Care

Over 80% of care staff could be forced into work when ill by ‘poverty’ sick pay

Union launches campaign for care staff to be given full pay when sick, after hard-hitting survey

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GMB UNION

GMB, the union for social care staff, is calling for social care workers to be given full pay when sick, after publishing findings of its recent survey of thousands of care workers across the UK.

The survey of almost 1,000 social care workers showed that a shocking 81% of the respondents across the UK would be forced into work if they became ill on Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

It also showed the damning statistic that a further 80% would be forced to consider borrowing off friends and family or taking on debt to make ends meet.

Currently most of the UK's social care workforce are only entitled to SSP when they become ill - set at just £95.85 per week.

This means some social care workers can be as much as £250 out of pocket per week as a result of being put on SSP.

The Government's COVID-19 guidance for care staff suggests that sick staff should adhere to strict self-isolation, staying away from the workplace.

GMB has launched its Care Full Pay campaign on the back of the findings and is calling on care providers and Government to act to ensure full sick pay is introduced for care staff.

Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer said:

"The issue is this - workers in a healthcare setting on statutory sick pay is an infection control risk. Most social care staff simply cannot afford to be sick under the current SSP arrangements.

"They are being presented with a terrible choice and getting penalised with poverty sick pay just for doing the right thing.

"The findings clearly show a trend across social care - that the Statutory Sick Pay system represents a significant risk, heightened during a pandemic.

"It's time for the Government and care providers to take action and provide the full sick pay that will ensure care staff aren't forced into contemplating working whilst sick."

Press office

Member requiring help?

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