



21st December 2020

GMB - NHS & AMBULANCE SERVICE END OF YEAR ROUND UP

As the year comes to an end, GMB Union wants to thank all of our NHS & Ambulance Service members for their hard work and efforts during the year, keeping us safe and cared for, and for their continued membership with GMB.

This year has been extremely difficult for everyone, but especially for all those who continued to work throughout the Coronavirus Pandemic (Covid-19) providing essential services within our NHS. We have had to collectively fight from the start of Covid-19 to ensure our members were protected - physically, mentally and financially.

We have made many representations to Ministers and the Department of Health & Social Care, ensuring they knew the reality of what our members were facing on the frontline. GMB has also participated in regular meetings with Department of Health Representatives, NHS Employers and other health unions from the start of Covid-19, ensuring GMB members voices have a platform to be heard.

We have had some successes throughout the year which include:

- Upgrading of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidance and influenced the Government's taking back central control of the logistics for delivery and supply.
- Free car parking.
- Protection of pay for Covid-19 related absences.
- Extension of full sick pay for outsourced staff.
- Requisition of private hospital beds.
- Access to regular testing.
- Death in Service Life Assurance Scheme for Covid-19 deaths.

It is without doubt that healthcare workers have been consistently failed throughout Covid-19 and that is why GMB will not stop calling for an independent inquiry into the Government's handling of the Pandemic. Unfortunately, that inquiry will come too late for the hundreds of health and social care workers who have lost their lives.

GMB's priority remains in keeping our members safe at work which is why throughout the Pandemic we have been regularly updating our Coronavirus Hub with all the information you need to keep yourself safe. You can check it out at: [Get It Right | The Coronavirus Hub | GMB](#)

You can also access NHS specific information at: [NHS and COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions | GMB](#)

If you have concerns that you may have contracted Covid-19 in the workplace, please record your details on the GMB Risk Register at: [COVID-19 Risk Register | GMB](#)

A mental health crisis is looming within the NHS. This comes after years of cuts to services and the inability of the service to recruit and retain staff, which led to a 100,000+ vacancy crisis prior to Covid-19. Almost a year of fighting Covid-19, with little or no time to rest and recover before we headed into the second wave and winter has left many NHS staff unable to cope. If you are struggling, please speak out. You can check out the GMB Mental Health Support Hub at - [Mental health and wellbeing | GMB](#)

Covid-19 Vaccination

It is with great relief that some of our elderly population have now been vaccinated. It will take many months for people in the prioritised categories to be vaccinated but we hope to see the vaccination programme roll out speedily and efficiently over the coming months.

Health and social care workers have been identified as a priority group of workers to be vaccinated and we have already started to see NHS staff be vaccinated, although the vast majority will not have access until the New Year.

GMB supports the Covid-19 vaccination programme and would encourage our members to have both the Flu and Covid-19 vaccination. However, this is not mandatory, and we understand that some of our members are not able to be vaccinated e.g. for health reasons; pregnancy; etc. We therefore would expect that no member suffers a financial detriment as a result of not being vaccinated. If you have any concerns regarding this, please speak with your local GMB Representative.

NHS Pay

The campaign for pay justice continues. GMB's pay claim to Government is:

- 15% or £2 per hour, whichever is the greater
- One year deal
- Unsocial Hours Payments when on Sick for all NHS staff
- Never again should NHS pay fall below the Real Living Wage

Government have now published their much-delayed remit to the NHS Pay Review Body (PRB) asking them to make a recommendation on your pay. However, GMB is disappointed with the Government's misleading use of statistics in the remit letter and potential restrictions placed upon the PRB. You can read our statement at: [GMB slams Matt Hancock's scrooge NHS pay letter | GMB](#)

GMB will be submitting evidence into the PRB using the data from the three all member consultation surveys we have carried out this year.

Some of the results from the most recent survey showed that:

- Over 61% of respondents have considered leaving the NHS in the last six months, with the main reason being stress, pay and workloads.
- Over 70% of respondents are working additional hours above their contract and almost 14% of those work the additional hours unpaid.
- There are still Band 1 workers who have not been supported to transfer to Band 2, despite this being a part of the last pay award.
- 44% of ambulance service respondents have decided not to pursue a promotion in order to protect their unsocial hours payments.
- There are many Trusts that have started charging staff for car parking again, despite the Pandemic not being over.
- Almost 31% of respondents do not receive any support or financial protection if they have to take time off work for dependents.

Check out our dedicated campaign website where you can see exactly how much money you have lost in your pay packets since 2010. You can also download and share campaign resources, order campaign merchandise and sign our petition at: [We're campaigning for pay justice in our NHS | GMB](#)

Are your contact details correct?

It is essential that your membership details are up to date so that we can ensure you are kept up to date with developments in the pay campaign and receive a ballot paper when they are issued.

You can update your details by contacting your local GMB Representative or online using the GMB website at <https://gmb.org.uk/mygmb-edit>

Union Visits to your Workplace

It will be many months before we see a return to any form of 'normality'. Covid-19 will still present a danger to health care workers and the people you care for. As a result, it means that your GMB Union Representatives may continue to have difficulties visiting you in your workplaces. However, we want you to know that we are still here. We are considering a variety of ways that we can get information to you and engage with you on your issues in the workplace. One way to do this is to arrange a virtual online meeting for your workplace. If you would like to book one of these in please contact your local GMB representative or email NHS@gmb.org.uk

GMB Representative Taster Sessions

Have you ever been interested in the role of GMB Representative in your workplace but unsure whether you have the skills or can commit the time? Why not join one of our NHS Rep Taster Sessions? If you're interested, email NHS@gmb.org.uk and we will be in touch with more details.

Lee Mead - Exclusive Ticket Giveaway

Lee Mead is best known for winning the title role in the 2007 West End revival of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat through the BBCs show 'Any Dream Will Do'. He is also known for starring in Casualty and Holby City.

As a thank you to GMB key workers he is giving away 1000 tickets to his 2021 tour in England and Wales. You can enter the ballot to win two tickets at: <https://bit.ly/3oUK0zj>

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

The Pandemic is far from over as we continue through the second wave of Covid-19 and face the winter pressures. GMB will continue to be by your side throughout.

We hope that you get some time over the Christmas holidays to rest and spend time with your families and loved ones. We wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Not a GMB Member? Join today at [Join the union for NHS staff today | GMB](#)

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