled deadline and relate to matters which have occurred after the relevant deadline.
- 8.2 Emergency motions may be submitted by properly-constituted meetings of the following bodies, in accordance with the procedure set out in the official conference bulletin:

Branch Disabled Members Groups

Regional Disabled Members' Groups

National Disabled Members' Committee

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Caucus

National Black Members' Caucus

National Women's Caucus

National Deaf (native British Sign Language users) Caucus.

National Young Members' Forum

- 8.3 If the Standing Orders Committee gives its approval to the emergency motion or amendment being considered by Conference, copies will be made available to delegates at least one hour before Conference is asked to decide whether to consent to the Emergency Motion being added to the Conference agenda.
- 8.4 An emergency motion will not be given a higher place in the order of business over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the

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Standing Orders Committee decides that its purpose would be frustrated if it were not dealt with earlier in the Conference.

SO9 Points of Order

- 9.1 A Point of Order draws Conference's attention to a breach of the Rules or Standing Orders.
- 9.2 A Point of Order may be raised by a delegate at any stage during Conference if s/he considers that business is not being conducted in accordance with UNISON's Rules or the Conference's Standing Orders.
- 9.3 The Point of Order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs, or at the earliest practicable moment.
- 9.4 The Point of Order shall not be debated or amended, and the Conference Chair shall make an immediate and final ruling.

SO10 Procedural Motions

- 10.1 The following procedural motions may be moved at any time without previous notice on the agenda:

- 10.1.1 "That the question be now put," provided that

- i) the Conference Chair may advise Conference not to accept this motion if in her/his opinion the matter has not been sufficiently debated.
 - ii) if this procedural motion is carried, it shall take effect at once, subject only to any right of reply under these Standing Orders.

- 10.1.2 "That the Conference proceed to the next business"

- If this is carried it means that the matter being discussed immediately falls from the agenda and Conference proceeds to the next item of business.

- 10.1.3 "That the debate be adjourned".

- 10.1.4 "That the Conference (or part of Conference) be held in private session."

- 10.1.5 The only people permitted to attend a private session of Conference are:

- i) delegates
 - ii) members of the National Disabled Members' Committee
 - iii) members of the Standing Orders Committee
 - iv) personal assistants working with any of the above
 - v) members of staff who have been authorised by the National Disabled Members' Committee or the UNISON General Secretary to attend Conference

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- vi) any other people as the Conference Chair shall determine.
- 10.2 Procedural motions are put to the vote immediately without discussion and no amendment is allowed, except for motion 10.1.4, where the Conference Chair may allow debate and/or amendments.
- 10.3 A person who has already spoken on the motion or amendment in question shall not move one of the procedural motions above.

SO11 Conduct of debates

- 11.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment may speak for no more than five minutes, and each subsequent speaker may speak for no more than three minutes.
- 11.2 The Chairperson may exercise their discretion to extend speaking times for delegates whose access requirements, in the Chairperson's judgement, would otherwise impact on their contribution, up to a maximum of double the speaking limits set in 11.1.
- 11.3 When an amendment to a motion is moved no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of, except during grouped debates.
- 11.4 When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as amended, becomes the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved.
- 11.5 A delegate may not move more than one amendment to any one motion. The mover of a motion may not move an amendment to their own motion.
- 11.6 No delegates shall speak more than once on a motion or amendment, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes. No new material may be introduced during a right of reply.

SO12 Grouped debates and sequential voting

- 12.1 The Standing Orders Committee may propose grouped debates or sequential voting on motions or amendments which deal with the same subject matter.
- 12.2 The following procedure will be followed:
 - 12.2.1 The Conference Chair will advise Conference of the order of business and of the sequence in which motions and amendments will be moved and voted on following a general debate, and of the effect of certain proposals on others;
 - 12.2.2 All motions and amendments included in the debate shall be moved;
 - 12.2.3 The general debate shall take place;

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12.2.4 The Conference Chair shall again state the order of voting and advise Conference which, if any, motions and amendments will fall if others are carried;

12.2.5 Voting will take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved.

12.2.6 A grouped debate may not be adjourned until after all the motions and amendments have been moved.

SO13 National Disabled Members' Committee at Conference

13.1 At the start of each Conference the National Disabled Members' Committee shall present its report for the past year, which shall be circulated to delegates prior to Conference.

13.2 Any report which contains proposals or recommendations requiring approval and adoption by Conference shall be submitted in advance in the form of a motion, in accordance with the timetable.

13.3 The National Disabled Members' Committee will indicate its policy on all items to delegates, in advance of a vote on the item.

SO14 Reference of outstanding items to the National Disabled Members Committee

14.1 Any motions not reached on the agenda shall stand referred to the National Disabled Members' Committee and reported on after the first meeting of that Committee after conference.

SO15 Elections at Conference

15.1 The following elections will take place at Conference:

15.1.1 National Disabled Members Conference Standing Orders Committee

15.1.2 Two delegates to the union's National Delegate Conference

15.1.3 One newssheet representative for the union's National Delegate Conference

15.1.4 One delegate for UNISON's delegation to Trade Union Congress

15.1.5 Two delegates to each of the union's service group conferences

15.1.6 Two delegates to Labour Party Conference, who shall also be delegates to the Labour Link Forum

15.1.7 Two delegates to the National Disabled Members Committee from each of the following caucuses:

(i) the disabled lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members caucus;

(ii) the disabled Black members caucus;

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- (iii) the Deaf (native British Sign Language users) caucus.
- 15.2 Nominees for these posts must be eligible to stand in the relevant capacity and be amongst those registered to attend Conference as:
 - (i) delegates from branches or regions;
 - (ii) the National Disabled Members Committee;
 - (iii) the Standing Orders Committee;
 - (iii) Representatives of Self-Organised Groups;
 - (iv) Representatives of the National Young Members Forum.
- 15.3 Any contested election for positions under 15.1.1, 15.1.2, 15.1.3, 15.1.4 will be decided by ballot. Only those registered as conference delegates from branches or the National Disabled Members Committee shall be entitled to vote.
- 15.4 Any contested positions under 15.1.5, 15.1.6, or 15.1.7 will be decided by the meetings convened at Conference for members of those constituencies.
- 15.5 All elections will be subject to proportionality for women members.
- SO16 Selection of motions for National Delegate Conference
- 16.1 A ballot will be conducted at Conference to determine from amongst those motions carried by Conference, which two shall be submitted as proposed business for National Delegate Conference.
- SO17 Suspension of Standing Orders
- 17.1 Any one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended by a resolution of Conference in relation to a specific item of business before the Conference or to the proceedings of Conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting vote for the resolution.

National Disabled Members Committee

Recruitment & Organisation

2. SUPPORTING BLACK MEMBERS WITH DYSLEXIA AND DYSPRAXIA

Conference notes that Dyslexia/Dyspraxia are the most common causes of reading, spelling and writing difficulties. 1 in 10 people are estimated to experience these problems. Research shows that Black people are disproportionately affected. Dyslexia goes beyond reading/writing difficulties.

The issues faced by Black Members are often misdiagnosed as performance related. Managers are quick to initiate disciplinary & capability procedures.

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Conference is aware that institutional racism as well as unconscious bias can result in the failure for organisations to offer appropriate support. Our Black Disabled members then find it difficult to implement coping strategies in order to carry out their daily tasks.

We call on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. work with the National Black Members Committee and other Self Organised Group committees to create a briefing paper about dyslexia/dyspraxia to be distributed to Branches, which includes the particular impacts likely to be experienced by Black members.
2. promote the existing Learning and Organising Service (LAOS) training on dyslexia

National Black Members Caucus

3. SUPPORTING BLACK MEMBERS WITH SICKLE CELL, THALASSEMIA AND LUPUS

Conference notes that Sickle Cell, Thalassaemia and Lupus disproportionately affect Black people, who may have increased bouts sickness, hospitalisation, infection and associated illness.

These absences often trigger disciplinary & capability procedures.

We call on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. review existing literature and add references to Sickle Cell, Thalassaemia and Lupus where not already existing,
2. work with the National Black Members Committee and other parts of the union to create a briefing paper about Sickle Cell, Thalassaemia and Lupus to be distributed to Branches, which includes the particular impacts likely to be experienced by Black Members.

National Black Members Caucus

4. TRADE UNION ACT AND DISABLED WOMEN ACTIVISTS

Conference welcomes the successful campaigning by UNISON which has led to the Trade Union Act not being as draconian as was originally intended, however, its implementation will still have a massive impact on UNISON's ability to organise in the work place, facilities time and our equalities work.

Being activists in our union without dedicated facility time impacts negatively on our disabled women, who are already under increased pressure in the workplace. The lack of facility time shows the lack of value placed of the work disabled women activists do and creates further barriers to them partaking in campaigning and awareness raising to improve disabled women's wellbeing. This work provides value for the wider workplace reducing sickness absences.

Conference, we call upon the National Disabled Members Committee to:

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1. campaign for dedicated facility time and provide good practice guides for branches.
2. conduct a survey to establish if disabled women activists are getting facility time so we can have a greater understanding and provide support to branches
3. promote activism within disabled and women members networks and profile women disabled activists in UNISON communications

National Women's Caucus

5. ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

Conference recognises that many disabled women are not aware if a disability leave policy exists in their workplace or how to make use of it if one should exist.

Currently sick leave due to disability being inappropriately classified as sickness absence can lead to disabled women facing disciplinary or capability action. Although disabled women may be entitled to disability leave, it can still trigger the employer to use the sickness absence policy against them or discriminate against them.

'Presenteeism' is a management issue that needs to be resolved. We have seen a shift in our workplace cultures due to harsh absence policies. An already vulnerable group, disabled women lack support and understanding and are often now working when they are not fit to do so through fear of disciplinary action and ultimately the threat of dismissal.

Conference, this is frightening that such draconian cultures are finding the way into the workplace. This needs to be addressed.

Conference also recognises that occupational health services vary, with some being supportive to disabled women whilst others favour the employer.

Conference calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. work with service groups and sector committees to promote consistency across employers plus encourage the adoption of disability leave policies
2. investigate the benefits of employers adopting a more person-centred approach to sickness absence
3. work with regional Disabled Members Self Organised Groups or branch Disabled Members Self Organised Groups to share examples of policies which are person-centred.

National Women's Caucus

6. PROMOTE SELF ORGANISED GROUPS (SOGs)

Self Organised Groups (SOGs) are the equality life blood of UNISON. A key part to achieving equality is the organisation of groups of members who face prejudice and discrimination.

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Disabled members issues are trade union issues. We welcome UNISON's continued commitment to equality and to tackling discrimination, enshrined in the union's rules.

Disabled members find it hard enough to hold their own within the workplace, standing up for their rights against employers. From experience, disabled people are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than non-disabled people, e.g. in 2012 19% of disabled people experienced unfair treatment at work compared to 13% of non-disabled people.

All SOGs appreciate the support they receive from their branches and committees. SOGs can play a vital role in the life of our branches and committees by supporting and ensuring the voice of the minorities is heard. The ethos of these groups is self organisation but we are not too proud to ask for help.

This motion calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. ensure that members are aware of the SOGs within their branches
2. encourage groups to work together on overlapping issues, e.g. health and safety issues, or discrimination issues
3. promote regional events and national conferences to members of SOGs

Scotland Region

7. COMBATING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

This Conference notes with great concern the high number of disabled workers experiencing bullying and harassment at work, with research by CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development) highlighting that 37% of disabled workers have experienced bullying and harassment, compared to 18% of non-disabled workers.

Further, research from Cardiff University highlighted that the type of disability an individual has can significantly affect their likelihood of experiencing this treatment at work, for example 21% of those with learning disabilities experienced violence at work compared to 10% of disabled workers overall and 5% of those without a disability.

UNISON's Scottish Young Members Committee recently undertook a survey, as part of their anti bullying project - "Gonnae No Dae That" – about bullying and harassment amongst young workers, which included responses from disabled people. One of the major findings was that 50% of respondents with a disability had impacts on their health and wellbeing due to bullying and harassment, compared to 39% of those without a disability. The health impacts for all groups were exceptionally wide ranging from members suffering from anxiety and depression to attempts at suicide.

We call on the National Disabled Members Committee to :-

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1. produce information, in accessible formats, for disabled members on bullying and harassment within the workplace, on what they can do and what support is available to them.
2. develop a campaign to highlight mental health impacts of bullying and harassment on disabled workers and how they are more vulnerable to its effects, for use by branches.

Scotland Region

8. PHASED RETURN TO WORK

A phased return to work may be the best way of helping a person to re-adjust to full attendance at the workplace. This is particularly the case after a prolonged period of absence or the absence is disability related, when returning to full time work immediately could have a detrimental impact on the person's health or performance. GPs and Occupational Health professionals recognise that this can be beneficial to both the worker and employee and often include it as a recommendation in the Fit Note or Occupational Health report.

A phased return to work offers workers the opportunity to return to work at an earlier stage of recovery from illness by allowing them to do reduced hours with modified duties based on a structured return to work plan.

Conference, for a disabled worker the benefit of the phased return to work can be to allow them to return to work much sooner with reduced pressure and a greater level of support. This has been shown to improve overall wellbeing.

How a return to work program is developed will depend on the reason for the person's absence, as recuperation rates vary greatly. Those who return to work too soon after illness may not be able to work to their full capacity even though they may appear sufficiently medically fit to return to their jobs. It would be easy for managers to misconstrue issues such as difficulty concentrating, remembering things or making decisions as poor performance, so it's important for employers to find out about a person's condition and their expected rehabilitation rates.

Conference, we are growingly concerned how employers are implementing return to work processes, particularly in relation to pay, and the impact this has on workers and in particular disabled workers. A number of employers have policies which mean when the working hours are reduced to accommodate a phased return, the employee is only paid for the hours worked but can make up their pay with accrued annual leave.

Conference, we believe that members should not suffer financial hardship as a result of a phased return and that whilst a large number of employers which UNISON have recognition with will have a sickness absence policies, it is important branches consider what their policy states in relation to pay during a return to work period and where possible negotiate that full pay is received during the phased return to work for all employees.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to;

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1. work with service groups and bargaining support group to ensure that any guidance on sickness absence policies includes advice on return to work and the interface with disability leave policies
2. raise awareness of pay within the return to work period and to urge branches to review their local policies and where possible, seek to negotiate to include full pay for all employees on a phased return, regardless of hours worked
3. raise awareness of the benefits that phased returns to work have for both workers and employers and the need for employers to get appropriate medical advice before agreeing individual return to work plans.
4. urge branches to remind employers that those who are struggling in work with a health condition, or have been off work for four weeks or more due to sickness, may need slightly longer than the first agreed time scale allotted for phased return, depending on the person.

National Disabled Members Committee

9. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICIES

Conference is concerned that the failure of some employers to make reasonable adjustments to sickness absence procedures is preventing an increasing number of Disabled Members from being unable to access essential medical treatment.

The usual process of informal and formal sickness hearings often culminating in a formal warning that includes the threat of dismissal is causing Disabled Members to postpone and cancel operations needed to alleviate the impacts of their disability.

Conference all employers have a duty of care to their employees including for their health and wellbeing but some do not understand that this includes making changes to their policies for disabled employees.

We recognise that a disabled person can be dismissed due to sickness absence but this can only be done if all reasonable adjustments have been put in place. If a disabled employee's sickness absence is related to their disability disregarding some or all of this is widely recognised as a reasonable adjustment.

But for some employers this does not seem to be the case once a formal sickness warning has been issued to a disabled worker. Some employers have even refused to make changes to a warning when they know the disabled worker has a planned medical procedure scheduled that will reduce sickness absence in the future.

This is not about sick leave. It is not about disability leave. It is not about special treatment. It is about reasonable adjustment. We are not saying a formal warning can't be issued. But a disabled worker should be allowed the time off work for the planned medical procedure and any recuperation without the threat of dismissal or the worry of additional sickness management hearings.

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By refusing to make these reasonable adjustments employers are not only risking the health of their disabled employee but risking claims of disability discrimination and reputational damage.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. work with branches and regions to identify cases where sickness absence procedures have led to Disabled Members cancelling, delaying or refusing medical treatment;
2. identify examples of good practice where employers have made changes to their sickness absence policies in relation to planned medical procedures; and
3. develop guidance for branches and regions to use to negotiate reasonable adjustments to sickness absence policies including to amendments to formal sickness warnings.

Northern Region

Negotiating and Bargaining

Negotiation and Bargaining

10. YOUNG WORKERS AND MENTAL HEALTH

This Conference believes it is clear that young members are amongst those groups where stress and mental health issues are of growing prevalence and concern.

This Conference welcomes the work undertaken by our young members organisation to raise this issue through their work in Young Workers Month (November 2015). Workplace meetings and events were organised to help raise awareness, notably through the use of the TUC's toolkit "Mental health at work: a young workers guide" – a toolkit which was produced with the active support and contribution of our young members.

This Conference believes that one way of supporting young members with mental health issues in particular, and other members more widely, would be to encourage branches to have volunteer "mental health first aiders".

This Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. provide regional disabled members groups with access to a copy of the TUC toolkit;
2. encourage them to make use of the toolkit in raising awareness of the issues for young workers and to hold at least one activity around the issue in Young Workers Month (November) this year.
3. call for these activities to show the importance of UNISON to support individual cases, and how the union can secure agreements to address poor or non-existent employer policies and practices, while recognising the need to build membership and organisation to give the union the strength it needs to undertake this work;

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4. investigate the Mental Health First Aid concept and bring to Disabled Members Conference 2017 a presentation on how such a scheme might be introduced in the workplaces where UNISON organises.

National Young Members' Forum

11. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

At Conference it is noted with concern that some members are still having problems getting reasonable adjustments implemented in their workplace. For the fortunate ones that do manage to get them they are not followed through or monitored and kept up to date as their needs change. Some employers are also still too quick to take our members down the capability route rather than implement reasonable adjustments even when they are just simple ones to put in place, such as a change in monitors or a change of shift or days.

The majority of employers have no concurrent or specific training that they impart to relevant line managers, supervisors or team leaders. Or they simply choose to take no notice of what their, usually more understanding Union Equality or UNISON Officers are asking them to implement.

Most employers think that a quick read of a policy is all that is needed, which although gives a basic knowledge in some issues it is not a whole spectrum of what they may encounter from various disabilities or understand and recognise non-apparent disabilities. Pressure needs to be applied on employers to adopt and apply specific disability policies for their employees and strive to keep them in employment, through making reasonable adjustments.

This needs to be addressed urgently.

Conference; we call upon the National Disabled Members Committee to liaise with the appropriate bodies and campaign to:

1. promote specific training in all areas for relevant staff.
2. inform employers of the needs of reasonable adjustments to get the best out of their staff and not just implement the bare minimum which may not always work.
3. ask that all policies that relate to members of staff be reviewed and updated to include good practice for reasonable adjustments and also for regular updates.
4. develop with employers good and effective use of these policies.

St Helens & Knowsley Health

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12. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS V INCAPABILITY PROCEDURES

Conference notes that many employers have introduced Capability Procedures which are designed to make it easier to terminate contracts on the grounds of either ill-health or performance. We believe these procedures are disproportionately targeted against disabled workers.

Conference notes, with concern, that reasonable adjustments are never exhausted and in some cases are not considered at all.

Conference is concerned that these procedures are or will be used to remove disabled workers from employment instead of making them redundant through cuts and therefore incurring the costs of redundancy. At a time of cuts in public service budgets, such misuse of these procedures without due consideration of reasonable adjustments must be guarded against and resisted.

We need to ensure that before any disabled member is dismissed on the grounds of capability that all appropriate considerations are given to the needs of the worker. These would include reasonable adjustments in the workplace; providing supports that can help a worker return to work, such as physiotherapy and counselling; additional training or re-training, to help a worker re-adjust after ill health or due to disability, or to address performance concerns.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to work with Service Group Executives to : -

1. conduct research into the use of capability procedures to try and identify if the numbers of terminations through capability are increasing year on year;
2. produce guidance for branches on how to monitor the use of these procedures, with special regard to reasonable adjustments, and how to ensure that they are not abused;
3. produce guidance on best practice on supporting branches, and disabled workers, to remain in the workforce with or when performance issues arise.

Scotland Region

Campaigning

Campaigns

13. I'LL ONLY BE A MINUTE.....

This Conference recognises this phrase - 'I'll only be a minute' as the most common reason able-bodied motorists give for parking in 'disabled' designated parking bays.

For those motorists, or their passengers, who have mobility issues and who rely on these spaces to be able to access work, services and shopping etc. the lack of consideration by other motorists can be an overwhelming issue when an individual has no other option than an accessible suitably sized and located bay.

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Conference believes that the 'I'll only be a minute....' motorists need educational assistance to understand why their attitude is unacceptable and harmful to the access needs of those with mobility issues.

Conference calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee to seek ways in which attitudes can be changed in this country. We would ask that the Committee:-

1. work with the NEC and Service Groups where workers have a role in 'policing' parking such as 'Local Government' and also 'Police and Justice' to seek ways of educating the public on the issues and also investigating such initiatives:-
 - a) the 'brown badge' schemes to see if they assist or detract from improvement
 - b) more effective 'policing' of bays
2. seek ways of raising the issue with the TUC and other organisations with similar mutual interest such as organisations working with those with mobility issues.
3. raise the issue through the APF to draw attention to the concerns with sympathetic MPs and members of devolved governments.
4. seek to encourage a wider discussion on the issues of the issue by education and publicity, particularly in UNISON publications, e.g. U magazine.
5. encourage branches to challenge local authorities and businesses such as supermarkets to ensure that they support the proper provision and use of 'disabled' designated parking bays.

Cymru/Wales Region

14. DRIVER ONLY OPERATED TRAINS

Conference picture this, a wheelchair user gets on a train at a station and has assistance to enter the train. Platform staff get the ramps and the disabled customer is helped onto the train.

The train has only a driver and no conductor. Then when getting to the station to get off the train, due to everything now being automated, ticket machine and no staff, who is there to help the wheelchair user off the train?

The answer no one.

So the choice is to have a couple of steps down off the train to launch yourself and your wheelchair down to get off the train by yourself,

Or

Don't travel. This may mean that employment is not possible as you can't travel to and from a place of work.

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Public transport is really important to everyone and accessibility is vital. This scenario also applies to tube travel as well as trains. A possible solution may be to have a conductor on every train or tube to ensure safety and access to the carriage is possible.

It may also mean that a staffed ticket office is needed so that those with a visual impairment and those with other disabilities who are not able to manage to use a ticket machine will not be excluded from public travel.

Conference we need to make our voice heard and work to curb the cuts to accessibility on trains, tubes and other forms of public transport.

Many stations are STILL disabled unfriendly, having no lifts or staff to assist you – you have few choices, be stranded on a platform you cannot get off. Stay on the train and be fined excess fares for travelling beyond your station. Yet still have to find your way back to where you needed to get to in the first place.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to work with the TUC disabled workers committee and other relevant bodies to raise these issues and campaign to secure accessible and safe train and tube transport.

Yorkshire Water

15. DRIVER ONLY OPERATED TRAINS

Conference picture this, a wheelchair user gets on a train at a station and has assistance to enter the train. Platform staff get the ramps and the disabled customer is helped onto the train.

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2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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Yorkshire & Humberside Region

16. ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

That this Conference notes with great concern the cuts that have been made across the different regions in the UK to socially necessary bus services by local authorities and the impact that this has on disabled people and their ability to access vital public services. We also note the move towards more unstaffed stations, thus depriving disabled people of help, advice and assistance to safely and confidently use public transport.

Whilst conference notes the steps taken by operators to meet their obligations under the Equalities Act, as recent high profile cases such as the issue of wheelchair access on buses, taxi operators and bus drivers refusing to allow people to travel with their assistance dogs on their vehicles and automated ticket machines at unstaffed stations which do not offer the full range of ticketing options show, there is much that still needs to be done to ensure that public transport is fully accessible to all.

Whilst conference recognises that transport is a devolved matter for each of the different governments of the regions to tackle, the issues faced by disabled people are similar across the UK.

We therefore call on the National Disabled Members Committee to:-

1. develop a national campaign which can be used by all regions highlighting the issues faced by disabled people in accessing public transport.

Perth And Kinross UNISON

17. END CUTS TO DISABILITY COLLEGES AND DISABLED STUDENTS FUNDING

Conference agrees that access to further and higher education benefits not only the student, but society as whole.

We especially note that for disabled people whether at sixth form level or already in work, further and higher education for a disabled person helps to level the playing field and expands disabled access to levels it has not yet attained.

It is therefore essential that UNISON disabled members participate in a campaign to halt and then reverse actual or proposed cuts affecting disability colleges and the funding of disabled students in Further and Higher Education.

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The Conservative Government thinking is to cut state funding for Disability Employment Support Colleges from 12 colleges to 6 or 8 colleges. These establishments provide vocational training courses in NVQ Levels 1, 2 and 3 in Job Training Qualifications?

Conference recognises and appreciated the support to these colleges by the previous Government up until 2010.

Now the Government wants to cut the amount of Disabled Students Allowance and student grants for disabled students in Further Education and Higher Education. This will affect students on the coursework, books and accommodation and living allowances.

Conference instructs the National Disabled Members Committee to call on the present Government to put more resources into specialised colleges that cater for disabled people as well as fully funding training and achieved full employment for disabled people. Work with other appropriate UNISON committees, including Labour Link, to lobby the Government to put more resources into specialised colleges that provide for disabled people, as well as fully funding training to achieve increased employment for disabled people.

We further call on the NDMC to raise awareness of this issue and to gain the support of regions and branches to fight these detrimental cuts and support disabled people, and report back to the NDMC 2017 on the progress made.

Eastern Region

18. FORCED ACADEMISATION AND DISABLED PEOPLE

Conference is concerned that although the Government has officially “revised its intentions” to force all schools to become academies this is still their intention.

The Government says “all schools will be made to convert where the local authority can no longer viably support them where a critical mass of academy schools exists.” Underperforming schools and schools in underperforming local authority area will also be forced to become convert yet there is no definition of underperforming. A school whose results are not better than in the previous year could potentially be defined as underperforming even if the results are outstanding.

Analysis of government policy by think tank CentreForum found that “Given the combination of voluntary conversion, academisation under the Education and Adoption Act and direction at local authority it is possible that full academisation could be achieved without forcing schools one at a time”

And Education Secretary Nicky Morgan’s statement after the official change in policy that “having listened to the feedback we will change the path to reaching the goal of all schools becoming academies” confirms the government’s true intentions.

Conference we are concerned about the impact this will have on disabled members who work in schools as well as disabled children who may receive less support.

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Local authorities will be responsible for “identifying, assessing and making provision for children with special educational needs and disability” but will not be able to enforce the level of support, commission the support or control admissions criteria. Disabled children will be left with little choice of school and insufficient support to meet their needs.

Conference, we are already seeing the impact on disabled members employed in academies. Disabled Teaching Assistants are being made redundant because the child they have been allocated to support moves schools even though they could support other children in the school. Deaf Teaching Assistants have been told they can't have a BSL (British Sign Language) interpreter in the classroom because other children “don't need to be taught BSL.”

Conference calls on National Disabled Members Committee to work with the Local Government Service Group to:

1. ensure that disability issues are at the centre of the campaign against forced academisation
2. raise awareness of the issues disabled employees and disabled children are facing in schools that have already been academised
3. provide guidance to branches and regions on working with disabled people's groups to fight forced academisation
4. work with Branches to ensure that employment and redundancy selection processes implemented by academies do not discriminate against disabled staff

Northern Region

19. INVISIBLE DISABILITIES

This Conference believes that young disabled people in particular are being subjected to ignorance and discrimination because of disabilities that are not immediately apparent. The impact of such disabilities can lead to people being wrongly labelled as “lazy”, or worse, and feeding the stereotype of those with invisible disabilities.

This Conference also believes that young people (disabled or not) are more likely to have less resources than their older counterparts in terms of knowledge, experience and strategies in challenging attitudes to invisible disabilities.

This Conference further believes that UNISON has a role to play in challenging this situation in the workplace, as collective action and support is better than going it alone.

This Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. seek to work with UNISON's Bargaining Unit to come up with an information and negotiating fact sheet about invisible disabilities for branches to raise the issue with their employers;

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

2. produce a leaflet around the subject to raise awareness with members of this issue.

National Young Members' Forum

20. ACCESS TO HOUSING FOR YOUNG DISABLED LGBT PEOPLE

This conference believes that many Disabled LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender) people are unaware of their rights with regards to accessing suitable housing.

This conference notes that the current governments attack on Housing Benefit for young people disproportionately affects young disabled LGBT people, forcing them into unsuitable accommodation.

The Albert Kennedy Trust reported in 2015 that 84% of LGBT organisations stated experience of young LGBT service users disclosing that risk of homelessness or living in a hostile environment as major concern.

Not being able to disclose their sexuality or gender identity can impact on the mental health of a group already affected by disproportionate levels of suicide.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. promote information to raise awareness on the issues faced by Disabled LGBT people with regard to housing and homelessness
2. publicise guidance on housing rights for Disabled LGBT people
3. signpost members to agencies working in this field.
4. work with regional disabled committees and the National LGBT Committee to identify examples of good practice and areas where there are service gaps to assist in evidence gathering for campaigning opportunities
5. report back to 2017 conference

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Caucus

21. HOMEWORKING

Conference notes the increased drive, in both the public and private sectors, to close workplaces and centralise operations. Frequently this leads to increasing length, both in time and distance, and difficult commutes to work. This impacts disproportionately negatively on disabled workers.

At the same time, continuing and rapid advances in information and communications technology have created a revolution in the ability of employees to work from home or at other remote locations.

The ability to work from home or at any location more convenient than a distant workplace is of great benefit to many disabled workers. Many more disabled people

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would gain and maintain employment if they were able to work from home, subject to proper Health and Safety protection, including a risk assessment of their home working environment where appropriate and reasonable adjustments being made available and provided by the employer.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to campaign for employers to increase access to, and availability of, home and remote working which will have a particular benefit for disabled workers.

West Midlands Region

22. ACCESS TO WORK

The Access to Work (AtW) programme is designed to provide disabled people with practical support to stay in employment. However, there have been significant problems with the scheme's operation.

Conference notes that the Work and Pensions Select Committee has concluded that the scheme helps "only a minority of the people it could benefit" and that the Department of Work and Pensions' (DWP) "attempts to increase the number of people helped by the programme, within an only marginally increased budget, risk bearing down on the awards of people who happen to have relatively high cost needs".

With the increasing use of "Zero Hours" contracts in the private sector workers have experienced specific problems, including lack of understanding of their employment status, inconsistency and delays in decision-making and requiring workers to claim back expenses after they have completed a job.

Conference welcomes the recommendations of the DWP Select Committee and calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee to campaign for better guidance to be issued that can take greater account of the realities of working on a zero or variable hours contract.

Conference also calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee to carry on campaigning for improved funding for AtW and other measures which seek to bring about a level playing field for disabled workers.

West Midlands Region

23. EQUALITY ACT AND DISABLED PEOPLE

Conference following a suggestion by Baroness Thomas of Winchester, herself disabled, the House of Lords appointed a post-legislative scrutiny committee to look at the impact of the Equality Act 2010 on disabled people. The Committee's remit was to consider:

- Why change was needed;
- If the Act has been successful;
- If the Government helps or hinders the Act;
- Could things done by the Act be done better without it; and

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- Issues raised by witnesses

On 24 March 2016 the Committee published their report and although the results were not surprising they were shocking. Amongst other things the Committee found that:

- There is a lack of understanding of reasonable adjustments
- Public transport is still not accessible
- The Public Sector Equality Duty is ineffective
- Communication and consultation needs to be improved
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission is under-resourced
- Disabled people are an afterthought for Government and public authorities
- Disabled people's rights are unenforceable
- The Equality Act is not a good Act for disabled people

The report concluded that disabled people were better off with their own Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Rights Commission.

Conference the Committee said it is too late to turn back the clock. The Government are supposed to respond to the report within two months but at the time of writing, in July, no response has been received. This is unacceptable and confirms the Committee's findings that disabled people are an afterthought.

UNISON has a proud history of leading the campaign for disabled people's rights. The recent decision to leave the European Union means it is vital that we build on this good work not to turn back the clock but to make disabled people's rights move forward. Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee (NDMC) to work with the NEC to:

1. campaign for additional legislation to be introduced to protect and improve disabled people's rights
2. lobby for the Equality and Human Rights Commission to be given dedicated resources to support disabled people to enforce their rights
3. call for a strengthening of the Public Sector Equality Duty to at least the same level as the previous Disability Equality Duty
4. write to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition requesting that the Minister for Disabled People is moved from the DWP to either the Cabinet Office or the Department for Communities and Local Government

Northern Region

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

24. TAKING OUR RIGHTS FORWARD

Conference, many of you will have woken up in dismay at the outcome of the European Referendum. While the outcome of the vote was clear what happens next is not. There is no timetable or exit strategy in place for the UK to leave the EU.

Disabled Members are concerned that we will not only lose workers' rights that are underpinned by EU legislation but that the anti-discrimination legislation we rely on will be repealed.

The Human Rights Act is not EU law but the proposal to replace it with a UK Bill of Rights will be much easier to implement once we leave the EU. We are signatories to the European Convention of Human Rights, but relying on this to enforce our rights is expensive, time consuming and beyond the reach of many disabled people.

At its best the campaign enabled genuine debate and discussion in our homes, workplaces and communities about the future of the economy and the kind of country we want to live in. At its worst, the campaign was typified by hatred, vitriol and misinformation that have done a huge disservice to our democracy and the values we hold so dear.

It will be some time before we fully understand what impact the vote to leave will have on disabled people but the increase in discrimination and prejudice in the days after the referendum shows us that we cannot be complacent. We can't simply wait and see what the outcome will be.

Conference, we welcome UNISON's quick response to the referendum. We applaud the commitment to holding the leave campaigners to the promises they made – that there will be more money for the NHS, and that our rights at work will remain intact. But we know we will need to work hard to make this happen.

Disabled Members are living in uncertain times and all political leaders must think about how to address the issues that we face. Issues such as falling incomes, insecure jobs, unaffordable housing, an under-resourced NHS, increasing discrimination and other huge challenges facing disabled people after more than half a decade of cuts.

Conference, branches must do what they can to support disabled workers in the workplace. And, nationally, UNISON must do all it can to protect the rights that disabled people have fought so hard to secure. Conference calls on the National Disabled Members Committee to work with the NEC, Labour Link, and other Self Organised Groups to:

1. seek to ensure trade unions and disabled people are included in exit negotiations
2. campaign for disabled people's rights to be protected in the exit strategy

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3. consider calling for a referendum on any final deal to be held prior to UK leaving the EU
4. issue advice and guidance to branches on hate crime and how to support disabled members who are victims both in and outside the workplace.

National Disabled Members Committee

25. MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS

This Conference recognises that good mental health support for members in UNISON is of vital importance and congratulates Cymru/Wales Region on their initiatives and development of Mental Health Champions.

UNISON Cymru/Wales has been active on mental health for some time. Last year, with the help of Mind Cymru and Time to Change Wales, Cymru/Wales Disabled Self Organised Group (SOG) launched their mental health awareness and have developed a mental health champions training programme for members and the first champions graduated in April. Participants completed a two day training course designed by the SOG and it was run with the assistance of a mental health practitioner. The training gave members the confidence and skills needed to undertake this new role as they help colleagues with mental health problems by directing them to the best available help and support. The feedback has been fantastic and our champions are very enthusiastic to put their new skills into practice.

Mental health problems are much more widespread than people think. One in four people will experience them at some stage in their life, so it is extremely likely that a family member or close colleague at work has been affected. Yet unfortunately, mental health is still surrounded by prejudice, ignorance and fear. The stigma can lead to isolation and exclusion, making it more difficult to recover. This is no way to deal with something that is so common and the truth is that mental well-being is not taken as seriously as physical well-being.

Mental health related problems are frequently caused by difficult situations in the workplace. We know that UK Conservative Government austerity cuts directly lead to very high levels of anxiety for those who lose their jobs and for those remaining, the pressures of being forced to do a lot more work with fewer resources.

This Conference calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee:-

1. encourage other regions within UNISON to consider taking forward this initiative and developing similar schemes in their regions.
2. seek to encourage an interest in good mental health by education and publicity, particularly in UNISON publications, e.g. 'U' and 'InFocus' magazines.
3. request supportive information to be made available on UNISON's website.
4. raise the issue through the Affiliated Political Fund (APF) to draw attention to MPs and members of devolved governments the need to fund good mental health services.

Cymru/Wales Region

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26. MITOCHONDRIAL REPLACEMENT - FRIEND OR FOE?

Over the previous years, a breakthrough in medical science, known as Mitochondrial Replacement has been generally publicised and debated.

Conference would express mixed feelings about these developments and what they may eventually lead to.

However, we do need to learn about the possible impact it could have on future generations of disabled people yet to be born. Our primary concern would be that the potential of genetic engineering and medical techniques that could allow parents to avoid a potentially disabled child from being born and thus deny the possibility of congenital conditions being alleviated or even cured in a living person.

Whilst we can see the prospect of a possible disability free society, we consider that the price will be too high.

If genuine benefits are to be gained we need to be part of a wider movement of disabled people who can track the progress of Mitochondrial Replacement research over the coming years in order that our society can understand what is happening and where necessary attempt to ensure that full ethical considerations are taken into account by our legislators.

Therefore Conference instructs the National Disabled Members Committee to:

1. keep in contact with those appropriate disability movements that would track the progress of Mitochondrial Replacement research and to report back to a future Disabled Members Conference when a wider and firmer picture of the research emerges. If results of ongoing research appears to threaten disabled people, we work up a campaign to raise the profile of our concerns to the attention of mainstream membership of UNISON as well as other like-minded organisations.
2. conference also agrees that this could be an extremely huge task and therefore sets no precise target date of deadlines for reports on these matters, but would welcome an update on these issues at the NDMC 2018

Eastern Region

27. IMPACT OF MENOPAUSE ON DISABLED WOMEN

Conference the menopause affects women in many different ways; and just like periods, it is something rarely discussed. We know that the menopause effects different ages and last for different periods of time. The symptoms can be very different from one woman to the next. There are at least 34 recognised different symptoms for example:

- Panic attacks, anxiety and depression
- Insomnia, fatigue and sleep disorders
- Reduced levels of concentration and memory

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- Joint aches and pains needing physiotherapy
- Osteoporosis

Medications that are commonly prescribed for the menopause can conflict with other medication or may have an adverse impact on other medical conditions meaning disabled women will have to deal with severe difficulties that non-disabled women will not have to face. In some cases the individual will need to choose between taking the medical treatment they need for their disability or the medication to alleviate the distressing and debilitating symptoms of the menopause.

With the increased retirement age and women working longer more and more disabled women are going through the menopause while still at work. It is therefore essential that employers recognise the menopause as a medical condition like any other and consider the additional impact it may have on disabled women.

The lack of understanding and support for disabled women going through the menopause makes them more at risk of disciplinary proceedings for capability and increasingly likely to be subjected to sickness absence procedures.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Members committee to work with the National Women's Committee to:

1. gather evidence, and if appropriate consider carrying out research, on the impact of the menopause on disabled women
2. issue up to date information and guidance to branches so they can provide better support to disabled women members going through menopause.
3. consider issuing guidance on if, and when, the menopause could be classed as a disability as defined by the Equality Act
4. campaign to break down barriers to enable and empower disabled women going through the menopause to be taken seriously

National Women's Caucus

28. END THE EXTRA FINANCIAL BURDEN PLACED ON THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSON

This conference instructs the NDMC and calls upon the NEC (National Executive Council) to use any means at their disposal to ensure that the unfavourable situation that exists against blind and partially sighted people who use a tablet or similar device to access "text to speech" is ended.

The market has spotted a gap in service and publishers of popular authors are blocking this facility unless customers are willing to pay an extra £4 per book for the use of this service.

It is impossible for people with sight loss to enjoy a book without "text to speech" facility unless they are fortunate to have; a person to read to them, they are trained in the use of Braille, or have access to talking books, all of which depend on the service of others.

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Conference therefore seeks representation to be made to the Disabilities Minister and all other relevant bodies to ensure that this situation, which adds an extra financial burden on the visually impaired is ended

Leeds Teaching Hospitals

29. WITNESSES TO THE HOLOCAUST

Conference will recall the horrific events of the Holocaust and the millions of lives that perished as the Nazis pursued mass genocide. This included people with disability that were put to death because of their disability. Their story should never be forgotten. The Holocaust began as early as July 1933, when the Nazis passed a law that allowed forced sterilisation of 350,000 men and women, who were deemed likely to produce 'inferior' children.

Conference further notes that between 1939 and 1941 a programme of euthanasia (so called 'mercy killing'), ordered by the state, led to the murder, by doctors and medical staff, of at least 70,000 people. This policy continued in one way or another through to 1945. The experience gained by the Nazis, as a result of the euthanasia programme, was also put to use from 1941 onwards when the Nazis sought to murder the Jews of Europe.

Conference acknowledges that the Tory Government have officially recognised Holocaust Memorial Day however have stopped short of including Holocaust studies on the curriculum of schools. Conference will note that education is key to making sure that these atrocities don't happen again.

Conference will further note the exemplary work undertaken by Sefton Branch in Holocaust education with annual study trips to Auschwitz and commemorative services while there.

Conference calls upon the National Disabled Members Committee working with the NEC and Regional Disabled Members Groups to:

1. consider how Holocaust Memorial Day can be commemorated in our union and include commemoration of the lives of people with disabilities who perished.
2. encourage support of the Sefton Branch Holocaust study trip and other regions doing their own study trip.
3. support the work of Hope Not Hate in combating the Far Right.
4. campaign for the inclusion of Holocaust Studies on the national curriculum.

North West Region

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Efficient and Effective Union

Efficient and Effective Union

30. AVAILABILITY AND RELIABILITY OF INDUCTION LOOP SYSTEMS

Induction loop systems help users of certain types of hearing aid or cochlear implants to pick up sound more clearly with less interference from background noise. They allow the hearing aid user to use the loop system microphones rather than the internal hearing aid microphone. Where a hearing aid microphone will typically amplify all sounds, induction loop microphones allow for more focused amplification.

There are different types of loop system. Room Loops are commonly installed in meeting rooms or conference halls comprise of a microphone, an amplifier and a cable that is 'looped' around the room, typically in the ceiling space or under the carpet. This type of system can help reduce background noise and lessen the impact of poor acoustics or distance from the speaker.

Counter Loops or Portable Loops, are often installed at points of initial customer contact such as till areas, counters or appointment desks. Usually only a small microphone is visible. This system works at close proximity and helps facilitate voice communication even in a noisy environment.

Induction Loop Systems are a common feature in many workplaces and some public spaces. This is a very positive thing as they are invaluable to many UNISON members both in their work and as members who use loop systems.

However, loop systems are not yet ubiquitous and where such systems have been installed they are often found not to be in working order. Furthermore, our members have often found systems are not used as effectively as they could be, due for example to the misplacement or neglect of the microphones.

Conference calls on the National Disabled Member's Committee to:

1. provide support and guidance to branches in promoting the installation, maintenance and training in use of loop systems in their workplaces where these are not in place.
2. to communicate to branches that the ongoing monitoring of loop systems in their workplaces is an important part of their work around equalities.
3. to ensure that the availability of a loop system is considered by UNISON when organising meetings or events.
4. to encourage the use of microphones where available and linked to a loop system.
5. to promote an awareness of hearing loop systems amongst the wider membership.

South East Region

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

31. LANGUAGE

Recent Disabled Members Conferences have had a running battle over the term used to identify disabled members, either "disabled members" or "people with disabilities."

The National Disabled Members Committee (NDMC) rather than debate and discuss the issue, the response from NDMC has often been presented in a dictatorial manner informing conference it will ignore its views on the wording.

This conference notes that large numbers of disability and liberation campaigns use the term "disabled members" or "disabled people" not "people with disabilities" e.g. Disabled People Against the Cuts.

UNISON accepts the social model of disability, i.e. disability is caused by the way society is organised.

UNISON Disabled Members should be an inclusive and democratic Self Organised Group (SOG) but also one that does not shy away from difficult arguments.

This conference instructs the NDMC to produce a discussion document on the arguments for and against use of "disabled members" and "people with disabilities". The document should draw on information and experience from other UK and worldwide disability campaigning organisations. Ensure this discussion is accessible to all disabled members including all required formats such as Easy Read and audio.

To use the document to consult the membership widely, asking for responses from Regional Disabled Members Committee, Branches and other Self Organised Groups and publish results prior to the next year's Conference.

That the NDMC bring a motion National Disabled Members Conference 2017 based on the feedback, with a view of settling the question.

Islington UNISON

32. STRUCTURE OF DISABLED MEMBERS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Conference will note that democracy and participation are integral values to our union and Disabled Members Self Organisation.

Conference will note that it is some time since the structure of the National Disabled Members Committee has been reviewed.

Conference therefore instructs the National Disabled Members Committee working with Regional Disabled Members to:

1. undertake a review of the structure of the National Disabled Members Committee.
2. publish the findings
3. consider a relevant motion to change the structure at NDMC 2017.

North West Regional Disabled Members Committee

2016 National Disabled Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Motions Ruled Out of Order

Beyond remit of the Conference

Motion ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL OPTIONS - TICKET LESS TRAIN TRAVEL

Conference is concerned to learn that the rail industry is planning to replace paper train tickets with smart phone technology within three years and the impact this will have on disabled travellers.

Disabled people who do not have a smart phone and will still have to buy tickets, face paying higher fares than those who had adopted the new technology, as anyone still wanting a paper ticket will be charged more than those using the new contact less method.

There is also concern that the introduction of ticket less travel will mean that the number of passenger services employees within the travel industry will also be reduced. This could have a serious impact on our disabled members' travel assistance and cannot be condoned.

Conference therefore instructs the NDMC to liaise with the NEC and other relevant bodies, including the Office of Road and Rail Regulator, to ensure that the impact of ticket less on all sectors of the travelling public is taken into account, and that disabled people are not financially disadvantaged by this proposal, and report back to the NDMC Conference 2017.

Eastern Region

Conflicts with an Existing Rule

Motion PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENTS - NOT FIT FOR PURPOSE

The Government changed Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payments (PIP), saying the change was necessary to provide help where it was really needed and to save the Government money.

People who were awarded DLA indefinitely have been moved over to PIP and many have subsequently had their benefits withdrawn. They have lost their cars which has meant a lot of claimants are now housebound as a result and even wheelchair adapted cars have been returned after the recipient failed to qualify for PIP. Many have had to give up work because they needed the extra money to meet the costs of working. People are having to attend tribunals to get awards which is costing the Government, so the savings they hoped to make have not been met.

The contracts for undertaking the medical assessments are held by private companies. These companies have a range of health professionals working for them carrying out these assessments. A Channel 4 Documentary showed how an assessor would often complete the assessment before the actual appointment and before meeting the applicant. There have been reports of assessors lying on the assessments and making unfounded judgements on a persons capability in order to meet targets.

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The Health professionals that carry out these assessments can be from any discipline and often varying expertise to competently assess the condition of the applicant. How can a mental health nurse assess a person with joint condition or how can a physiotherapist assess a person with mental health conditions? Under the Consumer Rights Act 2015, companies have to offer services fit for purpose, conference believes that these private companies are not doing this.

Conference calls on UNISON Disabled Members Committee to:

- i) work with Labour Link, seeking to establish Labour policies to reverse Personal Independence Payments
- ii) explore the possibility of using the Consumer Act to legally challenge the Personal Independence Payments process
- iii) publicise the impact of Personal Independence Payments on our disabled members

Suffolk Police Sector Unison

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Motion IMPACT OF MENOPAUSE ON DISABLED WOMEN

Conference the menopause affects women in many different ways; and just like periods, it is something rarely discussed.

Conference, we know that the menopause effects different ages and lasts for different periods of time. The symptoms can be very different from one woman to the next.

There are at least 34 recognised different symptoms for example:

- Panic attacks, anxiety and depression
- Insomnia, fatigue and sleep disorders
- Reduced levels of concentration and memory
- Joint aches and pains needing physiotherapy
- Osteoporosis

The menopause adds to the complications disabled women already live with and other women may not be affected as severely.

Medications that are prescribed for the menopause may compound on other disabilities the individual may be experiencing and adversely interact with medications used to manage existing conditions. The individual may not even be able to take medication treatment for menopause due to other medications.

As the retirement age has increased more, and more women are working longer; and in public services in particular, the age demographic means that more

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menopausal disabled women are in work and so the menopause needs to be recognised and supported just like any other condition.

The lack of understanding and support for women going through menopause makes them more vulnerable, leaving them at risk of disciplinary proceedings for both capability and sickness absence procedures because they are menopausal.

We call upon the National Disabled Members committee to work with the Women's committee to:

1. conduct more research with a wide cross-section of disabled women members to update our knowledge of what women experience and use that research to update our information and guidance to branches so they can offer better understanding and support disabled women members going through menopause.
2. campaign to demonstrate that the severe effects of the menopause could amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010 so as to afford women more recognition and protection under the law; particularly in regard of capability, sickness and disciplinary action
3. campaign to break down barriers to enable and empower disabled women going through the menopause to be taken seriously

National Women's Caucus

Not competent

Motion HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

Conference, since the Welfare Reforms began people with disabilities have been put a greater disadvantage with increased affects on homelessness due to Housing Benefit reductions, benefit sanctions and reduction of support networks within their communities which mean that they are falling through the net at a an increasing rate.

In England alone, the total number of homeless households that were accepted as homeless by all the Local Authorities was 14,780, of which 71,540 are in temporary accommodation and a great many are disabled people in priority need with complex needs and in need of specific support. This number has increased year on year since 2010 and in all of these Local Authorities, there is nowhere to put these families and vulnerable individuals.

Out of the total number of 10,000.00 homeless persons in the first quarter of 2016 over 1,300 were people with mental health issues alone and over 1,000 were disabled people. Many of these homeless persons will not be able to be supported in temporary accommodation due to the high dependency and complex needs for which they depend on outside agencies for support, support which has been eroded by this government to the point where in many areas it simply no longer exists.

Conference, these figures are unacceptable.

Disabled people who become homeless face other greater issues because increasingly they are not being accommodated in the areas that they know, where

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their support networks are, a familiar surrounding, friends and family are too far away to keep contact which has a serious detrimental affect on their health and for some has lead to suicide.

Conference we ask:

1. for delegates to take back these issues to their branches and look to working within their own Local Authorities to campaign for reinstatements of some services such as dementia centres, out-reach programmes and walk in centres.
2. conference asks the National Disabled Members Committee to work with other Self Organised Groups to find ways to campaign and lobby the government to help assist Local Authorities to support homeless disabled people by working with local landlords to provide more sustainable and affordable housing options.

Greater London Region

Not sufficiently clear

Motion FUEL POVERTY

Conference, now more than ever disabled members are being put at risk of becoming ill or even dying due to the high cost of fuel.

Many disabled people have less income due to the Department for Works and Pensions cancelling their entitlement to Disability Living Allowance while they wait, sometimes for months on end for a decision about their applications for Personal Independence Payments and that is just the assessment to entitlement never mind receive the funds.

People with disabilities often require warmer environments to prevent other health issues affecting their disability and this comes at a price.

We know that during this time, especially in winter, disabled people have had to make decision, as with anyone on a limited budget, to either feed themselves and their families or heat their homes. Many are left with unpayable debts that will stay with them for years which has a huge impact on their health and wellbeing.

Everybody has the right to be able to afford gas and electricity that meets our everyday needs. But conference, at a reasonable price!

We know that many people, due to their limited income living in energy debt, are being forced to have prepayment meters installed in their homes, which comes attached with a charge that takes away the funds that could be used to heat the home or cook a meal.

Many disabled members are suffering in silence, without a voice to speak out for them and left to battle these bullies who threaten their customers without trying to find compromises or offer any real solutions that would mean that our members could afford their fuel and pay their bills.

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Conference we ask:

1. all Self Organise groups consider working together to find a way to fight these companies.
2. that Self Organised groups work with the appropriate Unison Committees/Structures to jointly campaign and lobby the government to take some action against these companies.

Greater London Region