

**Branch Meeting**

**Wednesday  
28th  
May  
6.30 p.m.**

STUC  
333 Woodlands Road  
Glasgow  
G3 6NG



Health and Safety queries should be directed to the Branch Safety Officer Bill Gray

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**Study Slams NHS PFI Assumptions**

A paper published in the British Medical Journal has attacked the assumptions on which the prestigious PFI (private finance initiative) project to replace the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh are based. The PFI project assumed that money would be saved by the modern trend to reduce the number of acute beds and the increase in day case treatments. The authors of the report compared the acute service provision in Lothian with the remainder of Scotland to see if the

use of PFI had impacted on the level of service provided to patients.

The analysis showed that there was indeed a "PFI effect" and that there had been a reduction in service across Lothian associated with the capacity constraints and financial problems facing downsized PFI hospitals. Even worse, the study then goes on to claim that new financial evidence suggests that further hospital and community downsizing will be needed to meet the financial deficits caused by PFI.

**Association of Medical Laboratory Assistants (AMLA)**

For the first time since the introduction of the MLA grade, staff will have a professional body to give advice and guidance on education and training and to promote the professional capabilities of the group. The potential membership of AMLA is more than 2000.

The official launch of AMLA will be done jointly by Amicus-MSF and IBMS at the union's NHS Conference in June of this year. This will see MLA's represented in all Industrial Relations through Amicus

and Professional Issues through AMLA providing members with the potential of a complete package for advice and guidance throughout their employment.

The qualifications which will be available to MLA staff will be NVQ2, NVQ3, Foundation Degree, through which will evolve a recognised career pathway and the ability to progress, providing Professional status in a modern National Health Service.

*Maureen Jenkins*

**Contacts**

Chair	Donald Sime	0141 211 2246
Secretary	Maureen Jenkins	0141 201 3044
Treasurer	Richard Shaw	0141 201 0412
Vice-chair	Helen McFarlane	0141 211 0800
Assistant Secretary	Vacant	
Safety Officer	Bill Gray	0141 531 3715
Women's Officer	Helen McFarlane	0141 211 0800
Newsletter Editor	James Ito	0141 201 0405



## Family Friendly Rights Website Launched

Mike Chapman

New family friendly employment rights came into effect from 6th April 2003 in the following areas: maternity leave and pay; paternity leave and pay; adoption leave and pay; the right to have a request for flexible working taken seriously by your employer and changes to child tax credits. These rights cover same sex families and are in addition to existing rights brought in in 1999 on: parental leave and time off for dependants.

The amicus Working Parents Website ([www.amicus-m.org/workingparents.shtml](http://www.amicus-m.org/workingparents.shtml)) launched on 6th April includes detailed advice on family friendly basic rights and detailed advice for representatives on negotiating improvements.

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## L.R.D. Booklets

The Branch has purchased and distributed to all Senior Representatives a series of booklets on employees' rights. The latest titles are:

- Contracts of employment—a legal guide
- Hazardous substances at work—a safety reps guide and
- Working parents—a guide to the new rights.

Group representatives and interested members may borrow these on request from their local Senior Representative. In the case of difficulty, please contact the Branch Secretary.

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## U.S. View of the NHS

In an interview in the Health Service Journal, one of the United States leading health experts has praised the NHS. Don Berwick is president and chief executive officer of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement as well as being clinical professor of paediatrics and healthcare policy at Harvard Medical School. He said 'It is a source of some embarrassment to me that when I come to the UK I come to a country that says "you will have healthcare." And when I'm in the US, I'm in a country that has not said that.'

He continued 'It takes my breath away. I can't believe you are going so fast. There are still plenty of challenges, but the progress is incredible. When I go to the NHS, I see a kind of dream.'

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## Electronic Newsletter

Members who wish an email copy of the Branch Newsletter, should send an email with the subject line 'subscribe newsletter' to the editor at:

[james.ito@bigfoot.com](mailto:james.ito@bigfoot.com)

Circulation of the printed version continues via group representatives.

## Branch Meeting Wednesday 28th May

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of previous meeting and arising.
3. Correspondence.
4. Reports.
5. Motions.
6. A.O.C.B.

The next meeting of the Branch will be held on Thursday 26th June at 6.30 p.m. All meetings are held in the Scottish Trade Union Congress, 333 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6NG.  
(Tea, coffee & sandwiches 6.15 p.m.)

