

Title

A Public System, Not Charity: Reinvesting in Food and Nutrition Security

Motion Body

Congress notes that:

Evidence from the COVID-19 pandemic shows England's Public Health Nutrition (PHN) system is underfunded, fragmented and unable to meet need, as reported by frontline staff.

Austerity and market-based policies have weakened PHN services, increasing hunger, worsening nutrition related health and widening inequalities.

87% of PHN professionals reported that austerity related cuts had severe, or moderate to severe, impacts (Noonan-Gunning et al, 2021).

Responsibility for food security has shifted from the state to the voluntary sector and unpaid labour, creating a postcode lottery and exposing system failures during the pandemic that impact wider determinants of health.

The lack of a national food strategy and effective governance undermined the response to COVID-19 and risks weakening future responses.

Congress believes that:

- Food and nutrition security is a fundamental right and a core responsibility of the state.
- Charity cannot replace a properly funded public system.
- A paid, skilled PHN and public health dietetics workforce is essential to public health and social justice.

Congress calls on the TUC to campaign for:

- Restoration and ring-fencing of PHN funding by central government.
- A national food and nutrition strategy, including workforce capacity and capability.
- The Right to Food to be enshrined in UK law.

- An end to marketisation and the normalisation of unpaid labour in food provision.
- Secure, unionised employment, training and recognition for food and nutrition workers, including work with affiliates to explore organising in emergency food aid and the community food sector.