

Unison Greater Manchester Mental Health

Our branch has submitted two Emergency Motions, one calling for a massive health workers contingent on the TUC Cost of Living national demonstration on 18 June, the other concerning the Health and Care Bill which is now completing its passage through Parliament. We ask you to ensure these motions are debated and supported whatever Standing Orders Committee recommends.

Health and Care Bill

UNISON Health Conference notes that when the Health and Care Bill returned to the House of Commons on 30th March, key amendments from the Lords which would have mitigated some of the dangers inherent in the Bill were overturned by large majorities or replaced by weaker Government amendments. Conference specifically notes:

- **Staffing:** A Lords amendment to require the Secretary of State to report to Parliament, at least every two years, on the system in place for assessing and meeting the workforce needs of the health, social care and public health services in England, with independently verified assessments of current and future workforce supply and health and care needs, was overturned by a large majority.
- **Privatisation:** A government amendment on 30 March gives all power to the chair of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to decide whether an appointment to the Board, its committees or subcommittees, “could reasonably be regarded as undermining the independence of the health service”. This subjective test, in the hands of the chair alone, will not keep the private sector off the ICB or its committees with delegated powers and budgets, causing conflicts of interest affecting ICB decisions.

[The motion then details the **loss of safeguards** for patients before discharge; the failure to ensure **Emergency Care** for everyone present in the area; new powers for the Secretary of State to **deregulate professions**; and the **threat to national pay and conditions** from the highly variable Payment Scheme to be used to set local budgets, with **input from the private sector**]

Unison criteria for evaluating new legislation have not been met, and the Bill as it is emerging from Parliament will put our members in an ever more difficult position.

Conference therefore recognises that the Bill will permit further privatisation of the NHS and is a threat to a fully comprehensive national health service, to patient safety and to staff pay and conditions.

Accordingly, Conference instructs the Service Group Executive to:

- 1) **Review its attitude to the Bill in light of its final form, and discuss this with the NEC with a view to cooperation with other TUC-affiliates in opposing the legislation**
- 2) **Encourage health branches to cooperate with local health campaigns**, such as Health Campaigns Together and Keep Our NHS Public, in developing pressure on the emerging Integrated Care Boards to address the issues listed above, insofar as there is local flexibility within ICBs to do so
- 3) **Inform health sector members of the dangers in the legislation**
- 4) **Prepare to defend national agreements on NHS pay, terms and conditions, and pensions**, from any attempt to undermine these national agreements and/or to move to local agreements within Integrated Care Systems.