

unite Executive Council Elections

Amicus Section—Health Sector

Gill George & Frank Wood

Dear Colleague

We are writing to ask you for your support. Please consider nominating us as candidates for the Unite Executive Council.

We are both experienced and hardworking trade unionists, playing a leading role in our Union at national and local level. We are both proud to be leading campaigners in defence of the NHS.

While the ballot will take place next March, the nominations have to be made in November and December of this year. Every workplace rep or steward is entitled to make nominations. Forms are available from your Full Time Officer or Regional Office. Your nomination should be confirmed by a meeting of members in your workplace.

NHS in Crisis

Our members in Health are paying a high price for Government attacks. In the last two years, we've lost 26,000 NHS jobs. Redundancies and unfilled vacancies have led to increased workloads and high levels of stress. Reconfiguration has been a way of life. With the imminent ending of working hours protection under Agenda for Change, many of us will soon be working longer hours, not including the unpaid overtime many of us have to work. Our job satisfaction, one of the key factors that makes the NHS special for our patients, is under threat.

Last year's financial crisis resulted in widespread chaos. The NHS is in deep trouble in England, with Wales and Northern Ireland not too far behind.

Privatisation and outsourcing jeopardise the jobs of many of our members—across primary care and the acute sector. The centralisation of pathology services, and the drive towards privatisation of diagnostic services more generally, pose a growing threat. Estates jobs are vanishing. Job cuts for our CPHVA members have left community nursing in many areas in crisis. Many of our National Blood Service and Medical Research Council members also face a shockingly uncertain future. Even our hospital chaplains have seen jobs axed in one in four NHS Trusts.

To add insult to injury, we've been dumped with a pay award less than half the rate of inflation.

In Scotland, the NHS is in better shape—but, incredibly, AFC implementation still drags on, the review of community nursing threatens the professional roles of Scottish nurses, and many members face uncertainty going forward.

The Darzi report on the NHS in London raises threats to

the NHS to a whole new level. Gordon Brown has made Darzi a Health Minister and asked him to roll out similar proposals across England. Darzi's proposals will lead to the wholesale closure of health centres and District General Hospitals. GPs and GP services are threatened. The recent reintroduction of a plan to privatise NHS commissioning giving control of the budgets to private companies, primarily from the US healthcare industry, shows Brown's direction.

The much vaunted extra funds for the NHS in Darling's spending announcement will go primarily into the pockets of the privateers.

Union in Crisis

Our National Executive Council—the Union's ruling body—agreed in September that the priority for our union was *'two years peace for Gordon Brown'*! What a disgrace. Our members in Health can't *afford* two years peace for Gordon Brown. We need a Union that makes it an absolute priority to fight for its own members.

While the Union has done much good work, the problems facing the Health sector always seem to be given less importance than propping up Blair and, now, Brown.

Too often our Union has seen equalities as an afterthought. Our sector has the highest proportion of women members in the Union, and many Black and Minority Ethnic members. For us, equalities issues have to be at the heart of all our work.

We've seen other problems in our own Union. Gill, as an NEC member since January 2004, has been in a constant battle opposing attacks on lay control.

We've seen the systematic undermining of our professional groups and associations. Our members are not just concerned with terms and conditions. The professional groups are vital in providing us with avenues to raise wider issues about our roles.

The loss of Regional OACs, Regional Health Committees reduced to skeleton bodies that barely function, the withering away of our branches ... the list goes on. We have to reverse this. Our reps and activists are the lifeblood of this Union. Our Union won't deliver for members until our members can set the priorities.

Our agenda is a simple one: We believe that our Union must belong to its members and must fight for its members. We give an absolute commitment to doing everything in our power to deliver on this.

Gill & Frank

Gill and Frank are happy to attend branch or workplace meetings to explain why they are standing, to answer questions, and to discuss member's concerns. To get in touch e-mail them at info@amicushealthactivists.org or ring Gill on (020) 7502 6905. For more information see the websites gillgeorge.wordpress.com and www.uniteelections.com.

Gill George



Gill is a Speech and Language Therapist working in City and Hackney PCT. She works with children with complex special needs, such as autism and cerebral palsy.

Gill is Unite Senior Rep and Staff Side Secretary in her Trust. She is an active member of her Branch, and a delegate to both the London Health Sector Committee and the Health Sector National Committee. Gill is Chair of the Speech and Language Therapy OAC. She spoke at this year's TUC in defence of the NHS and public services.

Gill has been a member of the Amicus National Executive since January 2004. She believes that our Union must do much more to defend our members in Health—but is proud of her own record of achievement on the NEC.

Gill won our national policy of affiliation and support for 'Keep Our NHS Public'. She won the support of the NEC for taking an emergency motion to the TUC in opposition to Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS—and joint union opposition forced the Government into a significant retreat on this. In 2006, when the Government had secret plans to sell off the whole of primary care, Gill spotted the significance of the ad in the Official Journal of the European Union, alerted Gail Cartmail and the national media, and set in train the events that led to the formation of 'NHS Together'.

Gill is a campaigner. She believes that our members were sold short by AfC, and she fought hard for a better deal. She is a signatory to the founding statement that launched 'Keep Our NHS Public'. She set up the 'Keep Our NHS Public' group in her own borough. She campaigns at national level, speaking at public meetings in defence of the NHS up and down the country.

When Gill was elected to the NEC, her manifesto pledged her support for democracy and lay control. Her record here is an absolutely consistent one. Gill believes that the drive towards increased centralisation of our Union is immensely damaging. She has defended the rights of our members—in Health and across the Union—with passion and commitment.

Gill's details for Nomination Forms:
Membership No.: 30609701
Branch: East London Health / 0007

Frank Wood



Frank Wood is a Biomedical Scientist at Kings College Hospital. He is the Unite (Amicus Section) Rep for a Unite group of 470 members. He is Chair of the Joint Staff Committee at Kings. Frank is Branch Secretary of South East London Medical Branch. He is Chair of the London Health Sector Committee, and a member of the Health Sector National Committee.

Frank is one of the most experienced reps in our Union. He has campaigned actively against PFI and the outsourcing of services, in his own Trust and at national level.

Privatisation is a key issue for Frank. We have to campaign for the Government to put strict limits on private sector involvement, and stop the obscene diversion of public money into private sector coffers. A major issue currently is the modernisation of Pathology, and the urgent need to resist both privatisation, and modernisation that is to the detriment of staff.

Frank recently led a campaign that successfully resisted the victimisation of a TGWU steward at his hospital.

Frank is also centrally involved in the wider campaign to defend the NHS. He is Chair of his local 'Keep Our NHS Public' group, and has played a key role in building a joint campaign of public sector unions, local activists and mental health groups, working together to defend desperately needed mental health services.

Frank knows that health workers are sick and tired of being treated badly. Agenda for Change, the below inflation pay rise, and the likely pay cuts arising from new Unsocial Hours and On Call arrangements have demoralised and angered many key groups of staff. The NHS should be a good employer. It should offer job security, training, equality and fairness. Instead, health care staff are overworked, facing re-organisation, redundancy or transfer, disadvantaged and abused.

Frank wants a Union that engages with its members in Health, works for those members—and that will challenge the Labour Government when necessary.

Frank's details for Nomination Forms:
Membership No.: 30396195
Branch: South East London Medical / 0024

Why I support Gill George and Frank Wood

I have known Gill George and Frank Wood for many years. I'm proud to support both of them. Gill has a rock solid record of fighting for our members in Health on the Union's National Executive. Frank is a well-respected member of our Health Sector National Committee, and is one of the hardest working reps we have anywhere in the Union. We've got plenty of problems currently in the NHS, and challenges as we move into the new merged union. I trust Gill and Frank to represent us, to work for us in raising the issues important to the Health Sector members, and—importantly—to be accountable to us.

Ray Stewart

Health Sector National Committee, Scottish Regional Health Sector Committee, Scottish Regional Council (personal capacity)