



SECamb Branch 20111



Courtesy of South East Coast Ambulance

# **NEWSLETTER**

## **August 2017**

### **The new SECamb leadership and Board Executives**

After the arrival of Chief Executive, Daren Mochrie, in April, we are still waiting for the appointment of permanent Board members to replace the series of interims filling the roles over the last months (and even years). Interviews and “stakeholder” forums with shortlisted candidates for 4 new SECamb Director roles are taking place, and appointments are expected in August. All trade unions have been offered places on the stakeholder forums and Pete Steventon, Nigel Sweet and Bryan Hopperton have been there alongside other union reps, senior staff, IHAG members and SECamb Governors quizzing the candidates. The last interviews were due to take place on 3 August for a new HR Director, but this has now been postponed.

UNISON believes our Trust cannot satisfactorily progress until we have a complete structure of Management at the highest level to offer the permanency, security and vision our Trust needs.

### **Management restructure progress**

The drawn out process of getting the OUM's in place seems to be nearing conclusion, but it has been a difficult path with confusion over the correct contracts of employment being issued. The OM role has followed a slightly smoother path and we hope they are now finding their legs.

The OTL role continues to cause concern that, although the job has already started, there is still disquiet over the Banding. Perhaps a little premature in its announcement, but the confirmation that the job evaluated at Band 7 has caused

concerns in the Trust due to there being obvious cost implications. The Band 7 classification follows completion of the formal Agenda for Change Job Evaluation process to which suitably trained UNISON reps contributed.

Interim Operations Director, Joe Garcia, has on a number of occasions supported the OTL Banding being raised due to the new responsibilities of the role, especially as Bronze duties are now part of it, with 50% off-road duties.

### **NHS111 Developments**

Members in NHS111 have raised concerns over possible changes to work rotas allied to changes in the way SECamb works with their business partner Care UK. Branch Chair, Clive Goddard, is aiming to raise these developments at the August JPF (joint meeting of unions and management) to clarify any change to NHS111 strategy, especially as increasing integration between NHS111 and 999 in SECamb is laid out in the Trust's new 5 year Strategy recently published.

### **Band 6 Paramedics**

Some say, it was about time that the Paramedic role was recognised at Band 6, and congratulations to all the unions, especially Alan Lofthouse from UNISON, who as national Joint Union Lead worked with determination to get this result. Although there are still some teething troubles which depend on National clarification, the process is progressing well.

There are still National discussions over finalising the preceptorship (Band 5) paramedic details, but there is at least a career progression with appropriate rewards for our Paramedic colleagues. This initial 2 year period of Band 5 working as a "newly qualified paramedic" or NQP, and the strange agreement to make it retrospective to September 2016, remains under discussion nationally. Main sticking point to reducing it for those with previous operational experience seems to be mentoring capability (eg PPED). If this can be successfully negotiated, then the Band 5 NQP may be shorted to less than 2 years.

In turn, this highlights our concerns over the banding of Technicians at Band 4 and work will continue on this matter. There is a new National Associate Practitioner role being constructed which is at Band 4 after a period of training, but does not require planned progression to Paramedic. Although this in itself is excellent recognition of the "Technician/Associate Practitioner" role, it does identify the opportunity for the NHS to ultimately reduce their costs by employing less Paramedics. Which brings us to....

## **Opening the door for all technicians to become advanced technicians and equal pay for equal work**

The Grievance on this issue being valiantly pursued by a UNISON Branch member has entered its 28 month since being launched !!! This makes it the longest running Grievance in SECAMB history.

On 27 July it entered its final appeal against Stage 3 phase. Amazingly, it was adjourned at SECAMB's request as they hadn't had sufficient time to investigate !! Our member and his representative, Nigel Sweet, agreed to the adjournment on the basis that the decision seems to hinge on whether there is a difference in scope of practise for Technicians and Advanced Technicians.

This is where all our members can help. Regardless of your position in SECAMB, we want your opinion as to whether you know of any difference in scope of practise/ways of working etc. between these 2 roles. Obviously the hearing, when reconvened on 22 August, will concentrate on the response of staff in 999 clinical roles, but all are encouraged to take part.

Please follow this link and complete by 20 August – (takes 5 minutes maximum)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WR3897L>

## **Report on Bullying & Harassment**

Look out for the publication of the long-awaited SECAMB report into Bullying & Harassment on Friday, 4 August. Staff will be briefed on the contents in advance of the media, and your Branch leaders will be doing all they can to ensure action points are fully implemented without further delay.

## **Ambulance Security**

The recent shocking series of thefts from SECAMB, of defibrillators in particular, shows how some people in the world are changing, and not for the better. Initially starting in Kent where two individuals were apprehended, it has spread further across the Trust, implying a more professional crime network. Please do your best to secure property, vehicles and premises and certainly do not put yourselves at risk from these criminals.

## **Crawley HQ**

The move to Crawley appears to have gone smoother than any of us might have expected and congratulations to our Trust Management in doing what seems to be a good job. That said, there are still some major parts to move including Banstead EOC in September and a concern over adequate parking remains.

Our Branch has supported a number of members who feel the increase in mileage and additional travel time will have a detrimental effect to their health and wellbeing due to their personal circumstances. This has meant for some that they feel the move to the new site is not a reasonable relocation request by the employer. A number of members have been successful in applications for relocation redundancy, supported by UNISON reps with the guidance of our UNISON solicitors Thompsons.

### **UNISON wins the day on Employment Tribunal fees**

The Government were called to account for effectively barring access to Employment Tribunals when UNISON won their case in the Supreme Court last month. The verdict was the culmination of 4 years' work by UNISON lawyers to prove the Government had broken the law by charging up to £1600 for an individual to bring a case to Employment Tribunal. All fees charged since their introduction in 2013 will have to be repaid.

You can see the video of the verdict here –

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/HFe5liLHOo4>

And the full written verdict of the Supreme Court in this landmark case is here –

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2015-0233-judgment.pdf>

And UNISON's jubilant response is here –

[https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2017/07/tribunal-fees-victory/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Activist%201%20August&utm\\_source=Communications&utm\\_content=ET%20fees%20pic](https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2017/07/tribunal-fees-victory/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Activist%201%20August&utm_source=Communications&utm_content=ET%20fees%20pic)

### **National Ambulance Seminar**

The UNISON National Ambulance Seminar held near Coventry in May was a very useful way to learn how our colleagues throughout the country are coping and sharing the challenges we are all facing. Our Branch was represented by Pete Steventon, Bryan Hopperton, Jenny Young and Nigel Sweet.

Overruns and missed meal breaks ranked high in the discussions but there did not seem to be any clear way of resolving the issues. Unsocial hours were also a topic of discussion, with a presentation by the CEO of the Welsh Ambulance Service confirming they are the only ambulance Trust to opt for the Agenda for Change Nurses USH section rather than our own ambulance USH annex.

This was of particular interest to us as Joe Garcia has recently started negotiations with Staff Side over the Unsocial Hours policy in SECAMB. We did make it clear to him that it would not be suitable to 999 staff but were happy for it to be considered in NHS111 where for Health Advisors in particular, it may be of benefit as unsocial hours working is much higher.

The general conclusion at the Seminar was that the workload is increasing, the demands are often unrealistic and ultimately the workforce will break or leave. As usual, it's a lack of appropriate funding, so back to the Government for that one, but don't hold your breath!!

## **Job Evaluations**

Those trained in Job Evaluation are currently being kept busy with plenty of meetings. Newly trained in this involved process are Clive Goddard and Nigel Sweet. It is good to see that the involvement of the unions is being appreciated by the Trust and that the correct process is now being followed to ensure fairness. A long list of roles to be evaluated is steadily being worked through, with the expectation that almost every SECAMB role will eventually be re-evaluated and Banded.

## **Recruit a Friend**

Don't forget that you can earn yourself a £10 shopping voucher when you help recruit a friend or colleague to UNISON. Just ensure your name is given when the recruitment form is completed and you'll get your £10 asap.



Pete Steventon 07500 991967



Clive Goddard 07984 497869



Nigel Sweet 07554 437181



Bryan Hopperton 07932 676787



Ann Sephton Branch Administrator 01273 575337

Croyde Bay Video (UNISON Holiday Hotel/Chalets)

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=1517696124959881&id=258341104228729&notif\\_t=feedback\\_reaction\\_generic&notif\\_id=1501107179279243&ref=m\\_notif](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1517696124959881&id=258341104228729&notif_t=feedback_reaction_generic&notif_id=1501107179279243&ref=m_notif)

**UNISON SECamb STEWARDS going on Courses please send their applications to**

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