

## **Branch Secretary's Report, 2009 - A year of comings and goings:**

### **Reps and Stewards**

The Good news - Peter Edwardson, Penny Giles and Nathaniel Stevens all completed their Stewards training and Jayne Dyson the Health & Safety Reps course. I extend my thanks and appreciation to everyone for their input over the last year, with particular appreciation to Jayne for all the good work she has undertaken in representing us so well on the Health and Safety front. Earlier this year we were faced with the real possibility of CSSD being outsourced. Bindy Sumner took a lead and active role in representing the members potentially affected. This involved an incredible amount of time and effort, locally and regionally. I will let Bindy expand on the outcome but would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her hard work and excellent representation of our members.

We also have 2 people who are about to undergo their Steward's training – Colin Griffiths & Helen Elliott; so welcome to them both and trust they will enjoy and benefit from the training. Additionally, another new member has expressed an interest in undergoing Health and Safety Training.

The not so good news - Unfortunately, Sue Newcombe who recently completed the Steward's training has resigned from the NDHT. In addition Brian Wilmot resigned as Steward following the result of the ballot in which UNISON members voted to accept the 3 year pay deal and we lost Dave Jones who is no longer employed by the Trust. Vanessa Kinman was also unable to take up the Health and Safety Training due to other commitments.

Hopefully we can encourage more members to take up an active role and take advantage of the accredited training on offer.

### **Other Training**

We held a very well-attended Steward's Training Day on Bullying and Harassment in December in Barnstaple and were joined by reps from both Torridge and North Devon Local Government. Feedback confirmed that attendees found this both informative and enjoyable.

Bindy Sumner completed the Treasurer's course last year at Croyde and has looked after our finances extremely well over the past year.

The International Officer's course was cancelled at the last moment but, hopefully Doug Lowe, will be able to attend in the coming months. Doug has kept us all informed with news of International importance and to remind us of the need for solidarity with unions worldwide.

### **Conferences**

The National Delegate's conference held in June was attended by Pauline Brennan and Mark Harper. Branches are required to send delegates to this Conference and can be financially penalised if we do not comply. The National Health Conference was attended by Bindy Sumner.

North Devon Healthcare Trust and Devon Partnership Trust - Another busy and eventful year requiring a great deal of time and effort by the Reps involved. I am sure Bindy and Mark will report in much more detail on this shortly. My thanks to all the reps who have worked so hard on the cases, collective and individual, over the past year.

## **Regional News**

After a period with no Regional Officer we now have 2, Helen Eccles and Mike Cracknell, currently sharing the workload. Visits to the Branch by either Helen or Mike are scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month. Reps and Officers can book time with them to discuss any cases or concerns they may have.

Regional Council meets regularly throughout the year, often at Croyde Bay and the branch can send 2 delegates to represent us. Motions are submitted from branches throughout the South West and we participate in voting for or against. Visitors, approved by the branch may also attend as Observers.

There are also Regional Committees and we are fortunate to have Bindy Sumner elected on to the South West Committee, The Health Sector Committee and the National Nursing Sector. Bindy is an excellent ambassador for the branch and again we thank her for her involvement and representation.

## **Branch Office News and Events**

Sue Harte's position as Branch Co-ordinator has been secured until the end of June 2009 (with the help of further funding from Regional Office). Sue's input to the Branch has been invaluable and we shall continue to fight for her retention.

A laptop, new computer and a printer were purchased enabling more than one rep to access office equipment at any given time.

We have up-to-date information, including books on Law at Work and a host of information available for reps to access in the office.

We have held several Recruitment days within NDDH. These raised our profile and attracted new members. Thanks to everyone who has helped out with these projects and particular thanks again to Bindy, who visits the community hospitals regularly and never fails to return without newly completed membership forms.

This year we will be holding Membership Service Days, co-ordinated jointly with Region, in the main hospital and on the community sites. These will commence in March with visits to Tyrell Hospital, Ilfracombe and South Molton Hospital as the first ports of call.

## **AOB**

**The loss of the League of Friends** from the tea bar and shop, evoked a considerable response from staff and the public alike, sad to see them go. We applaud the work of Mrs Dibble and her voluntary team and echo the sentiments of many in thanking her for all the hard work and the huge amount of money the League of Friends have raised for the hospital over the years.

Both the shop and tea bar are now being temporarily run by Sodexo and the contracts are out to tender.

**Resignation** - Finally, as many of you will already know, at the last Branch Executive meeting I announced that I would be stepping down as Branch Secretary after this AGM. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has supported not only me, but the Branch as a whole during a very busy year. I also wish the new Branch Secretary every success and best wishes for the coming year. Unfortunately, the lack of facility time for officers and reps has been a

contributory factor in my resignation. I remain ever hopeful that this situation will be addressed, in the near future, with the assistance of our new Regional Officers.

Thank you

Pauline Brennan  
Branch Secretary.