

#WithNHSStaff



for fair pay

Guidance for Trade Union members supporting industrial action by other unions.

What members should do

Trade union members supporting colleagues taking industrial action can do so but are limited in how they can participate. Advice can be provided by their respective union representatives.

Trade union members who have not got a mandate for industrial action should report for work as normal having advised the employer/manager in advance that they will not accept any variation to their contracted duties and/or undertake the timetabled or other responsibilities of those engaged in action. Workplace representatives should inform the manager of this on behalf of members.

Any requested work should be within their scope of practice and professional competence. Members are advised to adhere to their code of conduct and registration requirements at all times. No-one should put their professional registration or certification at risk at any time during industrial action.

Managers having been notified of the number participating in the strike action by the union involved in their department/hospital, will make a judgement about whether it can remain fully open, partially open or will close. The representative will need to confirm that the manager/employer has undertaken a risk assessment based on the potential impact on the department/hospital of the absence of the staff who will be involved in the action.

Managers should not ask staff individually whether they plan to take industrial action. They should liaise with the union reps regarding numbers participating in action.

It is for the trade union taking action to agree with the employer the derogations (exemptions) to any action being taken that will ensure life and limb cover is provided.

Official picket lines

Where a union in action establishes an official picket line, refusal to cross it is a decision for individual employees. However, union members should seek advice from their own union as refusing to cross a picket line is likely to lead to deduction of wages and could possibly result in disciplinary action.

It will be up to the trade union that is organising the picket line to facilitate orderly and proportionate support from others taking into account the code for picketing.

Members that decide to cross the picket line should assure those picketing that they will not undertake work that those on strike would normally have carried out.

Trade union members are encouraged to support those unions participating in industrial action by joining them on the picket lines at break/lunch times; offering to provide refreshments to pickets or contributing to that union's strike fund. Posters and banners from trade unions that have a mandate for industrial action could be utilised and those of unions yet to determine or without a mandate for strike action might do so at the discretion of that union and the union organising the picket.

