

## **Background Information from your local UNISON representatives**

UNISON branches around the country have been campaigning for some time to see Band 2 Health Care Assistants (HCAs) upgraded to Band 3.

You have been telling us that you are regularly undertaking additional duties (such as recording patient observations, simple wound dressings, removal of peripheral cannula, etc). These tasks are classed as clinical care which fall outside the Band 2 job description. It is only fair that you are paid correctly for the work you do.

Local UNISON branches started gathering examples and data to put forward a case to their Trusts for re-grading. National guidance was issued in August 2021 which further clarified the differences between the Band 2 and Band 3 roles. Band 2 does not include clinical care.

It is now widely accepted that the majority of Health Care Assistants routinely undertake a variety of clinical care tasks and therefore should progress to Band 3.

The issue of back pay to recognise work already done is a more complex issue to unravel, however. It would be virtually impossible to establish exactly which duties have been picked up and when, on an individual basis.

So, with strong member participation the first branches to approach their Trusts were able to negotiate positive plans for addressing this issue collectively. Local agreements have already been reached in Manchester, Greater London and Bristol.

In the South West Region, our colleagues at North Bristol Trust negotiated a framework for moving staff onto the correct pay rate and recognising duties already undertaken with a scale of compensatory payments. We have taken this to management at both CFT and RCHT, who have now agreed to adopt the principles of the North Bristol Trust model and will be sharing these and consulting you on an individual basis shortly.

Before this can happen, we need to seek feedback from UNISON members to check that the discussions we've been involved in reflect the views of staff and that the proposals are acceptable to you.

We know that times are hard right now and both sides are keen to get any financial reward into your pockets as soon as possible.

This means that over a very short timeframe – between 17<sup>th</sup> and midday on 24<sup>th</sup> March, you are being invited to have your say by participating in this electronic ballot. It is important that we hear from as many of you as possible so we can be confident we are speaking on your behalf – this is why you are a trade union member.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns via our dedicated email address [cornwallhca@unison.co.uk](mailto:cornwallhca@unison.co.uk) or by speaking to one of your local branch representatives.

UNISON members represent a significant proportion of the HCA workforce, and if you tell us you are not happy with the offer we will feed this back to the Trust on the afternoon of Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March.

It is important to be aware that we believe this is the best offer that could be achieved through negotiation. If you reject the proposals and your employer is unwilling to consider any amendments, the only way to change this is likely to be via a coordinated campaign involving further action.