



GMB launch official dispute with Welsh Ambulance over unqualified military help

12 Nov 2021

GMB union has launched a formal dispute with the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust (WAST), citing bullying and harassment from the management over underqualified military help.

Clinical staff have raised concerns surrounding the scale of military involvement in Emergency call outs.

Initially the Welsh Government pledged military support for 'lower acuity, non-emergency' work.

“ Paramedics in Wales fear they cannot do their job safely due to being forced to work with military personnel on ambulances, union warns <https://t.co/XjaDG0PJTV>

— BBC News (UK) (@BBCNews) November 12, 2021

But trained ambulance crews have been split as untrained military personnel are used to try and plug gaps in the service.

Ambulance staff must undertake 'blue light training' to be able to drive an ambulance on emergency status, training that is not extended to military personnel who are instead given a two-day familiarisation course.

When members have raised concerns, management have threatened them with redundancies and registration status.

“ GMB Union have sent these letters, one to the Welsh Minister for Health and Social Care and another to Chief Executive of Welsh Ambulance. Threats to the mental health of GMB members along with their registration & jobs will not be tolerated. [@KellyRed777](#) [@RehanaAzam](#) [@RHarrisonGMB](#) pic.twitter.com/ZEwxNgdRYc

— Nathan holman (@NathanGmbunion) [November 11, 2021](#)

Most paramedics already believe that their status is under threat, with non blue light trained personnel unequipped for the job.

GMB union has formally lodged a dispute with the trust and written to the Welsh Government minister to raise its concerns about the extent of the Military involvement.

The union believes that the move further drives down staff morale, with the proportion of trust staff off due to stress and ill health over 11% and rising.

The dispute comes as GMB members are due to vote on the latest pay deal to come from the Welsh Government, with the ballot due to open on Monday.

“ The post Use of army to support Welsh Ambulance Service is 'endangering the public', says union appeared first on . <https://t.co/3GSdg555FH>

— Premier Radio Wrexham (@RadioWrexham) [November 12, 2021](#)

Nathan Holman, GMB Regional Organiser said:

“Let's be clear, threats to our members will not be tolerated.

“Our members mental health and their safety is our number one priority, and we will not accept the bullying and cajoling from the management at WAST.

“We do not object to the military assisting in low acuity, non-emergency calls, but we cannot turn a blind eye, unqualified personnel assisting in emergency situations.



“ Full support and solidarity @GMBWSW Welsh ambulance workers, under threat of losing jobs and registration, for daring to speak out about risks to health & safety + impact on mental health & well being at work. Bullying and harassment, will not be tolerated in our health service. <https://t.co/UmQI01aedW>

— Shavanah Taj (@shavtaj) November 11, 2021

“You wouldn’t bring a postman in to work with a GP or a midwife, so why would you accept an unqualified individual working alongside a paramedic.

“You cannot use underqualified staff to plug the holes in the service.

“At the end of the day it’s not just our members jobs that are at risk, but the users of the service too.”

