

## Unsocial hours review

We've been able to meet briefly with the Senior LAS Staffside members and the following represents our joint views which I would ask you to share and feed into the national discussions.

**1. What would be the operational impacts for your organisation if you move to this new system?**

If the new system brought benefits to the majority then the basic structure of the pay enhancement elements would generally aid the service delivery during unsocial hours.

**2. What would be the impacts on the earnings of staff working unsocial hours in the standard 37.5 hour week?**

Although LAS has only been able to model a limited number of roster patterns of those that are worked in the Trust, it is clear that there will be significant variations in earnings. A small number of rosters see increases in the value of unsocial hours enhancements from 25% (under the Ambulance/EI provisions) to over 40% under the new proposals. However, it is felt that the majority of rosters lie in the range between little change and reductions of 5% or so.

Whilst it is noted that there are protection provisions and a broad implementation window for ambulance Trusts, implementation is likely to have a negative effect on staff morale in many areas.

**3. Do these draft provisions provide the incentives necessary to ensure twenty four hour cover seven days a week, where this is needed?**

If the new system brought benefits to the majority then, in general, yes, although transitional issues could be significant.

LAS is disappointed to note that there is no separate rate of enhancement for work on a public holiday. The preferred option, based upon experience in operating the existing AfC provisions and feedback from staff, would have been for the public holiday provisions to have been separated and removed from the general unsocial hours arrangements. Treating them separately would create a real-time and direct link between hours worked on public holidays and reward/recompense.

**4. In your organisation would there be any issues linked to equality if this system of payments were implemented?**

We are concerned by the circumstances illustrated in the following scenario:

- Two members of staff – both on Pay Point 13 (currently £16,799)
- One of these is in Band 3; the other is in Band 4
- For every unsocial hour worked, the worker in Band 3 gets an enhancement worth 23.3% more than the other.

**5. Would this system be appropriate to all Agenda for Change staff working in unsocial hours in the standard working week?**

No issues for LAS identified at this stage.

**6. What administrative changes would you need to make to accommodate the proposed system?**

The proposals describe a relatively complicated system which is felt likely to make collection and processing of reliable data more burdensome than at present. This would likely, in turn, lead to staff concerns about the accuracy of their pay and also possibly increase the number of payment errors.

There would be need for a significant ESR change to be designed, tested and implemented prior to implementation of revised unsocial hours enhancements. Because of the implementation window and the option for certain Trusts to design and agree their own implementation phasing, ESR would have to be flexible in this respect.

The collection of time and attendance data for certain staff groups would demand an entirely new tranche of administration (ie for staff who work unsocial hours but without a predictable roster).

**7. What is your view on the idea of extending the transitional arrangements to staff above band three?**

LAS has no strong view, but questions the desirability of treating any staff group differently.

**8. Any general comments or feedback on the draft provisions?**

- LAS is disappointed to note the complexity of the proposals. They will not be quickly understood by either staff or those who have to administer them.
- When compared to the existing Ambulance/EI scheme, the deviations (ie the outliers) may be too far removed from the average
- There is no cap on Band 8/9.
- We would like to be able to understand the potential impact of the proposals across all LAS rosters.

Regards