



## Department of Health protest over 'dangerous' ambulance working age

16 Jul 2019

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GMB, the union for ambulance workers, is staging a protest outside the Department of Health today calling for the ambulance worker pension age to be brought in line with the police, fire brigade and armed forces

Paramedics and ambulance workers will demonstrate outside the Department of Health, in Victoria Street, at 4pm.

In a recent survey of GMB ambulance members, almost 99% said the job will be too demanding for them to carry out properly when they hit the current retirement age of 68.

**“ I’m worried - I am not sure that we will be physically able to work 12 hour shifts at that age. This job is physically and mentally demanding and is getting more so as each year passes.**

### Paramedic answer in GMB survey

GMB is campaigning to have their retirement age reduced to 60 in line with other emergency services.

The survey also showed:

- 95.93% don't think they will be able to continue in their current role until their pensionable age.



- 98.81% think that their job will be too demanding (physically and mentally) the older they become.
- 87.90% think there will not be the opportunity for redeployment if they are unable to continue in their role.
- 99.49% would like to see a reduction in their pension age.
- 98.81% would support GMB in calling on government to reduce the pensionable age of ambulance workers to 60 years.

**A South Western Ambulance Paramedic said:**

“How do you reassure the 59-year-old heart attack victim that the two 67-year-old ambulance personnel can safely carry him downstairs?”

**Another Paramedic, said:**

“I’m worried - I am not sure that we will be physically able to work 12 hour shifts at that age.

“This job is physically and mentally demanding and is getting more so as each year passes.

“Something has to give if the Government expects us to work until 68.”

Other ambulance workers described the current retirement ages as ‘very dangerous’ and said the idea of paramedics working until they were in their late 67 was ‘ludicrous’.  
[Contact GMB Press Office for more survey responses]

**Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer, said:**

“Our members work desperately hard saving lives – but they just can’t keep it going until they are 68.

“They know it’s impossible and could risk the lives of their patients

“Meanwhile they worry their health will deteriorate and they will be forced to leave and find alternative employment.

**“ Our members work desperately hard saving lives – but they just can’t keep it going until they are 68. It’s not fair on our life saving ambulance staff and the Government must review the situation.**

**Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer**

“Many fear that they will be forced to retire early, taking a reduced pension and ultimately being in a poorer medical condition than the person they are treating.

“It’s not fair on our life saving ambulance staff and the Government must review the situation.”

