

To: (Union Lead),

(Union) currently represents some of the 100,000 NHS staff who have exercised their basic human right of informed consent regarding a medical intervention, and have decided not yet to receive a vaccination against Covid-19. You also represent many others who have taken the vaccine, but hold serious ethical reservations about mandating it and stand for bodily autonomy and freedom of choice.

We all care for our patients and strive to do our best for them and keep them safe. However, this mandate will in no way achieve this. It may well cause a staffing crisis, at a time when services are considerably stretched and be highly detrimental to their care.

The rights to bodily autonomy and to give informed consent for a medical intervention are fundamental human rights. The principle of consent is an important part of medical ethics and international human rights law and many of us as frontline clinicians champion these fundamental rights on a daily basis. These rights, including the freedom to choose or decline vaccination against covid-19 should be extended to everybody, including health care and social care workers.

Many of your members have chosen to decline for medical reasons, or through religious or ethical concerns. However, the reason is irrelevant. Under international human rights laws, each individual has a right to give informed consent to any medical intervention, including vaccination. Mandating vaccination is a slippery slope; we have no reason to believe that this proposed mandate will stop at two jabs for covid-19, firstly since this government has a history of broken promises and secondly, that those who have chosen to take them already require boosters. The mandate will doubtlessly be extended for all subsequent injections, likely every 6 months, for all staff, whether clinical or not, potentially beyond the health and care sector and potentially for other vaccinations or medications that the government deems fit.

Each individual is responsible for their own care and it is important that they are allowed to give informed consent, free from coercion. This basic human right is protected by international laws and conventions, including the Nuremberg code. Enforcing a no jab, no job policy is in our opinion, deeply coercive. Once you allow a government to mandate a medical intervention, you set a very dangerous precedent that is hard to return from. If we accept this as a profession, we must question what else they can mandate for ourselves, our patients and to wider society.

We believe that (Union name) are failing in their duty to protect the fundamental human rights of its members and society as a whole by not opposing these mandates. We demand that you campaign to protect these rights for the reasons set out above. Due to your current stance, some members have already left Unison and immediate, tangible action may result in considerably more changing unions.

Yours Faithfully,

Members: (numbers)