

STUC's LGBT+ Workers Conference



By David McMullan, Senior Informatics Pharmacist for EMIS Health and a PDA LGBT+ Network member



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I attended the STUC LGBT+ Workers Conference as a first-time delegate for the PDA. I've always been passionate about advancing LGBT+ rights so this was the perfect opportunity for me to become more actively involved.

Delegates in attendance were from a diverse group of unions, representing a real cross-section of the LGBT+ working community in Scotland. It was inspiring to hear their stories and how they came to be involved.

During the conference, there were passionate debates across a range of motions. One of the motions we strongly supported was the need to tackle disproportionately worse health outcomes experienced by LGBT+ people.

We specifically supported the recommendation to put pressure on the Scottish government to adopt the recommendations from the PHS Health Needs Assessment report of LGBT+ people in Scotland.

We were able to share the successes of the PDA LGBT+ Network as part of the LGBT+ MPharm campaign. The campaign highlights the need for LGBT+ inclusivity education and training to be part of healthcare degrees and for awareness/training to be mandatory for all healthcare positions.

Back in the workplace, I was able to share my experience of the conference with colleagues. They took a genuine interest in the issues that were discussed and were shocked at some of the statistics highlighting the continued injustices and inequalities affecting the LGBT+ community.

It was shocking to note that in 2015, the UK was top of the ILGA Rainbow index (a ranking of countries based on their LGBT+ equality laws and policies) for Europe, yet, by 2023, the UK has fallen to 17th place. Learning this really opened my eyes to the importance of the trade union movement and how, when we come together collectively, we can bring about the changes that are needed to challenge injustice and all forms of discrimination.