



Agenda for Change

London Ambulance Service NHS Trust working in partnership with UNISON, GMB, Amicus and TGWU

13 August 2004

Issue 1

News about the new NHS pay and conditions system

Agenda for Change represents a major change to the terms and conditions of employment for over a million NHS staff, including those who work for the London Ambulance Service.

It provides a real opportunity to facilitate improvements to our service, and ensure that our staff are properly recognised and rewarded for what they do.

This bulletin outlines some of the latest developments regarding the implementation of the national system, and how the changes will affect you and your job.

Changes to the national implementation date

National roll-out of the Agenda for Change programme was scheduled to begin on 1 October 2004, but this has now moved to 1 December of this year. The change to this date will give the Service an extra two months to prepare for implementation, and will give trade unions that are balloting again time to complete this process. Amicus members will ballot in September, and UNISON members in October.

Staff should note that, despite the change to the proposed implementation date, any Agenda for Change pay increases will be backdated to 1 October 2004.

Job matching and evaluation

Ahead of implementation, work will need to be carried out to place all of our current posts in the new nine-scale pay banding. A number of management staff and trade union representatives are currently receiving training in how to do this.

The first step will be to check to see if we can match our current posts against one of the national job profiles – 250 national profiles have been agreed to date by identifying jobs across the NHS where roles and responsibilities are broadly similar.

If a post does not fit against a national benchmark, then the job will be evaluated locally within the Service. This will involve completion of a job analysis questionnaire by post-holders and possibly a discussion with a panel of two trained job analysts, prior to the post being considered by a full job evaluation panel. Comprising two trained staff-side representatives and two trained managers, this panel will assess the level of knowledge, skills and effort needed to carry out the job within the Service. This process will also determine the pay band in which a job should be placed.

Update

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Concerns about pay bands

Staff in a number of areas have expressed concerns about the pay band in which their roles have been placed.

The pay band for emergency medical technicians has not yet been confirmed. The Service has submitted a job analysis questionnaire to the national Job Evaluation Working Party, a joint staff-side/management body, which will determine the profile and banding for the position. We expect the banding for this role to be confirmed ahead of trade union ballots.

We are also preparing job analysis questionnaires for emergency medical dispatcher posts and, when completed and agreed, these will also be submitted to the Job Evaluation Working Party for profiling.

It is important for all staff to recognise, however, that the pay bands represent basic pay for staff and are therefore not a complete representation of the terms and conditions package that Agenda for Change will provide. Many staff in our Service are set to benefit from pay enhancements for working unsocial hours and increases in the London allowance, as well as through the standardisation of overtime rates.

Lessons from early implementer sites

A joint statement was issued by the Shadow Executive of the Shadow NHS Staff Council on 11 August 2004 outlining the outcome of the review of the early implementation process.

One of the key outcomes of the review is that unsocial hours payments will not initially form part of the proposed Agenda for Change package which is due to be implemented from 1 December 2004. The only **exception** to this will be **ambulance services**, as the new unsocial hours arrangements will clearly be beneficial to their staff. Unsocial hours payments for other areas of the NHS will be subject to review; the aim being to bring in new arrangements by April 2006. All other proposed conditions will remain within the Agenda for Change package.

It has also been announced that the date by which all staff should have transferred to the proposed new terms and conditions has changed from the end of March 2005 to September 2005. The joint statement can be accessed on *the pulse* under Agenda for Change, Early implementer sites.

Partnership Conference

The Service will host its third Partnership Conference on 6 October at Millwall. Attended by management and elected staff-side representatives, the focus of this year's conference will be Agenda for Change. Invitations to the Conference will be issued shortly.

Where to find out more about Agenda for Change

This bulletin is one of the ways we will be communicating with you about Agenda for Change over the coming months. There is also more information about the programme on the Service's intranet site – *the pulse* (<http://thepulse>) - as well as on your trade unions' websites. Two other key sites to visit are www.modern.nhs.uk and the Department of Health's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

If you have any comments or questions about Agenda for Change, email agendaforchange@lond-amb.nhs.uk.

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