



## Statement from Nurses United and 'NHS Workers say No!' (NSN) Facebook group

As NHS workers we are aware that there have been concerns about the recent rise in the reproduction rate of COVID-19, commonly known as the 'R-rate'. **This statement seeks to address that and provide guidance to demonstration organisers.**

NHS workers care for our patients and place public safety as an utmost priority, which is why we are taking action to improve the pay of all NHS staff. With the [average Band 5 NHS worker losing 20% of their pay since 2010](#) it is no surprise that this has caused over 100,000 vacancies within our NHS. A 15% pay rise is about addressing the conditions which put ourselves and our patients at risk long before COVID-19.

NHS workers are understandably angry when their lives are put at risk and the response from this Government is that their work and their lives are not valued. As a group who has been supporting people to independently organise protests to highlight these issues, **it is important for demonstration organisers and attendees to keep themselves informed of risks**, the latest public health guidance and the latest regulations. **These may change rapidly and may differ across the UK.**

[Our online event](#) has been set up to allow people to choose how they would like to take part in the day of action in a variety of different ways. Additionally, there are [33 demonstrations](#) planned across the UK. We urge all demonstration organisers to emphasise to attendees on their Facebook events and on the day to:

- **Social distance** - be clear about social distancing and the reasons for it in your demo guidelines and ask people to hold out their arms at the start of demonstrations to ensure that they are 2 metres apart
- **Wear Face masks/coverings** - known to reduce risk & show that we are taking precautions
- **Practise Hand hygiene** - hand washing/hand sanitiser and developing 'zero-contact' alternatives for things like leaflets and contact sheets
- **Use loudspeakers** - to ensure that people do not bunch up at the end of demonstrations we recommend using these and asking people to sit down during speeches

Additionally, because of the recent changes it may be necessary to consider different options based upon what is happening in your area:

- **If there are no additional concerns in your area:** continue to plan your demonstration as planned with reference to the guidance above.
- **If there are new concerns in your area with additional restrictions being added:** consider opting for a 1 hour static demonstration outside of hospitals or the public space you planned to finish your event in, with reference to the guidance above.
- **If your area is placed into a 'lockdown':** consider moving your event online and signposting people to the national online event which is designed for you to have a variety of different ways for people to get involved.

This is a pivotal moment for NHS workers to stand up and take action to defend our patients and our own lives. We will continue to keep working and organising to secure this vision and we hope that everyone who is a member of our group will get involved with us as that is the way we will win.