

Branch Meeting

**Tuesday
26th
April
6.30 p.m.**

STUC
333 Woodlands Road
Glasgow
G3 6NG



Donald Sime, who was recently elected as the interim Secretary of the amicus Greater Glasgow NHS Group

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- **New amicus group formed**
- **Gender pay gap continues**
- **Directors convicted for health and safety offences**

Cartmail Slams Health Department

Gail Cartmail, amicus national officer with responsibility for health, has attacked the English Department of Health (DoH) for their creation of a 'marketing intelligence unit'. She described her reaction as one of incredulity to the decision to set up an internal marketing department in order to sell NHS trusts to patients. "This must be the biggest waste of money ever in the NHS. The whole concept of marketing in the NHS is an expensive misnomer," she stated. "Patient needs are not difficult to

comprehend", she continued, "all they want is timely, efficient service and good standards of care. The marketing intelligence unit appears to be another expensive obstacle to achieving those aims."

The marketing intelligence unit will be run by Stephen O'Brien whose previous experience includes a spell as marketing director for electrical retailer Comet. The DoH explained that the unit will help NHS trusts understand the needs of patients as customers and ... market themselves to prospective patients.

NHS hit by scare stories as general election looms

One characteristic of the NHS makes itself manifest at election time: it's politically driven. It's not exactly a new phenomenon. Although last month, Margaret Dixon's much postponed shoulder op was hitting the headlines, if it hadn't been her it would have been someone else. After all, when you treat as many patients as the NHS, it isn't difficult to find to find someone who's had a really raw deal—anyone else remember the war of Jennifer's ear in 1992. We are a public service and that means that

government ministers are our bosses—we are there to implement the policies which they decide, whatever our personal views and regardless of which government is in power.

However, as individual citizens we have a vote and can help choose which party is elected. Although health is a matter devolved to the Scottish Parliament, what Westminster decides has an enormous influence north of the border. Branch members are urged to remember this on May 5th.

Contacts



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Treasurer	Richard Shaw	0141 201 0412
Vice-chair	Helen McFarlane	0141 211 0800
Assistant Secretary	Vacant	
Safety Officer	Derek Anstee	0141 211 2128
Women's Officer	Helen McFarlane	0141 211 0800
Education Officer	Ian Forbes	0141 211 4523
Newsletter Editor	James Ito	0141 201 0798

New amicus group formed in Greater Glasgow

Greater Glasgow NHS Board has decided to implement a new management structure which is pan Glasgow based rather than the previous Divisionally based one. In response, it has been decided that we need to have an amicus structure which echoes the management structure. The first part of this is the setting up of a Greater Glasgow NHS Group Committee of amicus.

The first meeting was held on Thursday 24th March and three interim Group Officers were elected; Bill Goudie (Chair), Donald Sime (Secretary) and Helen McDermott (Minute Secretary). It was also agreed that the Senior Representatives within each of the former constituent parts of GGHB (North, South, Primary Care, and Yorkhill) would form an executive to take forward our response to the management changes.

Gender pay gap continues

According to equality campaign group the Fawcett Society, the finance inequality between the sexes is still wide. Compared to men, women working full-time earn nearly 20% less and women working part-time earn nearly 40% less. The gap continues after retirement, with only 13% of today's women pensioners being entitled to the full basic state pension compared to 92% of men.

Directors convicted over health and safety offences

Safety campaign group, the Centre for Corporate Accountability, has reported that between April 2002 and November 2004, 27 company directors have been convicted of health and safety related offences. Eight of the offences involved one or more deaths. The longest sentence was seven years given to the director of a road haulage firm who pled guilty to manslaughter and unlawful killing after a driver fell asleep at the wheel and crashed into seven vehicles. The prosecution described the working practices as "an accident waiting to happen" because workers were encouraged to work as long they could and skip rest breaks. Any similarity to some NHS on-call practices is of course illusory.

Branch activist awarded MSc

By Maureen Jenkins

Congratulations are due to Branch member Donald McCabe, who passed his MSc in Biomedical Sciences with distinction. Donald is currently employed as a medical laboratory assistant and did the course by distance learning. He graduates at the end of June at Colerain, Northern Ireland.

Branch Meeting Tuesday 26th April

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 Wednesday 25th May 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.)

