EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

29th October 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES

Up to £1 where sold

Nurse demands 24 hour rail tickets to avoid night-shift double costs

23 July 2025



A specialist NHS nurse is calling for urgent train ticket reform after revealing she spends over £200 a month commuting to her job at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Alicia Arias, a paediatric cardiac intensive care nurse, has launched a campaign urging rail companies to introduce 24-hour train tickets. Her Change.org petition has already gained over 24,000 signatures. Alicia moved from London to Woking a year ago to save on rent and live in a house, said her monthly commuting costs regularly exceed £200 – despite using a discount Flexi Season ticket. She said: “Why am I living in Woking paying all of this money for trains that are always delayed?!”

Working 12-hour shifts, often overnight, Alicia said she is forced to buy two tickets for each shift: one to travel in and another to get home the next morning, as existing train tickets expire at 4:29am. “We go for a horrible night shift, we don’t have a break and then we have to pay for another ticket,” Alicia said. “It’s just not fair. It’s making it fair with 24hr tickets.” Working in paediatric intensive care, no day is the same. But every day can be gruelling. Alicia said: “I offer the treatment the last chance that kids have. It’s really hard but it’s really rewarding.” As a senior nurse, Alicia said her job ranges from teaching and supporting other nursing staff, sometimes taking over the patients, as well as looking after her own patients. “We are always short and we are always busy,” she said.

Although there are other hospitals in Surrey, Alicia said she never wants to leave her current job. “Working at Great Ormond Street Hospital is a great sense of acheivement,” Alicia said. “It’s the best thing I’ve ever done – I love it.” Originally from Spain, Alicia said she was shocked by how expensive and inflexible British transport is. Alicia said she moved to the UK 13 years ago, but the “cultural shock” of how expensive and inflexible British transport is has only really come in the last year of moving to Woking. She explained in Madrid you can get transport passes for bus, train and rail for £70 a month. When Alicia lived in central London, she would cycle to work. “I take my bicycle from Waterloo to Great Ormond Street which is really busy,” she said. “I’m pretty sure I’m going to die on the bike one day.”

“I have sometimes regretted [moving to Woking],” Alicia admitted, explaining how she is constantly juggling to find the cheapest way to buy train tickets. Alicia said the campaign is not only for nurses but everyone. “But not only me but the cleaners, the maintenance workers, people in the kitchen, people who have lower salaries than me who are struggling more,” she said. “We’re all NHS. Not only shift workers in Surrey but everywhere in the UK. Shift workers that pay for two tickets and they do it quietly. No, it’s not fair.” Another campaign which Alicia started at the same time is her petition for an NHS railcard which has also reached nearly 3,000 signatures on the House of Commons website.

A Department for Transport spokesperson said: “While we are not planning to introduce 24-hour return tickets, we are overhauling the complex fares system to make rail travel simpler and more flexible for passengers. We’ve already delivered ticketing innovations such as contactless pay as you go to additional stations in Surrey this year, giving passengers the best value ticket for their journey, with additional stations expected to get the technology soon.”

Petition link: https://www.change.org/p/make-train-day-tickets-last-24-hours-support-shift-workers
House of Commons petition link: https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/729126

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY