

Solidarity with resident doctors A living wage for all health staff Save our NHS

Introduction

Doctors in Unite the Union support resident doctors fighting to restore their living standards and conditions after long-term government attacks.

A doctor qualifying in 1985 after five years study had paid no tuition fees. A doctor qualifying this year has paid £46,250 fees, with average debt £50,000-£90,000.

In 1985 qualifying doctors were offered free hospital accommodation. They could plan on buying a house, the average price being three times a starting salary.

Today there is no free hospital accommodation, the average house is 9.6 times the starting salary, and with no security of where the next job will be, buying a house is hard to contemplate, even if it was affordable.

Pension contributions have gone up from 6% to 9.8%.

Despite these massively increased costs, starting salary has fallen (in 2025 figures) by over £2,000 a year since 1985.

No wonder there were an estimated 15,000–23,000 early leavers, soon after graduation, between September 2022–23, with estimated replacement cost of £1.6–2.4 billion, potentially rising to £5 billion/year without government intervention.

All NHS workers need a pay rise

Resident doctors are coming under ferocious attack from the Labour government, senior NHS management and the billionaire-owned media.

At the same time, health workers on Agenda for Change pay scales have rejected Labour's 3.6% pay increase in consultative ballots. RPI inflation (including housing costs) was 4.4% in June. Agenda for Change NHS workers face a real terms pay cut! Every NHS employee has a right to a decent standard of living and decent conditions at work.

Doctors in Unite believe co-ordinated industrial action between the BMA and other health unions would maximise pressure on the government to increase pay and NHS funding.

Fighting to save our NHS

That's the best way to end the staffing crisis, responsible for long waiting lists, cancelled appointments and treatments, causing so much misery and suffering.

Yet thousands of NHS jobs are threatened by the Labour government. Doctors are facing unemployment instead of treating patients.

Privatisation drains money from the NHS, often to overseas tax havens. Big business profits and super-rich wealth has swelled while workers' living standards and public services are squeezed. This must change!

Fighting to increase all health workers' pay, fully funded by government, is a fight to save our NHS.