

ON CALL PROTECTION EXTENDED TO MARCH 31ST 2010

The on call protection arrangements as part of the Agenda for Change terms and conditions, currently due to expire at the end of September 2008, have been extended until March 31st 2010. This was agreed at a recent meeting of the NHS Staff Council. During the new protection period, a sub-group of the Council will be convened to look into various aspects of on call work. This will include defining what on call work is and developing a system of remuneration to cover on call work. The Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP) will feed into this work through the Unite On Call Working Group which has been formed in response to this development. Any proposals that are developed will be the subject of a ballot of union members.

Dave Thornton, Chair of Terms and Conditions for GHP said “This is good news for our members who provide Emergency Duty Cover (EDC) in the managed sector. At the moment, the EDC payment (approximately £2500 per year) previously agreed under Whitley, is one of the protected arrangements. This protection was due to finish at the end of September and the only model of payment to replace it would have meant that all pharmacists providing EDC would lose a large proportion of their salary. We are aware of a number of Trusts that were suggesting pharmacists (and other groups of staff) would revert to these payments in October” he added. “The extension will prevent this from happening and will give some peace of mind to our members. I will work with Unite to ensure the position of our members is fully considered within the negotiations.”

Notes for Editors

The Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists represents UK wide around 4,000 pharmacists including the majority of hospital pharmacists, pharmacists employed by Primary Care Trusts and pharmacists employed by other public bodies such as the Healthcare Commission, and is part of the health sector of the union Unite.

For further information contact Dave Thornton, Chair of Terms and Conditions GHP, 01925 576774