

# NHS members make the case on pay on their protest day

Shadow health secretary Andy Burnham met protestors in Liverpool to discuss the question of NHS pay protest day in June – although health secretary Jeremy Hunt preferred to look at an exhibition at the NHS Confederation conference.

Labour's Mr Burnham described the secretary of state's decision on pay as "a calculated insult to NHS staff".

The NHS employers' chief executive Dean Royles did speak to protestors, but while he offered sympathy, he declared that any rise would be "unaffordable".

Earlier in the day, UNISON's head of health Christina McAnea had led protestors outside the conference centre as they demonstrated the scale of unpaid overtime that NHS workers donate to the government each year with a cheque representing the amount.

And in London, UNISON general secretary Dave Prentis, BMA board chair Dr Mark Porter and TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady delivered a similar cheque to the Department of Health to reinforce the point.

In the meantime, across the UK, UNISON members showed their anger against the continuing pay freeze.

In Northern Ireland, members were busy across the region making sure that their protests against the lack of a pay rise were heard loud and clear.

They protested outside Antrim Area Hospital, and in Lisburn too, while members at Belfast City Hospital and at Ulster Hospital also made their feelings clear.

In Norwich, mental health staff lined the roadside with banners and placards and leaflets to make sure local people understood what is happening.



**Dave Prentis, Dr Mark Porter and Frances O'Grady present a cheque to the government for all the unpaid overtime that NHS workforce contribute to the service**

Photo: Mark Thomas

At the George Eliot Hospital in Nuneaton, activists handed out pay packets full of peanuts to illustrate just what the health secretary thinks they should get as a pay rise this year – a protest repeated at City Hospital Birmingham too.

Lunchtime protests took off from Basingstoke to Hastings, while London Ambulance Service staff also took to the streets to make the case for decent pay and staff at University College Hospital in the capital held a big rally on the steps outside.

"1% is not enough!" said a placard in Mid Yorkshire, reflecting cold, hard reality for NHS workers across the UK.

UNISON students in Newark, preparing to embark on their NHS careers, spent their lunch hour holding a protest.

One of the very first reports was a tweeted picture of the UNISON stall outside St Mary's Hospital on the Isle of Wight – ready for visitors at 7am on a gloriously sunny morning.

South West Yorkshire Partnership health branch also created a stall, where they

encouraged people to sign the petition for fair pay in the NHS.

In London, members from the Guy's and St Thomas' branch joined colleagues from the RCN to make their voices heard in the shadow of Westminster, while members at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital made the case with a special UNISON stall.

And in Birmingham, UNISON and RCN colleagues also came together to mount a protest outside the City Hospital.

In the North East, Gateshead Health activists used a stall outside Quenellies, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's main restaurant to make the case.

In Eastern region, North West Anglia health branch created a pop-up stand, with purple and green balloons and plenty of information about UNISON – including why people should join.

At the Royal Devon and Exeter, activists set up a stall near the canteen to make sure they got their message out as widely as possible – and encouraged colleagues to have their photographs taken as part of the union's Worth It pay campaign.