



## Ballot thresholds

Provisions in the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 that the Bill seeks to amend contain appropriate checks and balances which recognise the imbalance of power between employee and employer. Industrial action is only ever proposed as a last resort, when negotiations have not resulted in an outcome that is considered acceptable or fair.

To date the RCN has not authorised industrial action on behalf of its members. Up to 1995 industrial action was not supported by our Rules. After a change in the Rules in 1995 industrial action could be authorised by RCN Council as long as it was not detrimental to the interests or wellbeing of patients or clients.

The RCN's experience is that members have requested industrial action in response to concerns about their department, their membership or their ability to resolve issues. The ballot threshold is set high to ensure that industrial action is only taken in exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to resolve an issue that is of significant importance to the membership.