

ONE TEAM

One team for patient care



Everything you need to know
about One Team Week

A briefing for UNISON branches

What's it all about?

One Team Week is a celebration of NHS support staff, particularly those working in operational services. UNISON organises One Team Week each year to celebrate the porters, cleaners, admin and clerical staff, catering staff and all support workers who work tirelessly in the NHS, often without the recognition they deserve.

In November we are spending five days celebrating our amazing support staff and we want your workplace to be part of it. So, put **5-9 November** in your diary and start planning how you will highlight the work these members do.

Why do we need to celebrate operational services staff?

When people think of NHS staff, who do they see? Probably doctors, nurses and paramedics. But almost half the staff in the NHS (around 470,000 people) are in clinical support or infrastructure support roles: these include porters, medical secretaries, telephonists, cleaners, caretakers and laundry staff. These are the people, often unseen by patients, who play a vital role in keeping our NHS running, making sure patients and their families get the best treatment possible.

UNISON is proud to represent these unseen heroes of the NHS and we are celebrating One Team Week because we believe that everyone, including patients, their families, politicians and the public should recognise and celebrate these staff too.

Get involved!

So, how will you be celebrating the people who make sure that patients' meals are cooked, medical notes are typed, wards are cleaned or bins are emptied?

Below are some ideas that we've come up with – why not try some of them where you work. Why not:

- give NHS staff, patients and their families a chance to meet some of your trust's unsung heroes by [having a stall in the hospital](#) where support staff can chat about the jobs they do and how they make a difference to patients and their families and support colleagues in their jobs, or give support staff badges which encourage other staff and patients to ask them about their jobs
- hold a [tea party](#) to show support staff that UNISON sees them as a vital part of the healthcare team. Tea and cake go down well, and you can order some special One Team badges and other goodies to hand out to members.
- speak to your employer about using your [workplace magazine or website](#) to interview a support worker about what they do and what they love about their job. Alternatively you could do the same thing in your branch newsletter or on your branch website.
- organise a [quiz](#) about all the different roles that support staff do – then either use it on your stall, or at a tea party and organise prizes for the staff who know the most about who empties their bins, brings patients' meals or how many different jobs there are in the workplace. A slightly different take on a quiz is to play [guess my job games](#) by listing the responsibilities of a particular role and matching those to the person who does that job.
- write to your [local newspaper](#) to let them know you're celebrating support staff during One Team Week from 5- 9 November and invite them to interview some members about the jobs they do.

Making a big fuss of support staff

Let's get the employers involved too because it's important that they are seen to recognise the vital role that support staff play. You could:

- approach your employer about the possibility of holding an [awards ceremony](#) for support staff in your workplace. Staff could nominate colleagues for awards and you could invite the chief executive to present the awards and make sure they are publicised in the staff magazine
- ask the employer to hold a “[coffee morning](#)” for all support staff and lay on tea, coffee and cakes
- why not issue a joint invitation from UNISON and your employer to your [local MP and local councillors](#) asking them to come and visit your workplace and meet some NHS support staff
- issue a friendly challenge to your chief executive asking if they would [shadow a member of support staff](#) for a morning, or ask if they would invite the local MP or councillors to try their hand at being a member of the NHS team for a couple of hours.

Whatever you are planning, UNISON has produced plenty of resources to help make your event a success. Check out what's available on our online catalogue at unison.org.uk/catalogue in the One Team Week section. Some of the material is free, some you will need to pay for but have a look and get planning.

Tell us what you are doing

These are just a few ideas to get you started. We are sure you will have plenty more yourselves and we'd love it if you would share them with us. Your ideas may inspire other branches to plan events and help turn the week into something that can't be ignored.

So, tell us your plans, and when you hold your events and things start happening, don't forget to share pictures and stories with us via social media. If you follow us on Twitter ([@UNISONOurNHS](#)) or like us on [Facebook](#) we can publicise your events too.

Resources

During One Team Week we'll be celebrating all support staff in the NHS. We have produced resources to help branches organising events – some are available from UNISON's online catalogue at unison.org.uk/catalogue.

We have also produced a range of products with TC Branding which branches can order from them directly. You will need to place your order for pens, bags, water bottles and mugs by **4 October** to guarantee delivery in time for One Team week. Contact june@tc-group.co.uk to find out more and order.