

# UNISON voice

The North Cheshire Health Branch Newsletter. February 2011



AGM Dates 2011 see overleaf >

UNISON is deeply concerned that the NHS will change from a publically run and accountable service, into a conglomerate of competing private companies outbidding the NHS for patients. Private companies, including KPMG are being brought in to work with GP consortia across London and foreign companies like the American United Healthcare are being used by GP consortia in the South West and Hounslow.

UNISON's key concerns include:

- The reforms will be hugely expensive to implement at a time when the NHS is being told to save £20bn.
- Money that should be used to improve patient care will be bled out of the system into the hands of private companies. The reforms will open the NHS up to EU competition law – once services have left the NHS, there is no going back.
- Turning the regulator Monitor into a utilities style watchdog like Ofgem or Ofwat is completely inappropriate for a service built on care and compassion.
- The massive structural upheaval and institutional chaos could leave the NHS unprepared to cope with crisis situations such as the swine flu pandemic.
- A postcode lottery will be allowed to develop – with no guarantee that your local NHS will continue to fund treatments that are not sufficiently profitable.
- NHS patients will be pushed to the back of the queue, as hospitals will be able to raise unlimited cash from private paying patients.
- Competing on price will mean that quality of care inevitably suffers
- Price competition may jeopardise staff's national terms and conditions as providers attempt to reduce their costs in the market place.

UNISON will be seeking to try to amend the Bill during its journey through parliament. The controversial plans have received a lot of media attention and UNISON is encouraging members to participate in the debate and to lobby their MPs and write to their GPs.

## Marching for Public Services

On 26<sup>th</sup> March 2011, thousands of people will join the TUC march in London, to tell the government that savage spending cuts are unnecessary and unfair.

We don't believe the coalition when they say we are all in this together - their public service cuts will hit the most vulnerable the hardest.

### *There is an alternative*

- ✓ Fair taxation
- ✓ Investment in our local communities, Health and Education
- ✓ A more equal and just society



MARCH  
**26**  
London

Join us on March 26<sup>th</sup>

Arrangements have been announced for the **March for the Alternative**. At 11.00 am on March the 26th 2011 UNISON will be assembling on Victoria Embankment between Temple Place and Blackfriars to march to a rally in Hyde Park.

To find out more call the Branch Office on 01928 753336  
Or log on to [www.unison.org/million](http://www.unison.org/million)

# 2011 AGM

Here's a reminder that we have the Branch 2011 AGM coming up next month. As stipulated by the UNISON Rule book, the AGM is required to take place every twelve months to enable the Branch to function constitutionally.

## AGM AGGREGATE MEETINGS TO BE HELD at THREE VENUES

### **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

12.15pm and 1.15pm in the ITU Trust Conference Room  
Warrington Hospital

### **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2011**

12.30pm and 1.30pm in the Blue Room Halton Hospital

### **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011**

12.30pm in the Halton and St. Helens PCT  
Cowley Hill Conference Room

A Free Easter Egg and Free Raffle with Prizes of £150, £75 and £50 at each meeting for every Branch Member who attends the AGM



Nominations are also invited for a **Branch Labour Link Officer**. This position is only open to Labour Party members.

The closing date for substantive motions to arrive in the Branch Office is March 14<sup>th</sup>