



OT steward induction pack

A useful BAOT/UNISON guide for new OT stewards



Updated 2011

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

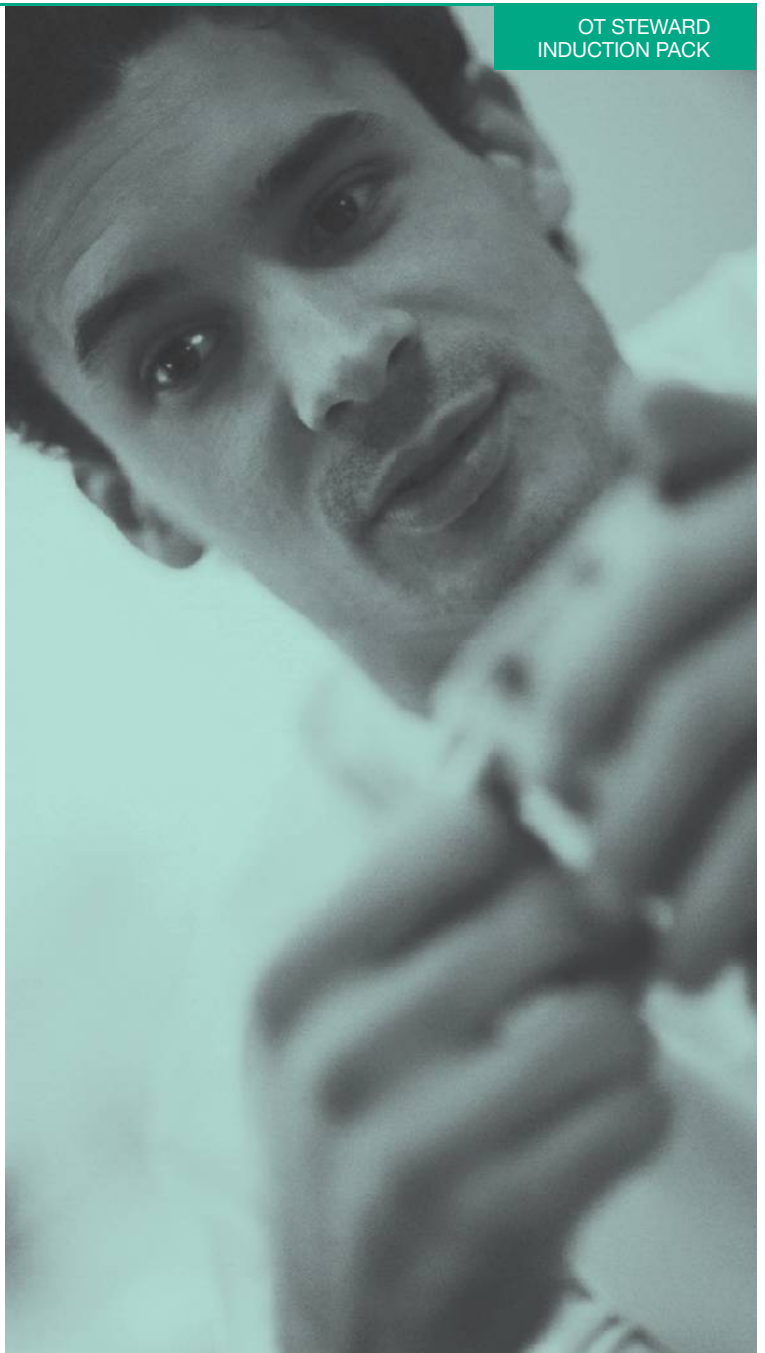
OT STEWARD
INDUCTION PACK

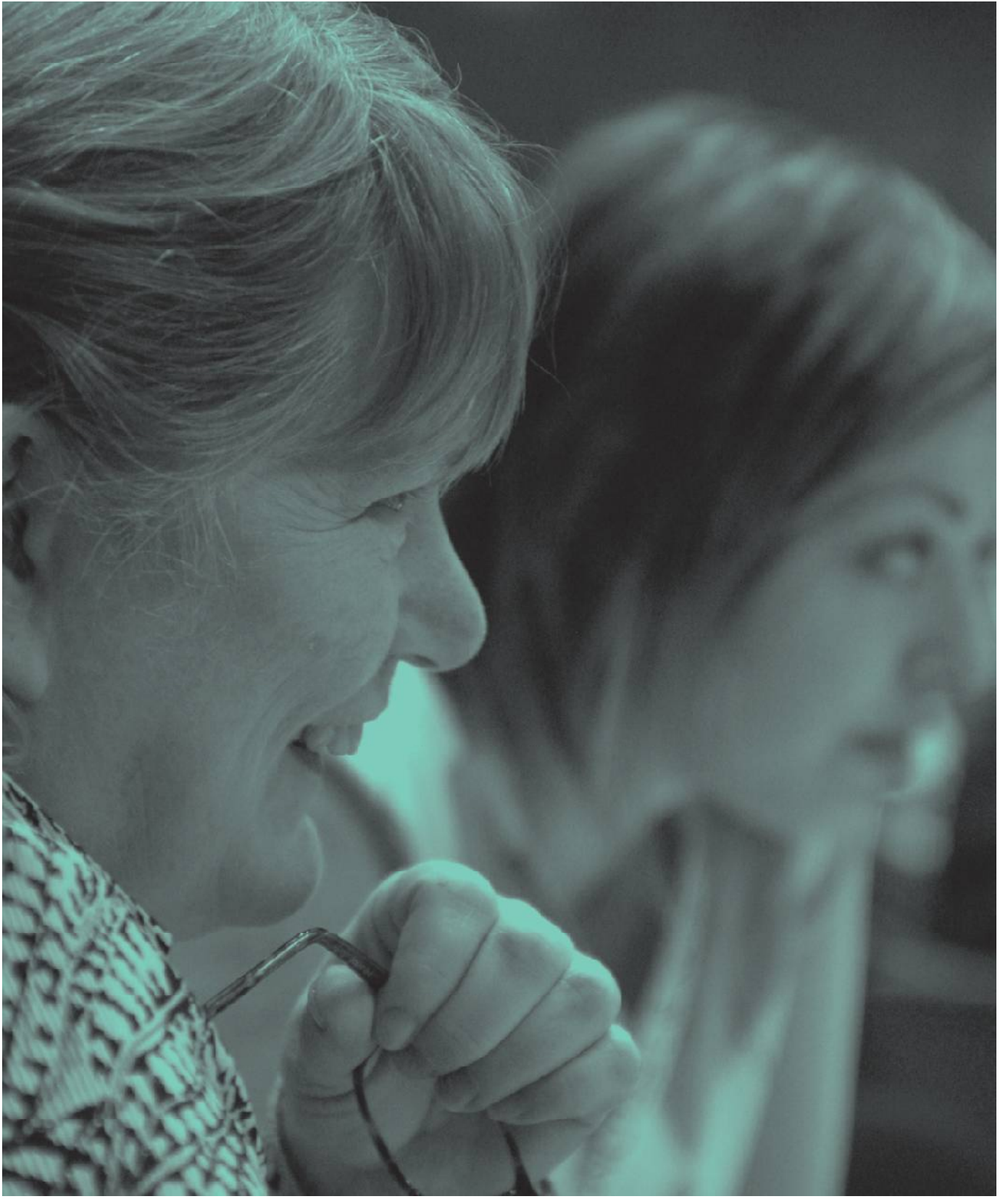
OT stewards play a vital role in providing occupational therapy staff with a voice in the workplace. Without stewards there would be no one there to act as the link between members and the union and to organise and support people in the workplace.

This induction pack provides useful information for new OT stewards including guidance to help you in your new role.

This pack is intended to supplement the information provided in the accredited stewards' training course and the UNISON stewards' and workplace representatives' handbook.

Your local branch should be your first point of contact for advice and support and a place where you can access the latest information, forms and leaflets to share with your fellow BAOT/UNISON members.





Understanding the BAOT/UNISON relationship

UNISON provides the industrial relations support for the British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT). All BAOT members are members of UNISON, the UK's largest public sector trade union except those solely employed in private practice or members based overseas.

The British Association of Occupational Therapists is an independent listed trade union and the College of Occupational Therapists is a wholly owned subsidiary body of BAOT formed to provide professional services. The British Association of Occupational Therapists has contracted out its trade union services to UNISON since 1993.

The agreement between BAOT and UNISON ensures that, in addition to the full range of member and professional services offered by the Association and College, members also have access to a wide range of industrial relations services provided by UNISON. There is also a nationwide network of accredited occupational therapy stewards and health and safety representatives appointed to help members with trade union problems.

UNISON has 1.3 million members in the public services, three-quarters of whom are women. Currently UNISON has around 50% of all NHS staff (420,000) in membership. In local authorities, UNISON has 800,000 members.

Membership of BAOT/UNISON provides the following benefits:

- negotiation of pay, terms and conditions of employment locally and nationally
- representation for members in grievances, disciplinarys, reorganisations and other casework
- access to support from trained and accredited BAOT/UNISON stewards and other workplace representatives
- opportunity to participate in professional and representational structures
- access to UNISON Direct (0845 355 0845), UNISON's helpline
- expert legal help not just with work issues, but for you and your family outside the workplace including: personal injury, landlord disputes, criminal law representation and a free wills service.
- UNISON Welfare, our unique charity, offers advice on issues like debt and domestic abuse and can also help with financial assistance through our hardship fund.
- UNISON Learning and Organising Services offer a wide range of learning opportunities, which range from basic skills through to professional level qualifications. It opens the door to more and better training through a range of free

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courses and a partnership with the Open University.

- a range of UNISONplus member benefits including insurance, mortgages, loans, savings plans and a credit card, plus discounts

on travel, holiday packages, leisure activities and a range of other offers.

For more information on these and other benefits go to: www.unison.org.uk/benefits





What do stewards do?

Being a steward enables you to represent your views and needs, and those of your OT colleagues, during the many changes that take place in your workplace. By being a steward, you can influence the way in which those changes take place, and, in some cases, whether they happen at all.

Stewards talk to members, distribute information and get their views; recruit new members; help members get advice on workplace problems and act as spokesperson or representative for their workgroup. With experience, you will be able to represent members in grievance or disciplinary meetings and be involved in high level negotiating – but you can do as much or as little as you want.

Training is provided directly by UNISON and through the TUC. All trade union training is accredited. You can use these

credits towards eligibility for further or higher education and you are entitled to paid release to carry out your duties.

OT stewards are BAOT members and UNISON accredited stewards. Once you are elected and trained, you can represent BAOT and UNISON members or just BAOT members. You may represent OT staff across your whole employer, or just your immediate workplace.

In workplaces where there is no OT steward, members can email baotstewards@unison.co.uk to find out more about how they can nominate an OT steward and gain access to valuable information and support. There is also an information sheet for recruiting new OT stewards available to download from the UNISON section of the BAOT website at www.baot.org.uk – click on 'Members Resources'.

What support is out there for me?

All stewards are part of a UNISON branch. Your local UNISON branch will be your first point of contact for advice and support. They will assist you to access stewards' training and you will receive support from more experienced stewards, branch officers and paid officials. It also gives you the opportunity to be involved in the organisation and running of your local branch.

Colleagues, workplace contacts and more experienced stewards, health and safety reps and branch officers will all help you. Your regional organiser, regional education officer, women's officer and branch support teams are based in the regional office and can be approached for assistance through your branch secretary.

Your branch

Connect with your branch. Keep in regular contact with your local UNISON branch and keep them informed of what you are doing. They can keep you up-to-date with the latest local and national news and information. Your branch can also help you to get further involved in UNISON structures, for example attending UNISON conferences or sitting on UNISON committees.

Your regional OT stewards' forum

Attend your regional OT Stewards' Forum - this is a chance for OT stewards in your region to meet together and discuss local issues. If you want

to know more about meetings in your region please contact your UNISON regional office or email baotstewards@unison.co.uk.

Join the national OT stewards e-network

Become part of the OT stewards' email network. Contact baotstewards@unison.co.uk to sign up for regular email updates on key issues for occupational therapy staff and stewards.

Please complete the questionnaire at the end of this induction pack to ensure your details are up-to-date on the national OT stewards' network. This information will also be used to help develop stewards' structures and closer working with BAOT at local and regional levels.

Annual national OT stewards' training seminar

Come along to the national OT stewards' training seminar – each year we run a seminar so you can meet other stewards, discuss issues and learn new things to help you in your role. Details and application forms are sent out to UNISON branches and via the OT stewards' email network.

Resources and briefings for OT stewards

Guidance briefings developed specifically for OT stewards are available on the UNISON section of the BAOT website at www.baot.org.uk.

You will need your BAOT membership number to log-in. For a list of some of the documents available, please see the chapter on 'Other Useful Publications'.

In addition, you should take the time to look at the resources and briefings on the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk.

The UNISON documents database is home to many UNISON-produced publications, articles and documents. The database is found at www.unison.org.uk/resources/docs_list

UNISON produces guides and information sheets on negotiating issues, including a monthly news sheet called *Bargaining Update* which is available from the Bargaining Support section of the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk/bargaining/index.asp

You'll also find free online employment advice for members and the public at our website www.troubleatwork.org.uk

UNISON's magazine *InFocus* is posted to all stewards, activists and reps every month and will keep you up to date with all the latest news and developments.

All registered UNISON stewards with a valid email address on their membership record are sent *eFocus* - a weekly email newsletter.

All members, including stewards, should also receive *U magazine*. *U magazine* goes out four times a year to all UNISON's 1.3 million members. Make sure your BAOT colleagues let their branch know of any changes to their contact or employment details so that they don't miss out on receiving *U magazine* and other important information.

BAOT members can also sign up via

the BAOT website to receive COT's *Highlight*, a twice-monthly e-mail bulletin of occupational news to inform your practice. To receive *Highlight* direct to your inbox go to www.baot.org.uk/members/countries/introduction/intro.php

BA/COT briefings and publications on a range of professional issues can be found on the BAOT website under '[Members Resources](#)'.

Each month UNISON also publishes a special news page in *OTnews* which is sent to all BAOT members.

Training

All new stewards are encouraged to go on an induction course and on a course for handling grievances and disciplinaries. The induction training course for new stewards includes the role and rights of a steward, recruitment and retention, equal opportunities, UNISON's services and structures and dealing with difficult situations. Stewards will receive Employment Relations Act (ERA) accreditation once they have attended a course.

UNISON offers a wide range of free seminars, workshops and training days across the UK. For more information on the latest training in your area, including training for new stewards, please talk to one of your local UNISON learning reps, or ask for a copy of the regional education programme, available from your branch education co-ordinator or branch secretary or from the regional education officer.

Details of some regional and national training events can also be found in UNISON's Training Diary here www.unison.org.uk/events/training.asp

Some training on professional issues is

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provided free of charge by BAOT/COT to BAOT activists. For details see the events section of the BAOT website.

UNISON stewards' and workplace representatives' handbook

Make sure you get a copy of the UNISON stewards' and workplace representatives' handbook. Copies are available from your branch or can be downloaded from the Bargaining Zone on the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk/bargaining/index.asp. The handbook provides lots of useful info on your role as a steward, including dealing with members' problems, working with your employer and your rights as a UNISON rep.

Facility time

When you become a steward it is important that you make sure you negotiate time within your working hours to undertake your steward duties. Your branch can help you do this. Local agreements can include dedicated facility time or paid release set aside for union reps to carry out union activities.

As a steward you need and have some rights to paid time off for trade union duties, for training and for union activities. Your rights come from the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act (1992). Conciliation service ACAS can give practical guidance on time off and a basic guide can be found at www.acas.org.uk

Influencing via your joint staff-side committee

Most employers will have well-established structures for conducting negotiation and consultation. These should include a bargaining committee,

made up of equal numbers of seats for management and trade unions.

The trade union side of the committee is sometimes referred to as a joint staff-side committee.

It is important for all unions to meet together, to co-operate and try, whenever possible, to agree a common approach.

In the NHS, BAOT is often entitled to a seat on relevant staff-side committees, in addition to any UNISON seat/s.

Recruitment

One of a steward's most vital jobs is recruitment. Organised workplaces with a high density of membership give BAOT and UNISON greater influence with local and national management and employers.

As a BAOT steward you are encouraged to recruit occupational therapy staff to become members of BAOT.

All OT staff can become a member of the British Association of Occupational Therapists. All BAOT members are also members of UNISON - other than those outside the UK or those who are solely self-employed in private practice. For lecturers in higher education UNISON has agreed joint membership arrangements with UCU and EIS to provide an industrial relations service.

Face-to-face recruiting is the most effective way to attract new members. This means that existing members share with others what they know and like about their union.

Stewards often distribute BAOT recruitment information to existing and potential members in their local area, to encourage greater recruitment to BAOT so that occupational therapists

and occupational therapy support workers can enjoy the full benefits of their professional organisation as well as the valuable added benefits of UNISON membership, representation and support.

Ask your UNISON regional office for copies of the latest BAOT recruitment leaflets/materials or contact the marketing department at BAOT HQ. You may like to think about making this information available to all new staff as part of their induction day.

If you are interested in recruiting non-occupational therapy staff then UNISON branches develop their own recruitment strategies and carry materials that help promote UNISON.

For tips on recruiting go to www.unison.org.uk/recruitment/index.asp

Associate members

BAOT defines associate members as 'those engaged in work within the recognised definition of occupational therapy but ineligible for registration with the Health Professions Council, and supervised in this work by a person who is eligible for professional membership.'

Recruitment of associate members to BAOT is a key goal for both the Association and UNISON. In a climate when support staff are being required to take on greater responsibilities and are being regulated, it is vital that they have access to the support and protection of a trade union. As well as being full members of UNISON, associate members are entitled to the same benefits as full professional members, including professional advice, indemnity insurance; special rates for the COT annual conference and study days and full voting rights.

Student members

In the past, occupational therapy students have had their membership to BAOT paid for by their training institution. However, many occupational therapy students are now being required to personally pay for their BAOT membership package, making OT student recruitment an important issue for both BAOT and UNISON.

BAOT have developed a useful flyer to aid student recruitment, called 'Get Connected – info on BAOT Student Membership'. You may find this flyer useful when promoting student membership to any occupational therapy students who may attend local recruitment events, induction days, open days, etc. to ensure they can access the full benefits of their professional organisation as well as the valuable added benefits of UNISON membership, representation and support.

Recruiting OT stewards

If you are looking at recruiting new OT stewards in your workplace or asking someone to job-share the steward's role with you, then download a copy of the 'Become a Steward' leaflet from the UNISON section of the BAOT website or email baotstewards@unison.co.uk. This leaflet gives information on the benefits and procedure for electing BAOT stewards in the workplace and can be used for stewards' recruitment or given to any OT departments who do not currently have a workplace rep.

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Understanding UNISON structures



Branch

Every BAOT/UNISON member belongs to a local branch which is run by a committee consisting of fellow members elected to take on different roles.

Region

Branches are grouped into 12 regions which cover the UK. Each UNISON region has its own head office and a regional council made up of delegates from all branches in the region. It also has a regional health committee and a regional local government committee which represent members working in those sectors.

UNISON conferences

Every year delegates from all over the UK take part in conference debates to identify UNISON's campaigning priorities and policies. Every UNISON branch elects reps to attend and vote on behalf of their local branch members.

Conferences include health conference and local government conference, as well as the national delegate conference which is the union's ruling body.

National Service Group Executive Committees

Members can stand for election to UNISON's national service group executives which are made up of members from different sectors (such as the Health SGE and Local Government SGE). Service Group Executives help to decide policies and activities to support members.

Health Occupational Groups

UNISON has a range of committees representing various occupational groupings. Committee members are elected via their regional health committee. The Occupational Groups can submit motions to UNISON's health conference and elect representatives to the Health SGE.

National Social Services Forum

The National Social Services Forum is the key committee where the views of UNISON's social care workers are represented. Each UNISON region appoints a rep to attend that committee. It provides advice to the Local Govt SGE and guides responses to government consultation documents.

Some UNISON regions also run regional social services forum meetings.

Regional OT Stewards' Forum

Regional OT Stewards' Forums are a chance for OT stewards from both the NHS and local authorities to meet together and discuss current issues in their local area/region. Each regional forum also nominates two representatives (one from health and one from local government) to attend the National OT Panel.

These forums may also choose to elect steward representatives to the local BAOT regional committee and BAOT country board.

National OT Panel

The National OT Panel is a key discussion body made up of nominated OT stewards from each UNISON region who come together

to share information and inform UNISON's workplan on OT issues. Representatives from the Panel also sit on COT Council and NHS Staff Council and ensure that issues are raised jointly within BAOT and UNISON, and elsewhere. As the Panel is a discussion forum rather than a formal decision-making body it may choose to refer specific issues to UNISON committees or BAOT Council where appropriate.

UNISON and BAOT seats on negotiating bodies

In the NHS, BAOT is recognised as a trade union for collective bargaining purposes. This means that in most NHS organisations BAOT are entitled to a seat on relevant bodies and negotiating committees at NHS employer level, in addition to existing UNISON seats.

In local government, BAOT members are represented on official structures by UNISON negotiators.

Understanding BAOT structures

Council

The British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT) is the professional body and trade union for occupational therapy staff in the UK with a strong, country-based regional and local membership structure. The regional structure comprises 12 geographical regions. The Council of the BAOT/COT takes decisions about the management of the organisation. Council members are also responsible and accountable for the direction and functioning of the organisation.

All elected members of council are directors of the two companies limited by liability which make up the British Association of Occupational Therapists Limited (BAOT) and the College of Occupational Therapists Limited (COT). They are registered as directors at Companies House and have the full responsibilities of directors.

The UNISON national officer provides a report to Council at their four meetings each year on the work programme being undertaken under the BAOT/UNISON agreement. There is also an industrial relations seat, elected by the National OT Panel. The BAOT/COT chief executive is secretary of the BAOT the union.

Functional boards

These boards are made up of members and cover the key strategic areas of activity of the BAOT/COT. Education and learning, professional practice,

research and development and membership and external affairs make up the four areas with each board chaired by a council member elected by BAOT members.

Country boards

The country boards were established to take forward devolved issues in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, while remaining an integral part of the BAOT/COT. By serving on their country board, members have the opportunity to influence their professional body and government policy, push forward issues and support their colleagues in the profession. There is an industrial relations seat for an OT steward on each of the four boards.

The English Board advises the College on member services, trends in OT practice, employment and work situations. Members in each of the eight regions in England elect a representative to sit on the English board. The representatives serve on the Board for a maximum of three years. The BAOT/UNISON member is nominated by English stewards. The Board meets four times a year for members to report on the activities in their region over the quarter. One member is elected to represent the board on Council.

The Northern Ireland Country Board and **Wales Country Board** each have eight members elected by the each country's membership. One member from each board is elected to represent

the board at Council reporting on the issues affecting each country. The BAOT/UNISON member is nominated by Northern Ireland or Welsh stewards respectively. The Boards meet four times a year to discuss policy and issues relating to Northern Irish and Welsh members.

The Scotland Country Board has eight members. The manager, learning disabilities/mental health, social care, health, council and educator members are elected by the membership in Scotland. The BAOT/UNISON member is nominated from Scotland's OT stewards. An additional BAOT/UNISON steward is in attendance so there is one steward from both health and local government. The Quality Improvement Scotland chair of the Practice Development Network for OT's is also in attendance to support practice issues. The Board meets four times a year to discuss policy and issues affecting Scotland.

BAOT regions

There are 11 regional committees, one for each of the 8 regions in England, 2 in Scotland and 1 in Wales. Members are elected by their peers to represent members' views to the respective country boards and to council. They advise on the needs of members in their region, organise study days, fund promotion of OT as a career and recruit new members.

Nomination papers for vacant posts are published each year in the January edition of OTnews. Members serve for a maximum of three years in each post on the committee. All members are volunteers who commit their own time to the development of the profession for the benefit of other BAOT members.

The regional committees meet four times a year and support a network of BAOT local groups.

BAOT local groups

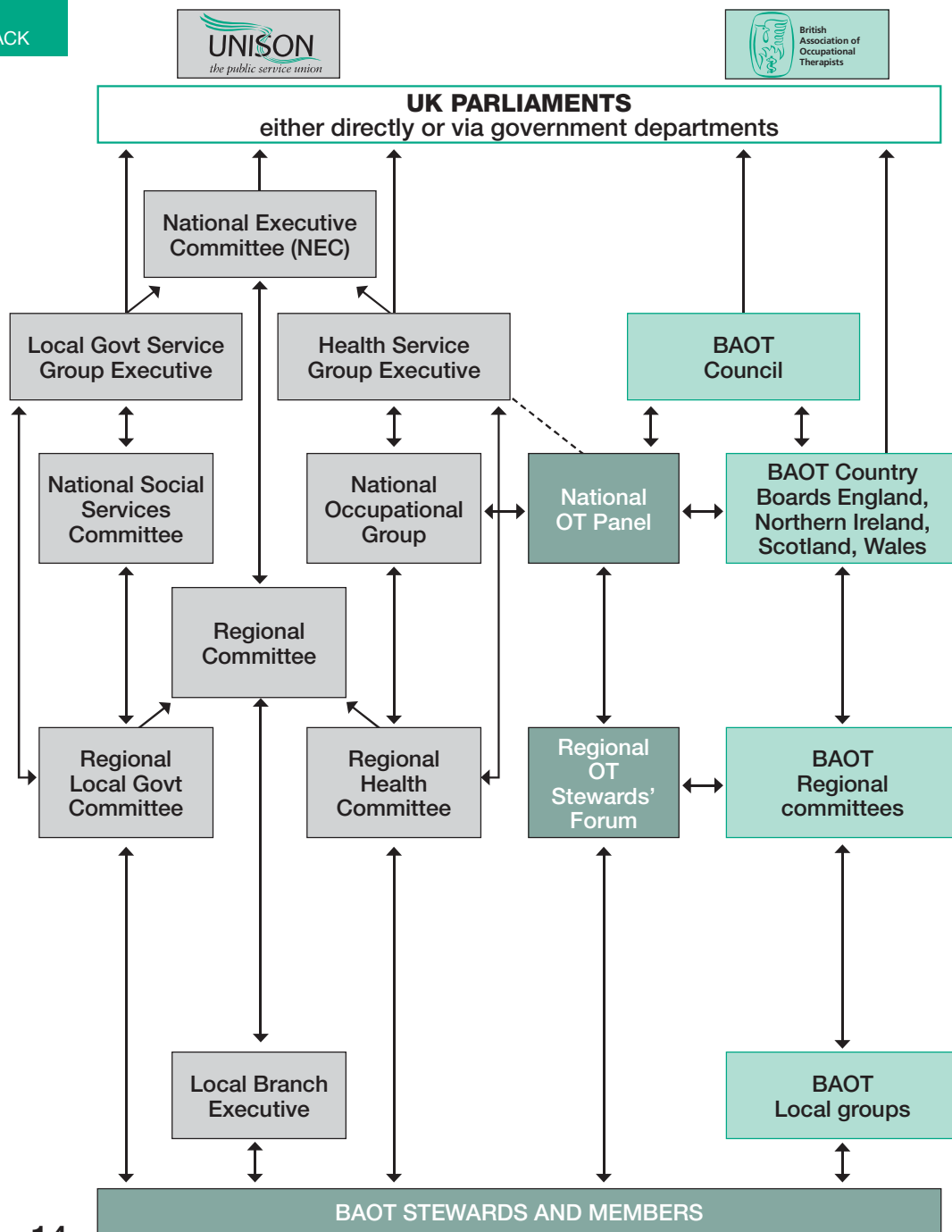
A local group comprises BAOT members who meet regularly to discuss issues that affect or influence their day-to-day working practice e.g. professional development. Members of a local group might work together in the same organisation or might be based more broadly in a particular area. The group co-ordinator registers the group with the BAOT regional office. Email beriah.nelson@cot.co.uk for more information.

BAOT regional committees can provide financial support to local groups. To access these funds local groups need to submit a cash expenditure request form to the BAOT regional committee. (Local groups in Northern Ireland should submit their claims to the Northern Ireland Country Board.)

UNISON/BAOT structural relationships

UNISON/BAOT
STRUCTURAL
RELATIONSHIPS

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Membership services

MEMBERSHIP
SERVICES

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Education and training

UNISON Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) co-ordinates trade union education and lifelong learning opportunities for members. This includes training and development for union reps as well as personal and career development courses ranging from Skills for Life through to professional qualifications. LAOS also offer learning discounts and a small educational grants scheme. For further details go to: www.unison.org.uk/laos

More information about regional and branch training courses is available in your Regional Education Programme, available from your branch education co-ordinator or branch secretary or from the regional education officer.

Legal services

UNISON provides the broadest range of legal help to union members in the UK. We offer advice and assistance not just with work issues, but for you and your family outside the workplace too. In order to qualify for free legal help members need to have been a BAOT/ UNISON member for at least four weeks before realising they need legal help.

Legal services (over and above the employment advice and support provided by local stewards and UNISON branches) are undertaken by Thompsons Solicitors. BAOT/ UNISON members can access free legal advice and representation from Thompsons Solicitors on all workplace

and employment issues - as well as non-workplace issues such as personal injury away from work, landlord disputes, wills, criminal law representation, etc.

Your branch can provide you with further information, including forms and leaflets to give to your members requesting legal advice.

For an introduction to what legal services members can access go to the Membership Benefits section of the UNISON website at: www.unison.org.uk/benefits/legal.asp

UNISON Welfare

UNISON Welfare is UNISON's registered charity. It is a unique confidential service offering advice and support just for UNISON members and their families including debt advice, listening and support, financial assistance, breaks and holidays and personal advice. Support is offered through our team of experienced casework staff at national office and a network of branch welfare officers.

More information about the range of services and types of help that are available can be found on the UNISON Welfare section of the website at: www.unison.org.uk/welfare/index.asp

UNISONPlus benefits

UNISONPlus offer a range of services and discounts to members including insurance, finance and holidays.

UNISON has appointed several companies as UNISONPlus approved suppliers. To get this endorsement not only must they be able to offer members savings and added value offers but UNISON also requires them to operate very high standards of customer care and to support the union's aims and objectives.

Some of the services include discounts on travel and holidays from UNISON Holiday Club; insurance discounts through UIA; mortgage discounts through Britannia Building Society; personal financial assistance, loans, savings plans from Frizzell and a range of other discounted offers

For more info on the services and discounts available to members go to the Membership benefits section of the UNISON website at: www.unison.org.uk/benefits/special.asp

BAOT/COT benefits

The UNISON benefits, that are provided for BAOT members, complement the full range of professional benefits provided by BAOT/COT to support members continuing profession development and assist them to provide evidence to the Health Professions Council [HPC] of continuing competence to practice at the biennial audit. The full range of these benefits can be found at www.baot.org.uk

- BJOT is the only monthly peer reviewed OT research journal in the world
- OTnews is the only OT good practice magazine published in the UK
- a 25% discount on membership subscriptions is available to newly qualified OTs and first time professional and associate members

- personalised job vacancies and event listings online which match your search specifications
- professional indemnity insurance - provides protection at work up to £5 million for any one claim. This covers any claims first made in the UK or the EU. Professional indemnity covers any error, omissions or negligence. It includes work undertaken in a self employed capacity to the value of £1500. Full details of the policy are available on the BAOT website
- professional guidance, briefing and advice – available via our helpline, publications and website
- income tax relief on up to 75% of the BAOT/COT subscription (for more information go to www.cot.org.uk/joinbaot/membership/benefits)
- online access to the Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy
- Interactive BAOT/COT website.

Other useful publications

OTHER USEFUL
PUBLICATIONS

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UNISON stewards' and workplace representatives' handbook.

Copies are available from your branch and also can be downloaded from the Bargaining Zone on the UNISON website at: www.unison.org.uk/bargaining/index.asp

Dealing with members' problems

As a new steward you should read the 'Dealing with members' problems' briefing on the Activists Zone of the UNISON website at: www.unison.org.uk/activists/sh4_problems.asp

From this page you can also download the following useful documents, or request copies from your branch:

UNISON Guide to Representation (a booklet for stewards)

UNISON CASE Form (a casework monitoring form which stewards should complete before giving advice or assistance to a member on a grievance or disciplinary matter)

UNISON Rule Book

Copies of the latest version of the UNISON Rule Book are available from your branch or can be downloaded from the Activists Zone on the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk/activists/branchresources.asp

The rule book outlines the aims and objectives of UNISON, the membership



and structures of the union and the rules that apply to the running of the union such as policy setting and financial management.

OT Stewards' and Member Briefings

A range of useful briefings and presentations written specifically for BAOT stewards and members are available on the UNISON Section of the BAOT website at www.baot.org.uk/. Click on 'Members Benefits'. You will need your BAOT membership number to log-in.

Here are examples of some of the briefings that are available:

- Agenda for Change – job evaluation
- Applying for a 'non-traditional' job role
- Bullying at work – a guide for OT stewards
- Generic working: a guide for OT stewards
- Guidance for OT stewards and managers facing restructuring
- Health and safety for home visits – a guide for OT stewards
- HPC fitness to practise cases – a guide for OT stewards
- Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) for OT staff in the NHS
- Preceptorship for Occupational Therapists
- Service reviews – a guide for OT stewards
- Seven day working and extended hours working
- Social enterprise – what you need to know
- Transporting clients or equipment in your own vehicle

BAOT/UNISON OT stewards' network questionnaire

We are constantly updating the national OT stewards' network. If you are a new or existing OT steward please help us by completing this questionnaire and returning it to the address overleaf.

The information will also be used to help develop stewards' structures and closer working with BAOT at local and regional levels.

Any queries can be directed to baotstewards@unison.co.uk

QUESTIONNAIRE

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1 Your name

2 Name of your employer

3 Workplace address

4 Telephone no. (office use only)

5 UNISON membership number

6 UNISON region

7 UNISON branch

8 What kind of employer do you work for?

- Social services
- Community and voluntary
- NHS
- Other (please specify)

9 Are you a BAOT/UNISON OT steward or contact?

- Yes, I am an OT steward
- Yes, I am an OT workplace contact
- Yes, I am a learning rep
- Yes, I am a health and safety rep
- No, I am not an active steward or contact*

*If your answer is no, then you are not required to complete the rest of the form. Please return your form to the address provided overleaf. Your details will then be removed from the OT Stewards distribution list. Please note that this will not amend your status as a steward/contact on the UNISON RMS membership system. Please contact your branch to make this amendment.

10 How long have you been a steward?

11 How did you hear about becoming a steward?

12 Do you receive the regular OT Stewards' updates that are sent to BAOT/UNISON stewards via email? These updates contain information on current issues effecting OTs and guidance on industrial relations issues.

- Yes
- No**

** If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please provide us with your email address.

My email address is:

13 Would you agree to have your name, workplace and email address listed in a directory of OT stewards so that stewards can network more easily together?

- Yes, please include my name, workplace and email address in the directory
- No, I do not want my details included

14 Do you attend meetings of your local regional OT Forum?

- Yes, I attend meetings of my regional OT Forum
- No, I am not able to attend these meetings
- I don't know about these meetings and would like more information on how I can attend

15 Have you ever attended the annual BAOT/UNISON National OT Stewards' Training Seminar?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know about this seminar and would like more information on how I can attend

16 How much support have you had from your manager whilst acting as a steward?

- None
- A little
- As much as I wanted

17 How much support have you had from your UNISON branch?

- None
- A little
- As much as I wanted

18 Is there additional support that you felt you needed but didn't have?

- Yes *******
 - No
- ***** If yes, what would this have been?

19 Are you involved with a local or regional BAOT group?

- Yes ********
 - No
- ****** If yes, please specify

20 In your opinion how closely do BAOT and UNISON work in your region? Please use the scale provided.

Not at all Very closely
1 2 3 4 5 6

21 How do you think closer working between BAOT and UNISON could be achieved?

22 Any additional feedback/comments

Thank you for taking the time to offer us your feedback. Please return your completed survey (no stamp required) to:
Freepost RSKU-RRCA-HHSJ
UNISON Health Group,
UNISON Centre
130 Euston Road
LONDON
NW1 2AY

Any additional feedback or queries to baotstewards@unison.co.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some helpful answers to questions that are frequently asked by BAOT members.

PROBLEM	ACTION
<i>I've got a problem at work – where can I go for advice?</i>	<p>Contact your local BAOT/UNISON steward or UNISON branch as soon as possible.</p> <p>If you don't know who your local UNISON rep is, ring our hotline:</p> <p>UNISONdirect 0845 355 0845 (calls charged at local rates) Freephone textphone 0800 0 967 968 Lines are open 6am-midnight Monday-Friday and 9am-4pm Saturdays.</p> <p>Every BAOT/UNISON member belongs to a local branch which is run by a committee consisting of fellow members elected to take on different roles. Your local branch is your first point of contact for advice and support.</p> <p>Please remember that the local stewards in your branch balance their trade union duties with the demands of their jobs. If there isn't a BAOT member elected as a steward in your workplace, please volunteer. We can't effectively represent members without stewards. (see also: 'How can we elect an OT Steward in our workplace?')</p> <p>If you need representation or support for a workplace issue then this will be provided by a steward in your branch. This may be a fellow occupational therapy staff member (i.e. and OT Steward), if there is one in your branch or it may be a trained steward who works in a different occupation, such as a social worker, nurse or cleaner. All UNISON stewards are trained and accredited to deal with problems affecting you at work. They also have certain legal rights to undertake their trade union duties.</p> <p>Your branch can also seek advice from the regional or national office, where necessary.</p> <p>In certain instances, cases may be referred by the branch to the regional office for representation. Please note that any decision to refer a member to the regional office must be made and approved by the branch.</p>

PROBLEM	ACTION
<i>I have been asked to attend a meeting with my manager or HR, what should I do?</i>	If you are asked to attend any formal meeting to do with your work, (e.g. sickness absence, workplace conduct, changes to your role) you are entitled to take a trade union representative with you. You should access UNISON representation and support as soon as possible.
<i>What is UNISON?</i>	<p>UNISON provides the industrial relations support for the British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT). BAOT has contracted out its trade union services to UNISON since 1993. There is also a nationwide network of accredited occupational therapy stewards to help members with trade union problems.</p> <p>UNISON is the UK's largest public sector trade union. UNISON has 1.3 million members in the public services, three-quarters of whom are women.</p>
<i>Are all BAOT members also members of UNISON?</i>	All BAOT members are also members of UNISON – other than those outside the UK or those who are solely self-employed in private practice.
<i>I am an OT lecturer at an Higher Education establishment, what trade union support do I have?</i>	Members of UNISON / BAOT who are teachers of occupational therapy in higher education institutions are able to have joint membership of EIS: The Educational Institute of Scotland (www.eis.org.uk) or UCU: The University and College Union(www.ucu.org.uk). Your subscription to the academic union is incorporated into your BAOT/UNISON membership at no cost to you. For EIS and UCU application forms please see the UNISON section of the BAOT website.
<i>How do I get news and information from UNISON?</i>	<p>For all the latest news and info go to: www.unison.co.uk</p> <p>U magazine goes out four times a year to all UNISON's 1.3 million members. Make sure you let your UNISON Branch know of any changes to your contact or employment details so that you don't miss out on receiving U magazine and other important information.</p> <p>Each month UNISON also publishes a news page in Occupational Therapy News (OTN).</p>
<i>I want to update my personal details - how do I do that?</i>	Visit the BAOT website or contact the BAOT Membership Administration Team (Tel 020 7450 2348 or email membership@cot.co.uk)
<i>I'm not receiving BJOT/OTN</i>	Ring BAOT Membership Administration Team (Tel 020 7450 2348 or email membership@cot.co.uk)

PROBLEM	ACTION
<i>UNISON has no record of me as a member or I am listed as a 'Lapsed' member</i>	<p>Here are the two main reasons why a BAOT member might not be found on the UNISON membership system (RMS):</p> <p>They are not listed on the RMS because they do not qualify for UNISON membership, i.e. they are a self-employed member, overseas member or similar. These individuals do not have access to UNISON support and should not be listed on the RMS.</p> <p>The member may be listed on the RMS but they may not have updated their workplace details, making it difficult to locate their membership record (this is particularly common for recent graduates who haven't informed UNISON of their new place of work). Members should contact the BAOT Membership Administration Team (Tel 020 7450 2348 or email membership@cot.co.uk) to update their details.</p> <p>If you believe your UNISON membership record has been 'Lapsed' in error then please contact the Membership Administration Team at BAOT (Tel 020 7450 2348 or email membership@cot.co.uk). They will clarify whether you are an up-to-date member and will contact UNISON RMS Second Line Support to have your record reinstated on the UNISON system as soon as possible.</p>
<i>I've moved jobs – should I inform my UNISON branch?</i>	<p>Yes. If you have transferred to a different location and employer, then let your new branch know. If necessary, you may have to ask your previous branch to fill in a transfer form.</p>
<i>I have been reported to the HPC - what should I do?</i>	<p>Contact your local OT steward or branch immediately. It is imperative that you seek advice as soon as you know that a complaint has been made. UNISON will then help you to prepare written responses to allegations and arrange for you to be represented at hearings.</p> <p>OT Stewards should refer to 'HPC Fitness to Practise Cases: A BAOT/UNISON guide for OT stewards' available from www.baot.org.uk</p>
<i>I've been called as a witness to an HPC or court case</i>	<p>Discuss this with your local BAOT/UNISON steward or branch as soon as possible in order to access advice and support.</p>
<i>What training does UNISON offer?</i>	<p>UNISON Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) offer a wide range of free seminars, workshops and training days across the UK. This includes training for union reps as well as personal and career development courses. Please talk to your local UNISON learning rep.</p>

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PROBLEM	ACTION
<i>Can UNISON help pay for my training or conference fees?</i>	All UNISON courses are free for members. When it comes to other forms of training some branches also choose to fund OT activists or stewards to attend particular training courses or conferences. This is at the discretion of your branch. Please note that it is unlikely that the branch will choose to fund members who are not active within the branch. Talk to your local branch learning rep or your local Regional Education Officer.
<i>Where can I find up-to-date pay scales for OT staff?</i>	NHS Agenda for Change pay scales are available from the NHS Employers website: www.nhsemployers.org Salaries in local authorities vary depending on the employer and the role – there are no national pay scales. Please contact your branch or HR department for local pay scales.
<i>How can we elect an OT Steward in our workplace?</i>	OT stewards talk to members, distribute information and get their views; recruit new members; help members get advice on workplace problems; and act as spokesperson or representative for their workgroup. OT stewards are BAOT members and UNISON accredited stewards. They are elected and trained as an OT steward, and can represent BAOT and UNISON members or just BAOT members. They can choose to represent OT staff across their whole employer, or just their immediate workplace. Training is provided directly by UNISON and through the TUC and stewards are entitled to paid release to carry out their duties. Members can email baotstewards@unison.co.uk to find out how they can nominate an OT Steward. You can also download a copy of the 'Become a Steward' leaflet from the UNISON section of the BAOT website.
<i>Need debt counselling, support or other welfare issues</i>	Contact UNISON branch welfare officer via branch office or local steward or call 02075511620. Support from UNISON welfare includes a unique confidential service offering advice and support just for members and their families including debt advice, listening and support, financial assistance, breaks and personal advice.
<i>Job evaluation (e.g. Agenda for Change)</i>	Contact UNISON branch for advice and support. Briefings for OT staff can be found on the UNISON section of the BAOT www.baot.org.uk

PROBLEM	ACTION
<i>UNISON membership services, e.g. insurance, loans, discounts, etc</i>	<p>UNISONPlus services and discounts include discounts on travel and holidays from UNISON Holiday Club; insurance discounts through UIA; mortgage discounts through Britannia Building Society; personal financial assistance, loans, savings plans from Frizzell and a range of other discounted offers.</p> <p>To access any of the above benefits please contact your local UNISON Branch or visit www.unison.org.uk/benefits for more information.</p>
<i>Can I claim tax relief on my BAOT subscription?</i>	<p>BAOT members can claim income tax relief on up to 75% of their subscription. For details see the BAOT website. As BAOT members pay subscriptions direct to BAOT they do not claim tax relief via UNISON.</p>
<i>How do I get news and information from UNISON?</i>	<p>All members should receive U magazine which contains all the latest UNISON news. U magazine goes out four times a year to all UNISON's 1.3 million members. Make sure you let your UNISON Branch or UNISON Direct (0845 355 0845) know of any changes to your contact or employment details so that you don't miss out on receiving U magazine and other important information.</p> <p>Each month UNISON also publishes a special news page in Occupational Therapy News (OTN) which is sent to all BAOT members.</p>
<i>How much of my BAOT membership fee goes to UNISON?</i>	<p>BAOT pays a block rate to UNISON centrally for all BAOT members based on its membership numbers. Therefore, there isn't a set portion of each membership fee that goes to UNISON for trade union services. Subscription to BAOT buys the whole package which includes full membership of the COT and UNISON. Members can obviously choose whether or not to take advantage of all services on offer, but there is no reduction in the subscription if they do not.</p>
<i>What UNISON groups can I get involved in?</i>	<p>BAOT members can take on branch officer roles or be elected to seats on local and national UNISON committees. They can also participate in UNISON's self-organised groups which enable members with common interests to come together. These groups include: Women; Black members; Disabled members; LGBT; Young members; Retired members.</p>
<i>Advice on transporting clients or equipment in your own car</i>	<p>A UNISON briefing for members who may have to transport clients or equipment in their car is available to download from the BAOT briefings section under 'Employment Relations'.</p>

PROBLEM	ACTION
<i>Where can I go for help regarding preceptorship in the NHS?</i>	Preceptorship is part of the Agenda for Change agreement and all NHS organisations are obliged to put it in place. Newly qualified Band 5 staff should receive an automatic incremental uplift at 6 months & 12 months after appointment to their first basic grade OT post. Eligible staff are entitled to back payment from October 2004. Many UNISON branches have successfully campaigned to ensure it is implemented. Please talk to your local OT Steward or UNISON Branch. Guidance & a model policy is available from the UNISON section of the BAOT website at www.baot.org.uk
<i>Does BAOT contribute toward UNISON's political campaigning?</i>	BAOT pays a block rate to UNISON on behalf of all BAOT members, so that they can access industrial relations services. This money does not go toward the General Political Fund (GPF) which UNISON uses to pay for political campaigning and lobbying in Parliament to pursue UNISON's objectives and priorities.
<i>Do I have to go on strike when UNISON takes industrial action?</i>	Industrial action is always the last resort for the union, and may happen when negotiations have broken down and where any agreed disputes procedure has been exhausted. UNISON's main objective is to get the best possible deal for members. The union will inform members of the reasons why any industrial action is being considered and will ballot all members (including both BAOT and UNISON members) it intends to call upon to take action, so that all members have the opportunity to vote on whether or not you wish to take industrial action. If following a ballot, the decision is made to take industrial action UNISON will encourage all members to participate – as it's the strength of turnout which will make the action successful. Trade unions cannot discipline members who refuse to participate in industrial action. However, the union does expect members to abide by the decision of the majority expressed in a legal and democratic ballot of its members.
<i>How is BAOT represented on local on negotiating bodies?</i>	In the NHS, BAOT is recognised as a trade union for collective bargaining purposes. This means that in most NHS organisations BAOT are entitled to representation on relevant local partnership bodies and negotiating committees at NHS employer level, in addition to existing UNISON seats. In local government, BAOT members are represented on official structures by UNISON negotiators.

PROBLEM	ACTION
<i>OT senior managers and Managers in Partnership (MiP)</i>	The Service Level Agreement between BAOT and UNISON does not provide Managers in Partnership (MiP) membership for those BAOT members working in senior management posts, however these members can join MiP, in addition to their BAOT membership, if they choose to. This means that unless a BAOT member has chosen to join MIP separately (and pay two sets of fees) then they are entitled to access advice and representation from their local UNISON Branch.
<i>I am a retired BAOT member, can I be a retired member of UNISON?</i>	A BAOT member with at least two years' continuous membership in the Professional, Associate, Student or Career break categories immediately prior to their retirement, who are in receipt of a pension and who are not in other paid employment can pay a nominal fee to become a UNISON retired member. Information on becoming a Retired Member is available by phoning UNISON Direct on 0845 355 0845.

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Contacts

CONTACTS

OT STEWARD INDUCTION PACK

General enquiries

BAOT members who have a query about their membership or a problem at work should contact their local UNISON branch or call UNISON on 0845 355 0845 or freephone textphone 0800 0 967 968. Lines are open 6am-midnight Monday-Friday and 9am-4pm Saturdays.

Alternatively, members can go to the 'Help at work' section on the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk/help/index.asp which contains a number of online forms that members can fill in to change to their membership details or make general enquiries.

OT Steward Email Enquiry Point baotstewards@unison.co.uk

OT stewards requiring advice on issues that cannot be handled by their local branch should email baotstewards@unison.co.uk.

OT stewards can also email this address to sign up to the national network and receive regular email updates on key issues.

Any BAOT members interested in receiving information about electing an OT steward in their workplace should also email this address.

UNISON Centre contacts

UNISON Centre
130 Euston Road
London NW1 2AY
Sara Gorton, national officer
0207 121 5258, s.gorton@unison.co.uk
Sarah Peters, assistant national officer
0207 121 5248, s.peters@unison.co.uk

UNISON regional contacts

All regional offices can be contacted on 0845 355 0845

The OT steward contacts in each region are:

Eastern

Tracey Lambert, regional head of health

East Midlands

Gerry Looker, regional organiser

Greater London

Chong Ma, organising support

Northern

Ian Daley, regional organiser

Northern Ireland

Anne Speed, regional head of health

North West

Sarah France, regional organiser

Scotland

Nicola Morris, organising support

South East

Elizabeth Wagstaffe, regional organiser

South West

Judy Wilson, regional organiser

Cymru/Wales

Eddie Gabrielsen, regional
organiser

West Midlands

Opinder Tiwana, regional organiser

Yorkshire & Humberside

Ray Gray, regional organiser

Change of address or BAOT
membership queries
John Beagan, membership
administrative manager
email membership@cot.co.uk

BAOT/COT contacts**BAOT/COT**

106-114 Borough High Street,
Southwark, London SE1 1LB
020 7357 6480

Julia Scott, secretary of BAOT and
chief executive

Beryl Steeden, head of
membership and external affairs,
responsible for

BAOT/UNISON liaison
email beryl.steeden@cot.co.uk

BAOT/UNISON Council
c/o Dominique Le Marchand, senior
administrative officer
email dominique.le.marchand@cot.co.uk

Lee Roach, membership
development manager, link to
the National OT Panel, tel. 020
74505471
email lee.roach@cot.co.uk



British
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Occupational
Therapists