



▶ THE PERSONALISATION OF SOCIAL CARE ..... 6

○ SUMMER | ○ 2009



▶ WHY UNISON OPPOSES PRIVATE SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES ..... 4



▶ HOME CARE..... 3

# Social Care *update*

THE UNISON MAGAZINE FOR SOCIAL CARE WORKERS  
IN DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

*The move to personalisation is a major change in the policy direction and provision of local authority social care provision*

## Personalisation - behind the rhetoric

We are witnessing a major change in the policy direction and provision of social care. People eligible for publicly funded social care may now choose a personal budget to directly employ their own personal assistants or buy their care from a private agency.

Whilst this vision and the accompanying words of empowerment, independence, dignity and choice can fall seductively on the ears of social care workers, we need to look beyond the rhetoric at some of the more uncomfortable and unpalatable issues that underlie this new vision of personalised care.

UNISON conducted a survey of members in 13 local authorities who piloted

Individual Budgets projects. A whole host of issues were uncovered including

- **Job losses and deterioration of employment conditions**
- **Minimum wage agency workers**
- **Increased outsourcing and closure of in house services**
- **No clarification over workforce roles**
- **Increased isolation of employees**
- **Complex and difficulties of risk management for vulnerable service users**



*(Continued on page 6)*



## BECOME A STEWARD!

With developments in areas of social care being introduced by central government and likely changes at a local level within Derbyshire, it is vital every workplace has a steward. If yours doesn't .... make sure you elect one urgently. More details and forms from the branch office.

# More fractured than ever!

## Mental Health Services

Obstacles are preventing the service working in a smooth, effective and coherent manner.

Some years ago, UNISON members working as Approved Social Workers (ASW) were forced into a dispute involving industrial action over a regrading claim and a collective grievance that was upheld by elected members.

### The same issues

These issues have now resurfaced with ASWs, now renamed Approved Mental Health Professionals AMHPs, having lodged another collective grievance in pursuit of the same issues. Principally, these issues include a shortfall in numbers leading to undue stress and work pressures and seeking pay parity with AMHPs in other local authorities.

### Inadequate cover

Other countywide issues also remain unresolved. Members complain of inadequate management cover in community mental health teams, with deputy or team leader posts being removed, causing situations where there is an absence of immediate accessible management support and cover.

This management shortfall is also leading to the distortion of the few lead practitioner posts that exist. These higher career grade posts were introduced to increase the profile of social care issues and to encourage professional staff who did not want to become managers to remain practising in the field. However, pressures are being placed on these lead practitioners to undertake routine management activities.

UNISON advises all members not to cooperate in any way with the continuing attempt to distort these roles.

### Joint protocols

Despite the joint management protocols that have been agreed with the Derbyshire Mental Health Services Trust (DMHST), it would appear that Trust managers are failing to comply with the need to observe social services policies and procedures in relation to managing social care staff.

Members are advised to contact their UNISON representative as and when this occurs.

### Seamless?

Finally, with social care priorities still being marginalised within this jointly managed service, UNISON has repeated its request for an evaluation of services, especially in relation to the original aim of the merger, which was to provide a unified and integrated seamless mental health service.

The present service appears to be more fractured than ever, with many functions divided amongst many different teams that are separately managed and with bureaucratic obstacles, including elaborate gatekeeping criteria preventing the service from working in a smooth, effective and coherent manner.





# Home Care

## News and updates

### Gaps between jobs

#### Too little

Members are telling us that management have unusually high expectations for home helps to rattle through calls at a quicker rate. New rotas are leaving

- less time to do the job
- less time to travel between jobs

When problems happen at a call, ie a service user is ill or needs more support, there is often no real direction from management about how to deal with lateness at the next call.

#### Too much

Not only are managers expecting workers to run around quicker potentially providing a poorer service but when the run is over a home help can find themselves miles away from home with gaps of an hour or so till the next call. There is then little option to go home but without being paid.

We need your views of how we deal with this.

### Enablement teams

**Unison is advising members not to volunteer to join enablement teams.**

We recently met management and they could not produce a Job Description for the post. Management have had no meaningful negotiations with unions about this role. In fact members who have volunteered or been

bullied into this role have told us there are higher expectations and skills needed to do this work.

There have been no discussion about how extra skills should be rewarded.

Unison needs your views about this and what expectations you have about the progress of the service.

### Your home help contacts

Sarah Fox	<b>07850 397219</b>	Derbyshire Dales / Ashbourne
Caroline Murphy	<b>07588 541471</b>	High Peak / New Mills
Jim Wardle	<b>07974 496871</b>	NE Derbyshire / Clay Cross
Maureen Clarke		Bolsover / Creswell

We want to come and talk to meetings of home help members around the county. We've found it better if members get together to organise a date and venue themselves rather than us setting one without knowing holiday patterns and rotas etc.

So come up with a date and give us a call!

### Equal pay claims

Enclosed with this magazine is a letter to all home helps concerning equal pay claims - make sure you read this!

**MORE HOME CARE UPDATES ON PAGE 7**

**GET IN THE KNOW:**  
Elect a steward



**THERE ARE TOO FEW HOME HELP STEWARDS**

**EACH PATCH SHOULD BE ELECTING A STEWARD OVER THE SUMMER**

**STEWARDS GET TIME OFF WORK TO TRAIN AND ATTEND MEETINGS**

**YOU GET TO MEET STEWARDS FROM PATCHES ALL AROUND DERBYSHIRE ON A MONTHLY BASIS**

**MORE DETAILS ON HOW TO BECOME A STEWARD FROM THE BRANCH OFFICE ON 01629 582266**

OR

**TALK TO ONE OF THE HOME HELP STEWARDS LISTED**



# 10 reasons why UNISON opposes private social work practices

*The government is planning a pilot to test the idea of private social work practices getting on contracts from local authorities to take over responsibilities for children in care*

## 1. More bureaucracy

Private social work practices will require additional bureaucracy in local authorities: new commissioning and client functions, and a new contract monitoring and quality assurance infrastructure. There is the danger that this new bureaucracy will reduce flexibility for local authorities to adjust resources and ways of working in response to changing needs and priorities.

## 2. Profit and restructuring: drain on resources

As well as paying for the commissioned services, the local authority would also have to find additional resources to support the new contracting infrastructure. The pilots are receiving £6m to cover this but the practices themselves will have no more resources than the current local authority teams to devote to children. And they will be taking profits out.

Neither will they be able to leverage additional resources and services in the same way that local authorities can for their looked after children.

## 3. More fragmentation for children

Private social work practices do not overcome problems of continuity – they will be a further fragmentation of the child's journey through the care system. A local authority social worker will have to hand over a child to new staff within a private practice at the conclusion of care proceedings. Furthermore the child may have to be handed back to local authority teams if their placement breaks down or they are returned to their birth family.

## 4. Blurred accountability

Local authorities will retain their statutory responsibilities but lines of accountability will be blurred and the coherence of the corporate

parent role will be undermined. In the longer term private practices may be bought up by bigger companies driven by corporate interests.

## 5. Frustration of interagency working

Evaluation of the Every Child Matters programme shows there are continuing difficulties about how to successfully engage GPs in partnership working across organisational and professional boundaries – social work practices modelled on GPs practices will create the same difficulties.

## 6. Social workers don't support it

UNISON members do not support proposals to privatise children's social work and there is no evidence that social workers are frustrated entrepreneurs who need a profit motive to do their best for children. Staff will be reluctant to TUPE transfer

**...DESPITE  
WIDESPREAD  
CONCERNS...**



The government came up with this controversial idea for private social work practices as part of its Care Matters white paper and decided to press ahead with legislation to implement a pilot programme despite widespread concerns expressed in the consultation about the implications for children, local authorities and social work teams.

UNISON does not believe that effectively outsourcing children in care to private practices will address the issues that the government is concerned about such as high staff turnover and bureaucracy.

*"There is no evidence to suggest that an independent agency would be any more able to recruit and retain staff than a local authority and it would not remove the financial constraints on social workers...It is clear from good practice that one essential ingredient is a 'good management grip' on what is happening. A transfer to an independent provider would likely weaken that grip and marginalise local authority control and direction of care for each child."*

**Local Government Association**

The resources put into pilots would be better placed in existing services to boost training, support, recruitment and retention of social workers

ASSOCIATION OF DIRECTORS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

into an experiment with private social work practices which has a very uncertain future. There are big unanswered questions about what happens to pension provision and what happens to jobs at the end of the pilots.

## 7. Restricted continuing professional development

Private practices may struggle to access and fund the range of continuing professional development and learning their participants will need – the focus on profitability may limit the training that is offered. And some of their training budgets will have to be spent on developing business and entrepreneurial skills.

## 8. Danger to recruitment and retention in child protection work

There is a danger that the local authority social work role will come to be seen as distinctly unattractive – ‘taking children into care’ and then handing them over to the private practices, with

career opportunities to do ongoing and more fulfilling work lost. This could exacerbate the problems of retaining experienced social workers and senior practitioners in local authorities to do child protection work.

## 9. Destabilisation in children’s services

A proliferation of social care practices will only exacerbate the existing turbulence caused by inter-authority poaching of social workers and pay leap-frogging. Competition between practices for local authority business risks destabilising the system.

## 10. There are better alternatives...

Excessive caseloads, stress, burn-out and poor pay and conditions cannot be solved simply by outsourcing the work unless more resources go in.

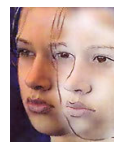
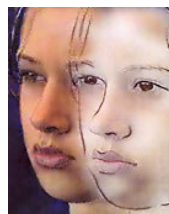
“The resources put into pilots would be better placed in existing services to boost training, support, recruitment and retention of social workers”

*Association of directors of children’s services*



**Excessive caseloads, stress, burn-out and poor pay and conditions cannot be solved by outsourcing the work**

**DROP US AN EMAIL TO [branch@unisondc.co.uk](mailto:branch@unisondc.co.uk) WITH YOUR VIEWS**





# Personalised care - no consultation!

*Don't participate in the time tracker audit!*

UNISON has not been involved in any consultation regarding the development of self directed care but merely informed as to the broad outline of the proposed restructuring and also when pilot projects are taking place.

## Lack of consultation

Only two meetings with management have taken place at which we have signalled our discontent in again being sidelined in a similar manner that preceded the disastrous implementation of the Care Pathway. It would appear management have yet again decided to develop their own focus groups and project teams without ever considering the need to engage with UNISON as a principle stakeholder and the workforce's representational voice.

## Assessment

The changes and threats to our in house domiciliary services are well-documented. However, the assessment wing of social care activities is now being threatened. An initial pilot designed to determine the trigger questions needed for individuals to assess their own social care needs has been held in Erewash. This will be used to develop a self assessment form to determine the amount of personal budget that individuals requesting services will receive. To what extent present assessment staff will be involved in these assess-

ments and the Resource Allocation System generally remains unknown.

## Time tracker

The department is also planning to request members volunteer for a Time Tracker time and motion study of their day to day activities, especially in relation to the brokering activities they undertake. UNISON is aware of the intention to introduce administrative posts to undertake these aspects of assessment workers' roles.

With assessment and brokerage roles being amended or removed from the practices of assessment staff, UNISON has sought assurances that jobs will be protected. The Director of Adult Social Services has stated that there are no present plans to cut jobs but has not provided any detail as to what the future roles of assessment staff will involve.

## Don't volunteer!

Given this uncertainty and continuing lack of consultation, **UNISON can only advise members not to volunteer to participate in the time tracker audit of activities.** In this respect, it would be a harsh irony if the same managers who have made members spend so much time sitting in offices behind computers, now measure this bureaucratic activity as a justification for making future job cuts.

**TIME TRACKER =**  
Time and Motion



**UNISON can only advise members not to volunteer to participate**

## Personalisation - behind the rhetoric

*(Continued from page 1)*

The claim that personalised services are inherently more cost effective also needs more sober reflection. Private agency services may outwardly appear cheaper because of the lower (and unfair) rates of pay involved and the absence of unsocial hours payments. But the quality of service offered is of demonstrably lower quality and does not include the 'hidden' benefits that are derived from having an in-house workforce that is better trained, better remunerated, better supervised and more continuous.

Some aspects of self directed or personalised care can be genuinely empowering in demystifying the profession and enabling disabled adults to take control of their lives but, for UNISON members, the personalisation agenda is a thinly veiled mask for the further privatisation of social care services.

Members need to be vigilant in reporting to their UNISON steward any detrimental effects they experience through the increasing use of personalised care.

## Feedback needed!

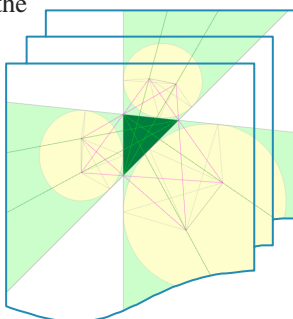
In the near future, UNISON hopes to be visiting areas to listen to the concerns and views of members. The need for collective feedback and unity of action is now paramount given that the Council is now under Conservative leadership, with 'efficiency savings' and the reform of social care amongst their key priorities in the coming years.

## Going through changes

UNISON has changed its structures to reflect the separation of children's, adult and business services staff into separate departments.

The former Education and Social Services committees have been reconstituted as the Children and Younger Adults (CAYA) Stewards' Committee and the Adult Social Services (ASS) Stewards' Committee.

This preserves the agreement with the council that UNISON stewards can only represent members in their own department.



However, given the fact that some workgroups feature in both departments, UNISON has made provision for close

communication between the 2 stewards' committees, so enabling a joint approach wherever necessary.

We're also seeking to ensure that this bulletin is sent to, for instance, social workers now in CAYA. But should any of your colleagues now in CAYA not have received this, please get them to let us know so we can update our records.

## The future of the home help service

Obviously since the council elections, there has been much discussion amongst members about the future of the in-house home help service.

Whilst there are no plans on the table, it would be foolish of us not to expect attempts at some stage in the future to radically alter the ratio of in-house:private provision or even the spectre of a complete sell-off.

One thing is certain - if or when we have to fight attacks on our jobs, we need every

single home help in a trade union.

Reaching that target must start now! Are your friends and colleagues in your patch in UNISON?

If not, get them to complete the form on the back of this magazine or they can sign up online at <https://join.unison.org.uk/>

But we also want all home helps to become more active - to join our fight to retain public services.



- Think about becoming a steward - or at least a contact - point for your patch.
- Arrange a meeting of

your local members for a UNISON officer to come and talk to.

See Page 3 for who to contact to discuss these issues.

# Join UNISON - your friend at work

PLEASE FILL IN THIS FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS USING BLACK INK AND GIVE IT TO YOUR UNISON REP OR STEWARD OR POST TO UNISON, FREEPOST, MATLOCK, DE4 9BR

## I. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS Please tick or fill in the boxes

Mrs	Ms	Miss	Mr	Other
-----	----	------	----	-------

First Name	Other initial(s)
------------	------------------

Surname/Family name	Date of birth
---------------------	---------------

Home address	
Postcode	

National insurance number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (eg large print or Braille) - be sure to supply contact details below

### How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black UK	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	White UK	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian UK	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	White other	<input type="checkbox"/>

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

## 2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's name
-----------------

Your job title/occupation
---------------------------

Department/section
--------------------

Workplace name and address	
Postcode	

Payroll number (from your payslip)	Contact tel/voice/text/email
------------------------------------	------------------------------

## 3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY From 1 October 2003

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION - WHAT YOU PAY					
Weekly pay	Annual pay	per week	per month	Band	
Up to £38.47	Up to £2000	£0.30	£1.30	A	
£38.48-£96.16	£2001-£5000	£0.81	£3.50	B	
£96.17-£153.84	£5001-£8000	£1.22	£5.30	C	
£153.85-£211.53	£8001-£11000	£1.52	£6.60	D	
£211.54-£269.23	£11001-£14000	£1.81	£7.85	E	
£269.24-£326.92	£14001-£17000	£2.24	£9.70	F	
£326.93-£384.61	£17001-£20000	£2.65	£11.50	G	
£384.62-£480.76	£20001-£25000	£3.23	£14.00	H	
£480.77-£576.92	£25001-£30000	£3.98	£17.25	I	
£576.93-£673.08	£30001-£35000	£4.68	£20.30	J	
£673.08+	Over £35000	£5.19	£22.50	K	

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid

Weekly

Fortnightly

Four weekly

Monthly

Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education. Your subscription is £10 per year

If you have been a member of a trade union before, please state which one:-

## 4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON's **Affiliated Political Fund (APF)** is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON's **General Political Fund (GPF)** is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national levels of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

*It is important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below. Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.*

## 5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.

I authorise deduction of UNISON subscriptions from my salary/wage at the rate determined by UNISON in accordance with its rules to be paid over to them on my behalf and I authorise my employer to provide information to UNISON to keep my records up to date.

I authorise deduction of the following Political Fund payment as part of my subscription. Tick one box only.

*Affiliated Political Fund*       *General Political Fund*

**Now please sign and date below**

Signature
-----------

Date
------

**DATA PROTECTION**  
**UNISON will process your membership information together with other information for administration, statistical analysis, conducting ballots and other statutory requirement purposes.**  
 We may also send you newsletters, journals and surveys and let you know about educational and campaigning matters. We will disclose your information to our service providers and agents for these purposes.  
 *If you do not want any mailings from UNISON besides those required by statute as shown in bold above, please tick this box.*  
 We may share your information with organisations with whom we have a business relationship for your benefit. We, or they, may contact you by mail, telephone, SMS, fax or e-mail to let you know about goods, services or promotions which we think may be of interest to you.  
 *If you do not wish to receive such information please tick this box.*

RECEIVED