

The Huntercombe Group

Last update: 1 Aug 2022

Latest Update

THE HUNTERCOMBE GROUP PAY CONSULTATION 2022/23

Posted on: 1 August 2022

Dear Member,

We wish to advise you of the result of this years pay ballot and negotiations, carried out by joint Trade Unions, GMB, RCN, and Unison this year.

The 2022/23 pay offer ballot closed 6th June 2022, with an outcome of RCN members voting to accept and GMB and Unison members voting to reject the pay offer.

Since this time, the joint TU's and The Huntercombe Group (THG), met to discuss the ballot outcome.

Despite the ballot outcome, Huntercombe have indicated that they will not consider any improvement on the pay offer, and intend to impose the increase and back pay in August.

As previously advised, The Huntercombe Group ceased to recognise the joint trade unions, as of 30th June 2022, and therefore we are unable to negotiate any further on pay on your behalf.

The Huntercombe Group have indicated that they are willing to meet the joint trade unions to discuss operational matters. The terms of this forum are yet to be agreed.

In the meantime, our members should continue to raise any issues they may have in relation to their employment and working conditions to their respective trade unions, in the usual way.



Should you have any questions regarding any part of this pay consultation, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Leigh Murray Gavin Edwards Rachel Harrison

National Officer National Officer National Officer

Royal College of Nursing Unison GMB

THE HUNTERCOMBE GROUP – PAY 2022 UPDATE



Posted on: 15 June 2022

Thank you to all GMB members who voted in the recent pay ballot.

GMB members that voted, did so to **reject the pay offer**. Unison members also voted to reject. RCN members voted accept the offer.

The joint unions have now notified your employer of our results and requested further discussions. The meeting with employers has been scheduled of Thursday 23rd June 2022. A further update will follow after this.

GMB are running several localised campaigns on issues such as pay, holiday pay and union recognition. If you want more details about campaigns in your area or have an idea for a campaign in your workplace – please email: PublicServices@gmb.org.uk

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DERECOGNITION AT HUNTERCOMBE



Posted on: 25 March 2022

The company's decision to derecognise staff unions following the transfer of care homes from Four Season to Huntercombe is a vicious attack on those essential workers' ability to negotiate collectively



and speak up for residents at a time when the care workforce is already on the ropes.

Staff at the sharp end of a cost of living crisis are trying to cope with the lasting trauma of the pandemic, along-side growing uncertainty for their families and future.

Their employer's response: to remove one of the few platforms those staff have to speak up.

They want you silent: to prevent you advocating for you patients, challenging low pay, and speaking up on their management failures.

Don't let them silence you. [Join GMB](#), [sign up your colleagues](#), and [organise your workplace](#).

[Read the joint union statement on Huntercombe Health's anti-union policies.](#)

GMB PAY 2022 CONSULTATION



Posted on: 11 February 2022

Thank you to all GMB members who took the time to Have Your Say on Your Pay in the recent GMB member pay consultation survey. A summary of responses received:

- 97% do not believe they are being paid appropriately when considering their responsibilities.
- 86% state that they are working short staffed every day, or at least a few times per week.
- The top three priorities for GMB members currently are:
 1. A pay rise to match inflation
 2. More paid holidays
 3. Unsocial hours or shift payment
- 67% have seriously considered leaving The Huntercombe Group and 54% have actively searched for other jobs, whilst 32% have applied for other jobs.



- 94% support GMBs campaign for £15 per hour as a minimum for social care workers.

The results are now being collated and analysed and will be used to formulate this year's joint union pay claim. A copy of the final pay claim will be made available to you once it has been submitted to the company and you will receive regular updates from the pay negotiations.

Not a GMB member? [Join today!](#)

Want more information about [being a GMB Representative in your Workplace](#)? Email PublicServices@gmb.org.uk

Previous Bulletins

UPDATE ON PAY TALKS



Posted on: 12 November 2021

We wish to advise you of the result of this years pay ballot and negotiations, carried out by joint Trade Unions, GMB, RCN, and Unison this year.

The 2021/22 pay offer ballot closed on 6th August, with an outcome of Unison members voting to accept and GMB and RCN members voting to reject the pay offer.

Since this time, the joint TU's and The Huntercombe Group (THG), have continued to meet to discuss the ballot outcome and seek to improve our members work experience as well as pay, terms and conditions.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to reach any agreement for further financial improvement to the pay offer, which THG intend to pay in January, backdated to 1st April 2021. As a result of these discussions THG have made an additional offer of a 'Birthday Day Off'. This would be a rota day off, unpaid. Unions did request that this be an additional paid day's leave but THG have advised they are unable to make any additional financial commitments under the pay offer other than as previously advised.

We will endeavour to survey our members again in the New Year, and work towards securing a better pay deal for 2022/23.



Our members also provided constructive feedback on issues such as – staffing levels, health and safety, workplace culture, low pay and lack of opportunity. We have raised all of these issues with THG who have advised us that all of these issues are being addressed with their recruitment and retention plans, datix reporting and weekly meetings, as well as Just Culture training for managers, BAME diversity and inclusion groups, and a zero tolerance task and finish group, looking at violence in the workplace.

The joint TU's are reassured that THG take these matters seriously, and we will continue to monitor progress in all of these areas, during our ongoing commitment to partnership working.

We thank all of our members for your patience, whilst we negotiated on your behalf. Without your continued engagement with us, these negotiations would not be so productive.

Should you have any questions regarding any part of this pay consultation, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

GMB Member Survey: The Huntercombe Group



Posted on: 4 October 2021

GMB is continuing to pursue pay negotiations with The Huntercombe Group following on from our members rejection of the 2021 pay offer.

If you work for The Huntercombe Group, we need to understand what your current key issues and areas of concern are at work.

Please take a couple of minutes to complete this short survey.

All responses are completely confidential and will not be shared with your Manager.

This survey closes on **Monday 11th October 2021**.

You can complete the survey on line at: <https://forms.office.com/r/bvFk4iXKRX>

Following Huntercombe Group Changes Ownership, Pending Possible Merger



Posted on: 6 April 2021



Following a change in ownership to **Montreau Capital Management**, a Swiss Investment Firm, The Huntercombe Group announced they will be merging with their other healthcare property "**Active Care Group**".

The implications for frontline staff are yet to be determined, and so far only executive level posts have been affected. In a **statement** THG and ACG Chief Executive Officer Dr Sylvia Tang said:

“Transition planning is already underway to bring the companies closer together...

...None of the executive changes will impact on care for patients and residents.

"No action is required of you at this stage. We will be in touch again later in the year to update you on any changes. If you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to **contact me**."

GMB will continue to advocate on behalf of staff, and in the event of any transfer of employment it would be subject to the legal requirement to consult with staff and trade unions. You can **read more about that on the government's website**.

The Huntercombe Group Summary Of Return To Work For Those Employees Who Have Been Shielding



Posted on: 24 March 2021

The UK Government has advised that more than 3.79 million clinically extremely vulnerable people in England will be informed they are no longer advised to shield from Thursday 1 April 2021.

People are still advised to continue working from home where possible, but if people are unable to do so, employers are required by law to take steps to make workplaces COVID-19 secure and should discuss this with their employees.



THG will be writing to all those employees who are clinically vulnerable during the next few weeks to discuss the return to work.

Below is a summary of what will be the expected steps for return.

- HRBPs to call those shielding and discuss their return to work, find out if they have been vaccinated and if it is both doses they have received. Talk about how people wish to return, we can discuss phased return over a few weeks. We will also need to understand if there are any health issues that have occurred, we are not aware of.
- If colleagues want to return to work, we get the service to contact them, and they will go through a risk assessment, update them on any changes and ensure people are aware of any new infection controls measures.
- The managers will then discuss shift patterns etc and agree the return date.
- If colleagues have not had both doses of vaccination and do not wish to return just with having their first, we will chat to them about when the next dose is due and see if we can reach an agreed return date.
- If colleagues are unable to return due to health, we will require a sick note and will discuss what this means.
- Continuing to furlough maybe an option in certain circumstances and will be discussed.

Please contact you local GMB representative for guidance throughout this process.

THE HUNTERCOMBE GROUP CONFIRMS CONTINUATION OF COVID-19 SICK PAY THROUGH WINTER



Posted on: 8 October 2021

Government last week announced an additional £388 million funding for social care infection and prevention controls over winter (to March 2022). This money is intended to ensure workers in adult residential care homes are paid their normal pay should they have to take time off work due to Covid-19



related reasons. The funding will also assist care homes in restricting the movement of staff between care homes where possible, ensure there are sufficient supplies of PPE and Covid-19 tests.

GMB, RCN and Unison contacted the company with the following request:

“ You will be aware that last week the Government announced an additional £388 million funding for social care infection and prevention over winter (to March 2022).

We believe that the issue of sick pay is a fundamental health and safety matter. True infection prevention and control can only be achieved by providing ‘full occupational pay for sick absence’, as well as for isolation in accordance with government Covid-19 guidelines. This should also extend to circumstances where an individual is suffering with long covid, or adverse reactions to the covid and flu vaccinations.

We do not want staff feeling they are forced to come into work when unfit (either emotionally or physically) because they can’t afford to be away on no pay for 3 days and SSP. For example, if they are tired and stressed and having to care for difficult residents with dementia, or they are potentially infectious with a cough, cold, diarrhoea or vomiting that carries a significant risk of cross infection to other staff and serious implications for the health of residents.

Can you please confirm that you will continue to pay Covid-19 sick pay during this period? And that it will extend to all forms of sickness absence?

We have now received a response to state that Covid-19 sick pay will continue to be paid, but not extended to the other elements of our request. The full response was:

“ At the moment we have continued with the temporary COVID sickness process we have had in the place throughout the pandemic, which is full pay for day one.

In relation to the questions about all sickness absence, this was addressed in the pay claim response.

We will continue to campaign for improved sick pay.



Posted on: 11 January 2021

Bulletin available as printable pdf

GMB has requested an update from THG in light of the new variants of the COVID 19 virus.

TESTING

All services now have or have been sent (maybe not received yet) Lateral flow tests – the process should be moving to is 2x lateral flow tests each week with 1x PCR test and records of those tests are being held by each of the services. THG are still working through some of the processes as the recommendation for social care sites is not the same guidance

in hospital settings, THG will keep GMB informed of any changes required. Any essential visitors, i.e. quality team, hr team etc. will have to undertake a lateral flow test the day before attending service.

VACCINATION

How will THG assist staff to receive their vaccinations?

There are 4 (2x Scotland) out of our 12 services have received (or due to in the next week) their first vaccines, we have submitted our numbers to NHSE also for vaccines and working closely with NHSE on the delivery programme – so we are still not completely clear at this point how all this will work but we are keeping a close eye and will support any colleague who is called for a vaccine to attend.

FURLOUGH & SHIELDING

- Visiting risk assessment have been reviewed and we are following the appropriate guidance on visiting.
- Our clinically extremely vulnerable colleagues will be furloughed (or anyone who receives the notification to shield), we are offering furlough to anyone with childcare or caring responsibilities that have no other alternatives. Our pregnant colleagues in 3rd



trimester are also being encouraged to remain at home and will be furloughed with top up.

- COVID Isolation/sickness payments

-

COVID SICKNESS AND ISOLATION PERIODS

All staff will receive full pay for any period of isolation sick pay as a result of COVID19

PPE

Update on levels of PPE – no issues with PPE – our average stock days held are 97 days.

The Huntercombe group is urging all staff to take the opportunity of receiving the COVID 19 vaccination.

GMB's priority remains in keeping our members safe at work which is why throughout the Pandemic we have been regularly updating our Coronavirus Hub with all the information you need to keep yourself safe. You can check it out at: [Get It Right | The Coronavirus Hub | GMB](#)

If you have concerns that you may have contracted Covid-19 in the workplace, please record your details on the GMB Risk Register at: [COVID-19 Risk Register | GMB](#)

UNION VISITS TO YOUR WORKPLACE

It will be many months before we see a return to any form of 'normality'. Covid-19 will still present a danger to social care workers and the people you care for. As a result, it means that your GMB Union Representatives may continue to have difficulties visiting you in your workplaces.

However, we want you to know that we are still here. We are considering a variety of ways that we can get information to you and engage with you on your issues in the workplace. One way to do this is to arrange a virtual online meeting for your workplace. If you would like to book one of these please contact your local GMB representative or email PublicServices@gmb.org.uk

ARE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS CORRECT?

It is essential that your membership details are up to date so that we can ensure you are kept up to date with advice and guidance relevant to you.



You can update your details by contacting your local GMB Representative or online [using the GMB website](#).

Not a GMB Member? [Join today!](#)

Find information about [becoming a GMB Representative](#) in your workplace!

Facebook: [GMB Social Care](#)

Twitter: [@GMBSocialCare](#)

Date: 16/03/2020

Full details about Coronavirus for GMB members is available on our dedicated webpage and can be accessed using the following link:

[Enter the Coronavirus Hub](#)

The GMB is in regular communication with The Huntercombe Group regarding their Covid-19 planning, including managing staff absences from work. Information and advice is changing daily and we will



endeavor to keep you up to date with developments.

Below is a summary of some key areas you may have concerns about.

- It is expected that usual sick pay policies will apply should staff need to self-isolate. Your Home Managers will be able to advise you further on this.
- Any staff who may be vulnerable due to underlying health conditions are advised to report these to HR to ensure you receive the full support and protection needed.
- Regular updates on the changing nature of Covid-19 and the impact on your Care Home are given to your Managers who are responsible for keeping all staff updated of developments.
- Non-urgent visits to Care Homes will be restricted and this may include visits from your GMB Trade Union Representatives.

The GMB understands that this is a time where many of our members, who have already been working under immense pressures, will be expected to go over and above, more so than normal. We want to assure you that we are doing everything in our power to get you the protection and support that you need.

If you are affected by any of the above and need further guidance and support, please speak with your local GMB representative.

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Noticeboard Bulletin - 03-02-2022



Posted on: 3 February 2022

GMB, Unison and RCN met with The Huntercombe Group (THG) today (3rd February) to discuss several key issues which may be of interest to GMB members.

Sick Pay



Unions were recently informed that THG in September 2021 had moved away from Covid-19 sick pay arrangements and reverted back to the company sick pay policy.

Unions enquired why the decision had been made to move away from Government Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) advice on this issue when funding was still available until March 2022. The requirement for staff to have two unpaid days at the start of any period of sickness is a serious IPC and Health & Safety risk which forces staff to come into work ill.

They advised they would need to obtain a formal response for us on this issue.

Pay 2021

We were advised that most pay roll issues had been resolved. However, some staff are still experiencing pay errors each month but these are resolved within 24 hours.

Pension contribution issues have been resolved.

Last year's pay increase and back pay will be paid this month. Letters will be going out to staff this week. Not expecting there to be any payroll issues with the back pay.

Pay 2022

Unions advised they will shortly be submitting a pay claim for 2022.

If you're a GMB member – its not too late to have your say on your pay and complete our pay consultation survey. The responses to this survey will be used to formulate the pay claim.

GMB members can complete the survey at – gmb.org.uk/hunter22

Mandatory Covid-19 Vaccination

Following on from the Government's u-turn on mandatory vaccination, THG advised that all formal conversations with staff regarding vaccination and termination have ended.

Local managers will also be contacting all staff that left or were terminated last year as a result of the vaccine mandate to see if Government guidance allows, they want to return.

You can read GMBs response to the u-turn at – [Covid vaccine u-turn too late for thousands of care workers](#)

Not a GMB Member? [Join today!](#)



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