

Agenda for Change: Time and Facilities for Staff Representatives

1. This document is being made available on the Modernisation Agency website to set out an approach to time and facilities for staff side representatives that are consistent with the Partnership Approach to Pay and Service Modernisation as set out in the Agenda for Change agreement.
2. All the parties to the Agenda for Change agreement are committed to working in partnership at national and local level. Agenda for Change poses significant work for all the parties involved that are vital to the success of the project.
3. It is recognized that some employers will already have agreed local arrangements with staff organizations that meet the need of the local parties as part of their plans to implement Agenda for Change. However, where this has not yet been done employing organisations should consider this partnership framework when developing with local staff sides plans for implementing the new pay system. It is expected local arrangements should be developed that are in line with the principles set out in this document.
4. The contents of this agreement have been developed and agreed by the Agenda for Change partners on the Shadow Executive of the NHS Staff Council.

AUGUST 2004

Agenda for Change TIME OFF AND FACILITIES FOR STAFF REPRESENTATIVES AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This facilities agreement is the basis of the preparation for and possible implementation and evaluation of Agenda for Change. It reflects a partnership approach to good employee relations.
- 1.2 All parties recognise that it is vital to good employee relations for the workforce to be properly represented by recognised unions. Furthermore, all sides believe that truly representative and effective unions will enhance workforce employee relations and the effective implementation of Agenda for Change.
- 1.3 All parties are committed to the systematic and routine involvement of trade union representatives at all levels in shaping the implementation of Agenda for Change and being an integral part of the decision making process, particularly in those areas which affect the working lives of staff and the delivery of services. The involvement of recognised trade unions is an essential part of the process and it is vital that a joint approach is taken at all levels and stages of the process in relation to all service and workforce priorities. Partnership working is an integral part of the process and should be placed at the heart of practice. All sides recognise the unique role that each has to play and acknowledge fully the work involved in establishing this. This time off and facilities agreement will operate fully in line with the principles of the Partnership Approach as contained in the Agenda for Change agreement.
- 1.4 A Code of Good Practice is attached at Appendix 1.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The provisions of this agreement shall apply to accredited representatives of recognised Trade Unions that are party to the Agenda for Change agreement.
- 2.2 Accreditation will only be given to employees of the organisation who have been duly elected or appointed in accordance with the rules of the respective Trade Unions.
- 2.3 It shall be for the relevant Trade Unions to discuss and agree with the employer an appropriate number of representatives, having regard for the size and location of its membership and the work load associated with Agenda for Change. The union will issue written credentials and notify the human resources department of the number and location of work groups for which each representative will be responsible. However, the employer(s) recognise

that it may be necessary to increase the number of representatives to ensure that Agenda for Change can be prepared for and implemented effectively. To facilitate this sufficient time should be made available for representatives to speak to their members and encourage their participation.

- 2.5 All accredited representatives and managers involved in Agenda for Change will be given adequate time to receive training and participate in the relevant aspects of the pay modernisation process
- 2.6 In recognition of the work involved throughout this process, the project plan will take account of the need to fund and backfill posts (where backfilling is practical) for the duration of the project. The employer and trade unions will jointly agree the numbers of managers and trade union representatives involved in each aspect of work.

3. TIME OFF FOR REPRESENTATIVES

- 3.1 This agreement seeks to establish a formal policy and procedure on trade union duties and activities in accordance with the legislative framework. It is recognised that it is not possible to be prescriptive about all duties, activities and the time required undertaking them. Requests for time off will not be unreasonably refused.
- 3.2 Subject to adequate notification, accredited representatives should be permitted time off, including time to prepare for such meetings and disseminate information and outcomes to members, during working hours to carry out duties that are concerned with any aspect of implementation of Agenda for Change including:
 - (a) Negotiation and/or consultation on matters relating to terms and conditions of employment and attendance at meetings connected with the establishment of Agenda for Change
 - (b) Meetings with members.
 - (c) Meetings with other lay officials or full time officers
 - (d) Appearing on behalf of members before internal bodies on Agenda for Change matters.
 - (e) Training including union approved training for representatives involved in Agenda for Change
- 3.3 There should be local agreement on when travelling and subsistence will be reimbursed to accredited representatives for periods of work approved in accordance with this policy for Agenda for Change project activities.
- 3.4 It is recognised that in order to prepare for Agenda for Change unions may need to attend meetings with members locally, regionally or nationally. Paid

time will be granted to an agreed number of delegates for attendance at meetings or conferences. It is expected that the trade unions will meet the costs of delegates' attendance (travel, subsistence etc.)

- 3.5 Reasonable time with pay will be granted to attend relevant training courses approved by the TUC or recognised trade unions except where the same course is already provided within the organisation. Requests should be made to the appropriate manager as soon as possible but certainly in advance of the course commencement. Details of the course should be provided.
- 3.6 The staff representative should indicate the general nature of the business for which time is required, where he/she can be contacted if required and requests should be made as far in advance as is reasonable in the circumstances. Wherever possible the representative will indicate the anticipated period of absence.
- 3.7 Where time with pay has been approved, the payment due will equate to the earnings the employee would otherwise have received had he/she been at work.
- 3.8 Where meetings called by management are held on matters covered by 3.2 above and where staff representatives have to attend out-side their normal working hours, appropriate payment may be made or equivalent time off will be granted by agreement.

4 FACILITIES

- 4.1 The employers should provide the following facilities to recognised trade unions:
 - Access to appropriate private accommodation, with storage facilities for documentation, for meetings and trade union education.
 - Access to internal and external telephones for use in Agenda for Change activity with due regard given for the need for privacy and confidentiality.
 - Access to internal & external mail systems.
 - Access to the employers Intranet and email systems.
 - Access to appropriate computer facilities for work in respect of Agenda for Change.
 - Administrative support for staff representatives.
 - Access to sufficient notice boards at all major locations for the display of trade union literature and information.

- Access for staff representatives to all joint documents relating to Agenda for Change.
- The facility for representatives to meet with full-time officers.
- Based on the geographical nature of the organisation consideration may need to be given to access to suitable transport facilities.
- Backfilling of posts where practical.

5.5 The employer(s) and the recognised trade unions will jointly review this facilities agreement twelve months following its introduction and when appropriate thereafter.

Appendix 1



Agenda for Change

Time and Facilities For Staff Representatives Agreement

Principles of Good Practice

- Staff involvement requires managers at all times to be committed to an open and participative working style being honest, open and fair in their relationships with staff. Managers will demonstrate this through their own behaviour and the behaviour they expect from their staff.
- The employer will ensure that at all levels management are familiar with agreements and arrangements relating to partnership working/staff involvement including the facilities agreement.
- Staff involvement will mean that staff will be able and encouraged to challenge and question.
- Staff representatives will have access to all appropriate information.
- Involvement will take place at all levels irrespective of boundaries of profession, service and functional structure.
- The systems and process for staff involvement at both corporate and functional levels will be supportive of and supplementary to co-existing consultation procedures.
- The process for staff involvement will provide clarity of scope, roles and responsibility.
- Staff have a responsibility to give their views/opinions when asked and to become actively involved in issues affecting them.
- Management recognise that staff and their representatives should have protected time away from their place of work to facilitate the work on agenda for change and recognise the significance of backfill to ensure that both sides can dedicate their time to this important piece of work.
- Staff, unions and managers will jointly audit the implementation of partnership working and its associated agreements.

Appendix 2

Nationally Recognised Trades Unions and Staff Organisations

The staff side organisations with national recognition for the purposes of Agenda for Change and the NHS Staff council currently are:

- UNISON
 - The Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
 - The Royal College of Midwives (RCM)
 - Amicus
 - The General Municipal and Boilermakers (GMB)
 - The Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU)
 - The Union of Shop, Allied and Distributive Workers (USDAW)
 - The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)
 - The Community and District Nursing Association (CDNA)
 - The Society of Radiographers (SoR)
 - The Federation of Clinical Scientists (FCS)
 - The British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT)
 - The Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT)
 - The British Orthoptic Society (BOS)
 - The Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists (SoCP)
 - The British Dietetic Association (BDA)