



Lewisham Issue 36 (10 January 2014)

Hospital Worker

A Workers' Liberty healthworkers' bulletin

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Keep up the pressure to Stop SERCO!

As we said in the last issue, the Trust is considering outsourcing the procurement department to Serco. Outsourcing to private companies is always bad, but Serco in particular has recently shown itself to be unable to handle public sector contracts - charging the government for tagging prisoners who were dead, having to pull out of the out of hours contract in Cornwall because of incompetence. There are lots of very good reasons for not giving out contracts to this company right now.

The Trust is concerned about its reputation. As it stands the campaign to save our hospital, has done nothing but improve the Trust's reputation. We're a bigger bolder organisation now, which has doubled in size since the merger. Clinically the worst of the statistics are not showing any cause for concern, and financially, apparently, in the ways that it matters to them, the Trust is doing all right.

It'd be a real shame, from their point of view, wouldn't it to have the community demonstrating with loud brash, media attracting placards outside its board meetings? This is what we must deliver unless they back down now in their plans to outsource the procurement department to Serco. Please keep up the pressure, encourage everyone you know to sign the e-petition, to let management know that they won't get away with this. The link is: [https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/keep-](https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/keep-serxco-out-of-lewisham-and-greenwich-nhs-trust?source=facebook-share-button&time=1387448669)

[serxco-out-of-lewisham-and-greenwich-nhs-trust?source=facebook-share-button&time=1387448669](https://www.facebook.com/serxco-out-of-lewisham-and-greenwich-nhs-trust?source=facebook-share-button&time=1387448669)

The Season of Goodwill?

There's nothing more humbling than getting a present from a patient, or their relatives. During one of the most stressful times for any family, at Christmas, when a family member is seriously ill, the fact that someone in the family, amidst all the seasonal chaos finds the time, money, and inclination to show their appreciation of us is amazing. & for our part, it's fair to say that NHS workers really do pull out all the stops to try to make this time of year as good for our patients as we can. From the lengths we go to to facilitate last minute discharges, to trying to make the wards as cheery as possible, even though we too, are away from our families on Christmas Day. But while this midwinter festival brings out the human kindness in many of us, the feeling didn't influence management. Traditionally, to acknowledge the difficulties in transport over Christmas, the Trust would pay for taxis to and from work, where necessary. This year, with just a few days to go, management announced that this year staff would be expected to pay £5 towards the fairs. Fortunately the unions were united in their determination not to let management spoil the day, and management had to make a last minute humiliating u-turn, sending out an e-mail on Christmas Eve to say all taxis would be paid for in full.

LHW provides a forum for staff at the hospital to tell their stories and air their views. If you have a story to tell or an opinion to share then get in touch. The bulletin is edited by healthcare professionals. All articles are published anonymously and we will ensure confidentiality is upheld. Email: hospitalworkerbulletin@gmail.com

Nurses to become immigration cops

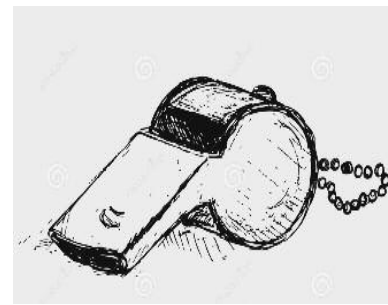
After screaming hysteria over Bulgarian and Romanian immigration, the government has announced plans to charge foreign nationals for treatment in A&E. Lord Howe suggested that he would be installing chip and pin machines in A&E departments. The BMA has argued that the system will cost more to administer than it will take in revenue with staff caught up in paperwork as they act as immigration cops. The government claim that the cost of treating foreign nationals on the NHS is £500 million a year. But others have shown the real figure is closer to £30-50 million (fullfact.org). In any case, the answer to this problem is to argue aggressively for universal healthcare across the rest of the world. If other countries had decent public healthcare then this problem would not exist. Instead, the government is attempting to break up the NHS and introduce the worst elements of private healthcare to Britain. We would be naïve to think they haven't got a few more uses for those chip-and-pin machines up their sleeves. In the past, when the government tried to turn social workers into immigration cops, Unison took a

strong stand against it, supporting any social workers who refused to comply. We need a similar campaign now. We must stand together with our brothers and sisters across the world against the international capitalist class.

Blow the whistle!

Lewisham Hospital Worker bulletin relies on contributions from workers in the hospital. Cuts and privatisation are affecting every ward and every department in the NHS. Its bad for staff and bad for patients. But don't mourn, organise! LHW offers a safe and anonymous forum for workers to raise concerns and

blow the whistle on issues affecting our NHS. Only by sharing our stories and publicising the effects of the cuts can we build a workers movement capable of saving the NHS.



*Dear Nurse Karl,
Weird weather we've been having lately. Surely nobody can deny climate change now? But what can we do about it? China needs its coal fired power stations if its economy is going to grow and in the West we are too fond of our gadgets to see a cut in our living conditions. Its human nature.
Best wishes, Janet*

Dear Janet

*Économic competition between nations has created an arms race in who can build the most coal fired power stations. But it is not human greed that is driving climate change. Global warming continues because of a lack of democracy. Democracy should mean that we have control over the decisions that affect our lives. Yet, we have no control over how our energy is produced, no control over what fuels our cars, no control over research into future technologies. All these decisions are made in the board rooms of private corporations in the interests of profit. The working-class produces all the wealth in society but we have no control over what form that wealth takes. We go to work and follow orders from our bosses, even if those orders involve destroying the basis of human life on earth. We need to live in a world where wealth is used for the benefit of all humanity, not as a means for a tiny minority to enslave the rest of us. We need economic democracy — socialism — to save the planet and create a world worth living in.
Solidarity, Karl*