

PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS

Royal College of Nursing

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is the world's largest professional organisation and trade union for nursing staff, with members in the NHS, independent and third sectors. RCN Scotland promotes patient and nursing interests by campaigning on issues that affect members, shaping national health policies, representing members on practice and employment issues and providing members with learning and development opportunities. With over 40,000 members in Scotland, the RCN is the voice of nursing.

RCN Position

The RCN strongly opposed the Trade Union Act 2016.

Facility time

In Scotland, within the Partnership for Practice (Scotland) NHS Scotland has shown practice consequences

The Department of Health's review of union facility time echoed the findings of the RCN's research, based on analysis of the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey, which found cost savings associated with union representation. It concluded that union activity is associated with:

lower voluntary exit rates, saving £72-£143 million annually in recruitment costs, and lower dismissal rates, saving £107-£213 million annually in recruitment costs

lower rates of employment tribunals, saving the Government £22-£43 million annually

lower rates of workplace related injuries, saving employers £126-£371 million annually and

lower incidences of workplace-related illness, saving employers £45-£207 million annually.

Facility time for union representatives is linked to increased productivity, crucial in the NHS for delivering high quality, cost effective care.

Trade unions invest in their representatives bringing skills, knowledge and experience to the workplace and to partnership. This is a cost effective way of developing practice and managing organisations. Without this, alternative provision would be costly to employers and the tax payer.

Improving patient care

Health care employees, union representatives and employers share a common goal to improve services and deliver high quality patient care.