ITEMS CONTAINED IN THIS BRIEFING

- Workplace Representatives Conference
- Medical Malpractice Insurance
- NHS Pension Scheme
- Messages from the Staff Survey
- Equal Pay Claims
- RCM Union Learning Representatives Project
- Maternity Support Workers
- Representatives Courses
- Job Analysis/Evaluation, Job Matching and Refresher Training Courses
- Legal Cases
- Congratulations

WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVES’ CONFERENCE

The RCM Annual Conference 2009 will be held in Manchester Central Conference and Exhibition Centre in Manchester on Thursday, 26\textsuperscript{th} and Friday, 27\textsuperscript{th} November 2009. The theme for this year is "Pioneering the Mother and Baby Pathway". All members will be receiving the full conference brochure with the forthcoming issue of Midwives.

At the same time there will be a dedicated Workplace Representatives’ Conference on Friday 27 November alongside the main conference programme and at the same venue. Admission to this full day training event is FREE for all RCM stewards, health & safety representatives and union learning representatives including lunch and refreshments.
Content will include a lively mix of presentations, training, workshops, speakers and topical discussions to update your knowledge and help you support your members.

You will also be able to attend the conference exhibition on both days free of charge and hear the General Secretary’s final address at the close of conference on Friday. If you would like to attend the main conference sessions on Day 1 (Thursday, 26 November) – including the Secretary of State for Health’s speech, and sessions including managing diversity and employee ownership in the NHS – there is a specially discounted main conference delegate rate just for RCM workplace representatives of **only £99 + VAT**. The traditional conference dinner is on the Thursday night and costs £59 + VAT.

We hope you will be able to make the most of both days of the Annual Conference. However, we especially encourage all workplace representatives to consider registering for these Workplace Representatives free conference sessions on Friday 27 November.

To find out more and to book your place please go to [www.rcm.org.uk/annualconference](http://www.rcm.org.uk/annualconference) and listen out for further announcements from the ER Department

**MESSAGES FROM THE NHS STAFF SURVEY**

The results of the NHS Staff Survey carried out by the newly formed Care and Quality Commission have been published. A précis of the findings can be found at [http://www.cqc.org.uk/publications.cfm?fde_id=11001](http://www.cqc.org.uk/publications.cfm?fde_id=11001). There are many mixed messages with different part of the NHS giving very different results but overall there seems to be steady progress in many areas including training, flexible working and reductions in abuse. Please take the time to read the summary at the link provided.

**MEDICAL MALPRACTICE INSURANCE**

The Medical Malpractice Insurance FAQ leaflet has now been updated to incorporate further areas of cover.

I have enclosed the updated leaflet for you, which will also appear on our website at [http://www.rcm.org.uk/college/membership/benefits/medical-malpractice-insurance/](http://www.rcm.org.uk/college/membership/benefits/medical-malpractice-insurance/)

This revised document will be sent out to all new members in their welcome packs and the information as to the extension of insurance cover will be published in a forthcoming edition of the Midwives magazine. It would be appreciated if you could bring this change to the attention of members.

Please email [membership@rcm.org.uk](mailto:membership@rcm.org.uk) or call 020 7312 3500 if you require a further supply.

**NHS PENSION SCHEME**
Members will recall that a new NHS Pension Scheme came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April last year and is running alongside the existing scheme. Later this year there will be a ‘Choice Exercise’ for existing scheme members to decide whether they wish to transfer from the old scheme to the new scheme.

It will be a one-off choice giving all eligible members of the NHS Pension Scheme an option to transfer all of their membership from the 1995 Section into the 2008 Section if they wish.

Eligible members will each receive a Choice Pack which includes an Explanatory Booklet, a Choice Statement (showing a comparison of benefits in the 1995 and 2008 Section) and a DVD.

Given the logistical size of the exercise it is scheduled to last from 1 October 2009 to March 2012. Choice packs will be delivered in a number of phases; full details can be found here [http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Choice.aspx](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Choice.aspx)

**EQUAL PAY CLAIMS**

Representatives may be aware of a recent equal pay case taken out against the NHS by a ‘no-win-no-fee’ solicitor who challenged AfC on the grounds that its Job Evaluation Scheme was inherently biased towards men and Job Scores were manipulated by men for men.

Following a long case at Employment Tribunal it was agreed that there were no grounds for this claim and it was therefore rejected. There is a likelihood of appeal and the RCM will keep you informed of developments.

**RCM UNION LEARNING REPRESENTATIVES PROJECT**

The RCM has successfully bid for Unionlearn funding to establish a network of Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) in England. The funding has enabled the RCM to commence a ULR Project which will continue until the end of March 2011.

Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) are elected in the same way as stewards and health and safety representatives and, under the Employment Act 2002, have the same rights as all other workplace representatives to time off for carrying out their duties and to undertake training within 6 months of commencing in post.

Their role is to raise awareness of training and development across the membership they represent, whether highly skilled professionals or unskilled workers. Activities may include supporting an individual wanting to learn a new skill, carrying out a learning needs analysis of the membership or negotiating with the employer for learning facilities. ULRs do not just help members to access work-related learning opportunities; they can
also help members focus on developing a new interest or skill outside of the work environment.

ULRs are required to undergo a recognised training course which will enable them to advise members on learning needs and opportunities.

The RCM first considered the introduction of ULRs into the organisation in 2005. A number of the NHS trade unions had already established ULR networks within their organisations whilst others were more hesitant. The RCM needed to explore whether they had a role within what was an increasingly graduate profession with an already well established network of CPD midwives, for example. In light of this as part of the RCM’s Forging the Future Programme a project group was set up to ‘explore the establishment of a network of RCM Learning representatives at a local level across the UK.’

The outcomes of the project included that:

- A RCM ULR network be established;
- External funding be explored.

These goals were ratified by RCM Council and a bid was developed and submitted to Unionlearn for a project entitled ‘Personal and Professional Learning in the Royal College of Midwives’. In March 2009 the RCM were informed that the bid had been successful.

The funding is conditional on a number of objectives being met. These include a network of RCM ULRs being identified and trained, an increase in the number of RCM members accessing learning opportunities, greater partnership working and increased understanding of the needs of RCM members and the maternity service.

Unfortunately the funding is for an England project only but the RCM will be exploring additional funding to roll out the ULR network across the UK.

The Project Team comprises of:

Denise Linay  ULR Project Manager;
Peter Amphlett  ULR Project Worker (North);
Imogen Fleury  ULR Project Worker (South);
Jax Conrad  ULR Administrator.

Denise, Imogen and Jax will be based in RCM HQ whilst Peter will be based in the RCM Leeds Office.

The ULR Project Workers will be responsible for recruiting and supporting RCM ULRs and engaging with employers and education providers. RCM ULRs will be trained either through a TUC or RCM bespoke course. The first RCM ULR Training Course will be held on 7th - 10th September 2009 (venue to be confirmed).
The project team will be accountable to a steering group which will have representation from across the RCM departments.

This project presents the RCM with a great opportunity to not only become more influential in accessing learning opportunities for RCM members (midwives and MSWs) but to develop a new network of activists. This may provide an opportunity to recruit and engage members who may not have wanted to take on the traditional steward or H & S role but are passionate about learning and development and believe, with the support of a project team, a network of other ULRs (RCM and other NHS Unions) that they can make a real difference.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Union Learning or if you or a colleague are interested in becoming a ULR please contact Denise Linay on 020 7312 3422 or email denise.linay@rcm.org.uk

MATERNITY SUPPORT WORKERS (MSWs)

We are delighted to see the widening of RCM membership to Maternity Support Workers (MSWs). Since 1 April 2009 the policy has attracted a lot of support from current RCM members and we are welcoming steadily increasing numbers of MSWs into the RCM.

The new category of RCM membership is open to any employee who works in a role that supports the midwife in the care of childbearing women, the newborn and their families.

Now that MSW membership is launched and numbers are growing, we cannot be complacent if we are to realise our objectives of supporting and developing MSWs and increasing our influence on their role within the midwifery team. We need to ensure all eligible workers are informed and inspired about the benefits of joining and have to hand the means of signing up.

We know Stewards and Health and Safety Representatives are hugely influential in recruiting members and your support in reaching potential MSW category members in the workplace is greatly appreciated. Enclosed with this briefing is a further supply of MSW Recruitment Forms to distribute. Further supplies and posters are available from the RCM Membership Services team membership@rcm.org.uk. If you work with MSWs, please support us by recruiting them into the RCM and making sure they know what the RCM can do for them.

If you have any questions about the new membership category and what it means for the RCM please contact Denise Linay on denise.linay@rcm.org.uk

REPRESENTATIVES COURSES

We still have spaces on the Confident Campaigning Course at Rednal, Birmingham on 13th to 15th July 2009.
For further information please contact Virginia Phillips, Employment Relations Officer on Virginiaphillips@rcm.org.uk or 020 7312 3515.

JOB ANALYSIS/EVALUATION, JOB MATCHING AND REFRESHER TRAINING COURSES

The table below displays a number of forthcoming courses which you may wish to attend:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Course Type</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Venue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NHS South of Tyne &amp; Wear</td>
<td>JA/JE</td>
<td>2/3 June</td>
<td>Sunderland</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Tees</td>
<td>JM</td>
<td>8/9 June</td>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS South of Tyne &amp; Wear</td>
<td>Refresher</td>
<td>17 Jun</td>
<td>Sunderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxfordshire Bucks MH Trust</td>
<td>JM</td>
<td>17/18 June</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
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<tr>
<td>East of England AMB</td>
<td>JA/JE</td>
<td>18/19 June</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
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<td>South Tees</td>
<td>JA/JE</td>
<td>1/2 July</td>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
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<td>Pennine Acute</td>
<td>JM</td>
<td>2/3 July</td>
<td>Oldham</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS South of Tyne &amp; Wear</td>
<td>JM</td>
<td>7/8 July</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS South of Tyne &amp; Wear</td>
<td>JA/JE</td>
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<td>NHS South of Tyne &amp; Wear</td>
<td>JM</td>
<td>10/11 Sept</td>
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LEGAL CASES

The RCM legal assistance scheme continues to assist members in their times of need without the use of so-called ‘no-win-no-fee’ solicitors.

- A member in Warwickshire was awarded £5,000 when she slipped on a wet floor and suffered a jarring injury to her knee.
- A member in Buckinghamshire was awarded £10,000 when she slipped on a wet floor and suffered a back injury.
- A member in Kent who fell at a clients home and twisted her ankle as she fell into a window ledge gained £13,000
- A member in Somerset who was injured and forced to retire after suffering shoulder, soft tissue and some psychological damage when maneuvering an electric bed in an emergency situation received over £40,000

Cases such as the above show the value of the RCM’s legal service and should, we hope, assist Health & Safety Reps prevent similar accidents in the future.

CONGRATULATIONS

Finally, congratulations go to Veronica Morgan for being elected as Convenor at Heart of England Foundation Trust, Birmingham.