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Open letter to [trust] in support of UNISON’s healthcare support worker rebanding claim

**If you would like to sign this open letter, please confirm your support by emailing the branch at (insert branch details)**

We are writing in support of healthcare support workers working at [insert name of Trust] in their campaign for fair pay, respect and recognition at work.

Every NHS Trust relies on passionate and hard-working healthcare support workers to provide care and support to some of our most vulnerable residents. Due to competing demands and pressures across the Trust, however, most healthcare support workers routinely undertake clinical duties and patient observations above and beyond their pay grade. This includes crucial tasks such as taking bloods or monitoring heart rate, blood pressure and blood sugars.

If healthcare support workers didn’t perform these essential clinical duties, they would need to be completed by nurses and doctors who are already overworked and understaffed.

Since (insert date), healthcare support members in UNISON have campaigned for these duties to be properly recognised and rewarded in accordance with the NHS’s Agenda for Change job evaluation scheme. In accordance with that scheme, clinical duties should be paid at band 3, however most healthcare support workers in your (OR our) organisation are employed at band 2, with many being consistently being underpaid by up to £2,000 per year.

We understand that at Trust level where responsibility for job evaluation in partnership with trades unions lies, the matter has still not been satisfactorily resolved.

The value our NHS staff contribute to our society, our communities, and our wellbeing has been more stark during than ever before as they’ve had to work selflessly around the clock, in challenging situation to care for patients during the pandemic.

A situation where Trusts in our city region/area take advantage of their staff’s goodwill, whilst many healthcare support staff miss out on thousands of pounds every year, is immoral and unsustainable.

We are therefore calling on you to give healthcare support workers the dignity and respect they deserve and resolve this issue at the earliest opportunity through engagement with UNISON and in line with their three key principles for healthcare support staff pay:

**A fair stake in the future**

Any plans to develop healthcare support roles for the future should take into account evidence UNISON has gathered and provided to NHS Trusts regarding existing practices in wards and departments, fairly assessing demand for more advanced duties.

**A fair recognition of work and commitment**

Any healthcare support staff who have not been paid for work previously undertaken at band 3 level in the past are compensated and paid fairly, in accordance with the principles of the NHS Job Evaluation Scheme.

**A fair deal on pay**

Your/our organisation should work with unions to resolve any healthcare support staff pay disparity where staff are routinely undertaking work above their pay band, in accordance with established and agreed NHS role profiles, without any undue delay.

Furthermore, no staff member should lose out through progression to band 3 – recognition and reward for their hard work and for undertaking more complex duties should be fair and just.

*[Optional if political work has been taking place]*

We also request that the Trust Chief Executive meets with our local MP and Councillors that have signed this letter, alongside UNISON members and organisers, to discuss how this matter can be resolved as a matter of urgency.

If our Trust continues to disregard the collective view of staff, we are concerned that it will lead to increased staff turnover and undermine morale, productivity, and quality of care.