

Branch Meeting

**Thursday
24th
June
6.30 p.m.**

STUC
333 Woodlands Road
Glasgow
G3 6NG



Regional Officer Michael Fuller addressing a meeting of NHS members

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- **Roger Lyons no longer Joint General Secretary**
- **Gender Pay Divide**

Agenda for Change Rollout Delayed

To the surprise of absolutely no-one at all, the national rollout of Agenda for Change has been delayed until 1st December 2004. The rollout has been postponed to allow the experiences in the early implementer sites to be evaluated and clarifications, amendments and further guidance to be published during July. The delay also allows those unions (including amicus) who are running second ballots to have these completed by the end of November.

Whilst the 'operational' date has moved to the 1st December, the 'effective' date for pay and conditions will remain 1st October 2004.

The main concerns arising from the early implementer sites concern the apparent misapplication of the job evaluation scheme to non-clinical jobs (resulting in lower bands) and the rules on out of hours payments having a disproportionate effect on some staff groups which then require earnings protection.

Fury Over Sunderland Agenda for Change

In July 2003, amicus made it known that at Sunderland City Hospital, one of the early implementer sites, Agenda for Change (AfC) was not being implemented correctly. However, it was not until the final bandings for our members were published earlier this month, that the full extent of the problem became known. Apparently, job descriptions were not agreed jointly and one job description was used to cover groups of staff in the same current Whitley grade in different Departments regardless of

different responsibilities. Following the decision that the NHS Staff Council is to visit Sunderland, the Chief Executive issued a statement saying that staff disadvantaged by the AfC results would not be moved to the new conditions.

Members should ensure that their current duties, responsibilities and role are not changed and that their job description is a fair representation of their current duties and is agreed in partnership between them and their line manager. *David C Houlston*

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Private healthcare not better value than NHS

In 2002 the British Medical Journal (BMJ) published an article which purported to show that a private Californian healthcare provider (Kaiser) was more cost effective than the NHS. An analysis of the article in June's British Journal of General Practice finds that the claims are unsupported by the evidence. In the original article, the NHS's costs were significantly overstated and those of the American provider understated. For example, the charges levied by Kaiser in addition to insurance premiums were omitted: these range from, for example, \$50 dollars for an out-patient visit to \$500 for childbirth—not insignificant amounts. Additionally, most of Kaiser's clients are enrolled through employers' schemes—ruling out most of the elderly and poorer sections of the community which the NHS has to treat. In summary, the BMJ article was fundamentally flawed. Rather unfortunate that John Reid, England's health secretary, continues to use the article as a lesson for the NHS, apparently unaware that its findings are built on sand.

Roger Lyons: no longer joint general secretary

Following an amicus member's complaint to the Trade Union Certification Officer that Roger Lyon's had not complied with the law regarding election of trade union General Secretaries, the Certification Officer ruled that Roger could no longer hold the post of Joint General Secretary. The union has decided that it will not appeal against the decision and accordingly Roger is no longer joint general secretary and Derek Simpson is General Secretary. Mr Simpson has instructed that Roger's name be removed from all amicus letterheads and memos, and that headed notepaper which refers to Derek Simpson as joint general secretary must be discarded. The Certification Officer's decision does not affect Roger's role as President of the TUC and amicus will support him in the same way as it would any other ordinary member fulfilling that role.

Gender Pay Divide

According to statistics released by website PayFinder.com, men are paid 24% more than women. The gap is widest in the South-east of England (30%) and Scotland (29%). By comparison, Northern Ireland (19%) and Yorkshire (21%) are positively egalitarian. The UK's employment laws gives an individual the right to the same contractual pay and conditions as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment if they are doing identical work or work of identical value.

Branch Meeting Thursday 24th June

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of previous meeting and arising.
3. Correspondence.
4. Reports.
5. E. Renfrewshire Labour Party - possible re-selection of sitting MP
6. Motions.
7. A.O.C.B.

The next meeting of the Branch will be held on Tuesday 31st August at 6.30 p.m. All meetings are held in the Scottish Trade Union Congress, 333 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6NG.
(Tea, coffee & biscuits 6.15 p.m.)

