We are here to help and support our members.

- We provide emergency assistance, including financial aid if necessary, through our charity There For You.
- We negotiate workplace policies to support and assist staff experiencing domestic abuse.

Anyone can be a victim, regardless of gender, age, culture, ethnic origin, disability or sexual orientation and anyone can be a perpetrator - partners, spouses, parents, children or carers.

So if you need our help go to unison.org.uk/get-help or call our trained advisors on 0207 121 5620 (Monday to Friday).

You can also call UNISON on 0800 0 857 857 (text phone 0800 0 967 968). Lines are open 6am-midnight, Monday to Friday, and 9am-4pm on Saturdays or email thereforyou@unison.co.uk

We recognise the impact that domestic abuse has on our members’ lives. Support and understanding from your employer can make all the difference if you are a survivor, or if you are trying to escape.

We take the lead in negotiating workplace policies to support and assist staff experiencing domestic abuse, in a confidential and safe way. If you need help, we are here for you.

UNISON – protecting jobs and services

Domestic abuse and violence against women services have been badly affected by the government’s austerity measures. We continue to campaign to protect properly funded dedicated services, and for more support to be available to victims.

UNISON – campaigning for change

Domestic abuse is not only about violence. It also takes away victims’ independence and freedom to make their own decisions and prevents them from living free from harm and fear. We have successfully lobbied for changes in the law that properly recognise the extent of abuse, which now include controlling and coercive behaviours and we are campaigning for more protection for victims.
**EU Citizens**

UNISON members who are EU citizens gathered to share their experiences since June’s referendum on membership of the European Union, and share their concerns about what happens next, at a seminar in the UNISON Centre last month.

The EU members’ seminar brought union members and activists from across the range of public services together in London. They hailed from France, Spain, Germany, Poland, Sweden and Bosnia, which took the first steps to joining the EU at September’s summit in Slovakia.

Their discussions will help inform the union’s work to defend its EU members’ right to remain in the UK, while opposing the tide of racial abuse that has arisen since the referendum.

UNISON has commissioned a booklet from the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, outlining members’ legal rights and set up an EU members’ helpline available every Tuesday on 0800 0 857 857.

There is also a dedicated Facebook group for UNISON members who are EU citizens to talk to each other at facebook.com/groups/UNISON EUMembers/. This is a closed group, and members will need to ask to join it.

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**Shocking reality of dementia homecare hidden behind closed doors**

The Alzheimer’s Society and UNISON carried out research into the care sector with Skills for Care, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to all local authorities in England, and a survey of over 1220 people affected by dementia to gather first-hand testimonies about homecare.

Key findings from our survey of over 1220 people affected by dementia include:

- Only 2% of people affected by dementia say homecare workers ‘have enough dementia training
- Half (49%) of people affected by dementia do not think that ‘homecare workers understand the specific needs of people with dementia’
- More than a third (38%) of people affected by dementia do not think that ‘homecare workers know how to treat people with dementia with understanding and dignity

Alzheimer’s Society learned of a multitude of failures that could have been avoided if homecare workers had better training. Exposed were instances where people with dementia were:

- Not provided with food or water, not properly supported to eat and not assisted in choosing meals
- Not given a bath or shower for weeks and left in dirty clothes for days
- Left to sleep in wet or soiled bed sheets
- Spoken down to, asked confusing questions, or not spoken to at all
- Reported missing with police after leaving their home which hadn’t been properly secured
- Not given their medication, or their medication was mixed up or thrown away
- Left with an infection which was not identified causing avoidable emergency hospital admissions
- Forced to move to a care home because the homecare workers could not cope with their needs

The homecare sector is operating in an increasingly impossible financial environment – with cuts of almost 40% to adult social care budgets since 2010. Funding for training and development of staff is often the first to be cut, but this is a false economy. FOI requests revealed 71% of local authorities that responded do not include an allocation for training within their contracts for homecare. 38% of local authorities that responded do not fund dementia specific training sessions for homecare providers (Local Authority FOI).