

**GMB**

**GMB@WORK**

# GMB - The Union for Care Workers



WHO CARES FOR OUR CARERS? GMB believe that our care workers deserve to be properly paid for the valuable service they provide. We will continue to campaign and put pressure on employers, Local Authorities and the Government to recognise and value the work that care workers do. The business model that many providers adopt rely on a low-wage workforce. Is it acceptable for people who care for some of the most vulnerable in society to be paid so poorly? The work that care workers do is important and should be acknowledged.

The logo for GMB, featuring the letters 'GMB' in a bold, white, sans-serif font on an orange square background.The logo for GMB@WORK, featuring the text 'GMB@WORK' in a white, sans-serif font on a black rectangular background.

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## TORY GOVERNMENT

The Tory Government is worsening the problem with its relentless attack on the public sector. Their imposed austerity and ideological squeeze on public spending shows no signs of abating and is having a devastating impact on one of our society's most important social responsibilities. Local Authorities are being allowed to increase council tax by 2% a year to pay for social care. This is not enough to plug the shortfall in care budgets, because of the wider squeeze on funding.

GMB have been warning about these problems for years. Some services are grinding to a halt and contracts are changing hands as providers leave. According to the Guardian newspaper, experts have said some local authorities may be forced to declare technical bankruptcy in the next two years, as councils struggle to survive the financial pressures caused by budget cuts and growing demand for social care. A survey of councils in England and Wales found that more than one in 10 believed they were in danger of failing to meet legal requirements to deliver core services. More than 40% of all councils anticipated making cuts in frontline services, rising to 71% among social care authorities. HOME CLOSURES GMB are concerned about the pace of care home closures. A growing number of homecare providers are turning their back on Council contracts. Over the past six years, the number of homes is estimated to have fallen nationally by 1,500. Data compiled by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services suggest that two-thirds of Local Authorities have seen contracts handed back or providers leaving the market. It's time for the Government to take urgent action and provide councils with proper funding before it's too late. Most recently Clova House in Ripon operated by Four Seasons closed and other providers have also recently closed homes.

## IMPACT OF THE LIVING WAGE

Employers have a legal duty to honour the Living Wage but increasingly differentials are being eroded. We know there is no incentive for care sector staff to take on additional responsibility if differentials become non-existent.



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## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Care homes differ from other workplaces because they're not only a place of work but also a home. They need to be a place to live, and meet with a legal duty to provide a safe and healthy place to work. Safe systems of work have to be devised and implemented. Staff must be trained and equipment maintained.

Your employer must:

- Assess risks to staff and visitors
  - Make appropriate health and safety arrangements which must be written down if 5 or more people are employed
  - Appoint competent persons to help them comply with health and safety law
  - Establish procedures to deal with imminent danger
  - Cooperate with other employers and self-employed people who share the work place
  - Provide information instruction and training
  - Report situations which they believe to be unsafe
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that employers carry out risk assessments, which involves carrying out a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, and considering whether they have done enough to prevent harm, or whether more action needs to be taken. The aim is to make sure that no one is injured or made ill from work activities.

## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED WITH GMB?

### JOIN GMB AND BECOMING A MEMBER

The more members there are, the more say you have as a worker.

You can join online at [www.gmb.org.uk/join](http://www.gmb.org.uk/join) or contact our Regional Office on 0345 337 7777

### DON'T RISK LOSING YOUR GMB MEMBERSHIP – SWITCH TO DIRECT DEBIT

DO YOU WANT TO BE A GMB REPRESENTATIVE IN YOUR WORKPLACE? Every workplace should have a trained GMB rep. If you don't have a rep in your workplace and you would like to find out information about paid time off for training to become a rep, please contact Rachel Dix at [Rachel.dix@gmb.org.uk](mailto:Rachel.dix@gmb.org.uk)