

# Agenda for change

## 10 Reasons Why

UNISON's national Health Care Service Group Executive (SGE), elected by members to run the union's health service affairs, is recommending that members vote YES to begin the process of trialling the new pay proposals in twelve test sites in England.

**There are many advantages to the new system, below are just ten of the reasons to agree with the SGE.**

**1. A 70p an hour increase in basic pay for the lowest paid worker...**and this is before adding the 3 year 10% pay increase.

**2. Longer pay bands** which reach further would mean many people will have wage increases for a greater number of years. For example, a health care assistant or nursing auxiliary whose job matched the published profile for a Support Worker would assimilate into band 2 which has a new top pay point of £13400 – this would mean earnings £1565 or 13% above the top of current Whitley grade A for those staff without the S/NVQ.

**3. Equal pay.** The new proposals use a new NHS Job Evaluation scheme that compares different jobs against the same set of factors. This will ensure equal pay and apply transparent criteria across the whole of the UK.

**4. More annual leave** for the vast majority of staff. A new minimum of 27 days for all in addition to 8 days general

public holidays (10 in Northern Ireland), would mean a whole weeks extra leave per year for many staff.

**5. Harmonised terms and conditions.** Currently, staff working alongside each other work different hours, have different allowances and different sick leave provisions. This is unfair and under the Agenda for Change proposals the same system would apply to all staff.

**6. Consistent and expanded pay system for NHS staff.** This would bring groups of workers such as Senior Managers and staff currently on Trust contracts back within a national pay system.

**7. The retention of national bargaining,** maintains UNISON's principle that a worker in Glasgow has the same basic value as a worker in Belfast, Cardiff and Birmingham. A vote against Agenda for Change could well mean the Government seeks to introduce local pay bargaining and is likely to mean a move to localised industrial action, with members reliant upon the legal system to resolve equal pay issues.

**8. New High Cost Area payments and Recruitment and Retention premia.** Whilst recognising the same basic value of workers the proposals offer additional payments to recognise that the cost of living varies across the UK and which address the difficulty in recruiting and retaining some staff groups.

**9. Foundation Trusts locked into the pay system.** These new bodies would be brought within the proposed system. Foundation Trusts would be prohibited from disturbing the local NHS workforce economy and any additional pay freedoms would be strictly limited and monitored.

**10. Two chances to vote.** The SGE is recommending that a first vote is taken in May which would allow 12 Trusts called 'Early Implementers' to try out the new system. These sites would be monitored and evaluated. UNISON would then have a second ballot before the new system is rolled out to the rest of the NHS, allowing members to judge the Agenda for Change proposals on the review of the Early Implementer sites.

**If you want to know more about Agenda for Change, speak to your steward, attend the hundreds of meetings being called by UNISON, visit our website [www.unison.org.uk/healthcare/a4c](http://www.unison.org.uk/healthcare/a4c) or phone UNISONdirect on 0845 355 0845**