

Do you work in social work or social care?

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UNISON is the largest union for staff in social work and social care

Our members work in all sectors and specialisms: social workers, residential and day care workers, OTs, home carers, support workers, supervisors and managers, professional, admin and clerical support staff. UNISON represent members in councils, health, the community, voluntary and private sectors.

UNISON is fighting austerity

All workers in social care are well aware of the impact of austerity on the lives of vulnerable people. Social workers and social carers have bigger caseloads, shorter timescales, and greater demands leading to greater risks.

UNISON campaigns for bigger social work/social care budgets

We work to protect social work budgets and for investment in social services, and for recognition that social work and social care workers need greater resources to deliver the quality of services that they are committed to.

UNISON lobby to strengthen social work and social care

We promote social work and social care services and challenge negative press. We fight job losses. We highlight that local social work services have been asked to take on higher risk cases without additional resources. Managers are asked to produce more care hours out of existing staff. Voluntary and private sector contractors have been squeezed to deliver more for less. The workforce is getting tired, stressed and increasingly concerned about the risk of errors and misjudgements. We lobby all political parties to commit to strengthening social work and social care in Scotland.

UNISON challenges conditions which cause the recruitment crisis in social care

This is a sector where it is still possible to help make a difference to people's lives and gain real job satisfaction. UNISON challenges the low wages, high workloads and unsocial hours which combine to make a career in social care less attractive. Social workers and social carers play a vital role in all our lives.

UNISON members and Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

We support members in discipline and grievance procedures. Social care workers are regulated by the SSSC and most are required to be [registered](#) with them. This body can investigate complaints and impose conditions on your registration, suspend you or strike you off the register meaning you cannot work in that role anywhere. UNISON has trained stewards, officials and lawyers who support members through these procedures including representation at hearings.

www.unison-scotland.org/social-work

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Health and education suffer when social work is weak

UNISON is the public services union. We represent NHS staff and nurses, local government workers, education staff, police staff, community and voluntary sector. We have an unrivalled overview of our public services. Politicians compete for votes to protect 'schools and hospitals'. However both of these suffer when social work is weak. UNISON brings us all together to challenge governments to see the big picture: cuts in social work and social care mean less support to families where children's school attendance and educational attainment is a concern. Increasing charges for older people's day care centres and closing centres for people with learning disabilities increases the likelihood of hospital admissions. Reductions in care in the community services place greater pressure on unpaid carers. Failure to properly resource home care services leads to delays in people getting out of hospital and to risks being taken when discharges take place without adequate support being available leading to re-admission to hospital.

UNISON Social Work Issues Group

UNISON Scotland organise a Social Work Issues Group (SWIG) with social work reps from branches across Scotland. We respond to government consultations, and regularly meet Scottish Government ministers and key civil servants to ensure your voice is heard. We also promote social work and social care's vital role to the media and we challenge negative press.

We also run campaigns on a range of issues relevant to our social work members. We produced a Manifesto for Social Work. We have taken the lead on Direct Payments. We provide legal views on court decisions. We issued a Workload Management and Supervision Negotiating Resource and a Guide for Social Work Practitioners, Keeping Safe in the Workplace. We produced a report on the children of asylum seekers. UNISON persuades councils to become Ethical Care Councils by adopting our charter which demands quality, dignified care; a stable, well paid and trained workforce; and commissioning services on the basis of the aims of the Charter, insisting contractors pay the living wage. Further info: unison-scotland.org/socialwork