

# NASGP and Unite the Union

## The future of the National Association of Sessional GPs

### **Introduction**

In July 2008 Dr. Richard Fieldhouse approached Unite/MPU with a view to finding a union that would take on the issues and concerns experienced by salaried GPs. They have found that within the BMA, the complaints of salaried GPs are being ignored, or that outcomes usually favour the GP employer rather than the sessional practitioner.

While it is appreciated that the BMA has worked on behalf of sessional GPs, NASGP members feel unsupported in a number of regards.

Following an approach to Unite/Medical Practitioners Union, there has been a meeting with NASGP, matters of concern to NASGP members have been discussed and Unite has looked at some typical examples of issues raised by NASGP members.

### **Problems facing NASGP**

BMA negotiates for sessional GPs and has a model contract for salaried GPs. NASGP feels that the outcome of these negotiations has not satisfied issues raised by sessional or salaried GPs.

BMA does not provide satisfactory representation.

NASGP members require individual contractual support regionally.

With a predominantly female membership, practitioners can feel disadvantaged and male dominated when agreeing/signing contracts.

NASGP members feel they are easily bullied into poor terms and conditions.

### **What has NASGP been doing about this?**

NASGP has sought alternative sources of representation including approaching Unite/MPU.

### **What is Unite?**

Unite is the largest trade union in the United Kingdom with a health sector of some 100,000 members ranging across a wide spectrum of health professionals. The Unite health sector has members regulated by eight of the nine statutory regulators, the exception being chiropractors.

### **What can Unite offer NASGP? - Some proposals.**

- 1. NASGP could recommend to its members that Unite is the Union of first choice for its members to join as individuals.** In which case NASGP members would be joined into the Medical Practitioners' Union Section of the Unite health sector and would need to pay NASGP subscriptions and Unite subscriptions.

**or**

- 2. NASGP members could be consulted on a closer relationship. Should a ballot of NASGP members result in the NASGP becoming part of Unite, the following would be possible –**

- NASGP to sit within the existing doctors' organisation in the health sector of Unite.
- NASGP members to belong to a national branch thus remaining an identifiable entity in the health sector.
- There will be a designated officer for the NASGP.
- NASGP members will have access to advice and representation from our regional industrial officers based across the ten regions of the union, including representation and support in the design of contracts. Officer training would be given if required.
- NASGP members would have representation by lawyers at fitness to practice hearings according to the Unite arrangements for representation of statutorily regulated members.

- Unite would facilitate the activities of the NASGP according to the “Groups & Associations” agreement in the health sector.
- NASGP would have access to lobbying on specific issues.
- We acknowledge that NASGP have salaried officers and consideration would be given to these staff, their roles and status, should any transfer to Unite/MPU take place.
- NASGP would have access to agreed research projects – the health sector has a designated researcher.
- Advice and representation on contractual issues.
- Press and communications resource – the health sector has an excellent press and communications officer.
- A designated section on the Health Sector part of the Unite web site – that would be linked to the NASGP web site.
- \*Under either 1. or 2. above, members would be subject to the Unite subscription rates – see **appendix A**.

## Appendix A.

Membership categories	Weekly rate	Monthly rate	Quarterly	Half Yearly	Annual rate
Full time (members aged 21 or over who normally work 20 hrs or more each week)	£2.30	£9.95	£29.85	£59.70	£119.40
Part time (members aged 21 or over who normally work less than 20 hrs per week)	£1.33	£5.78	£17.34	£34.68	£69.36
Young (members aged under 21)	£1.16	£4.98	£14.94	£29.88	£59.76
Training First Year (members in apprenticeships or full time occupational professional or government training schemes)	£0.51	£2.21	£6.63	£13.26	£26.52
Training until training period is finished (members in apprenticeships or full time occupational professional or government training schemes)	£1.33	£5.78	£17.34	£34.68	£69.36
Student (members in full-time higher or further education)					£10.00
Retired (permanently retired or permanently unable to work on medical grounds or excused contributions over 24 months and not working)					£10.00

The Political Fund is: weekly 13p and monthly 58p, annually £6.90 (retired members who are contracted out pay £3.10).