



3rd July 2020

Moving forward on NHS pay

It is time to give NHS staff a meaningful pay rise and recognise the true value of their work.

The 14 health unions representing NHS staff on the 'Agenda for Change' pay system, including GMB, have written to the Chancellor and Prime Minister to call for the next NHS pay round and the resulting settlement to be brought forward. Waiting until 2021 is not acceptable. After all they've been through, staff need certainty now. They need to know that they are valued and that the government is committed to ensuring that their pay reflects this.

The last few months have shone a light on the essential contribution NHS workers make. They have demonstrated immense strength in the face of adversity and the public has shown great appreciation for their work. The true value of the NHS has been felt by every person in the UK and the public expects their gratitude to be reflected in what the government does next for its staff.

There is a unique moment for the government to show its support for the NHS and its workforce, by turning the warm words and applause into a firm commitment to bring forward NHS pay talks and a settlement. The applause and tributes have been a short-term morale boost for many of our members but we must now see action.

The government is looking at how to support the UK economy in the months and years ahead and they must remember that local economies and the Treasury benefit from increasing the money in the pockets of the sizeable NHS workforce.

Every NHS occupation and every hospital clinic and community team has vacancies it needs to fill to provide the safe care all our members want to give. The NHS should be the first and best choice for anyone with the skills and aptitude to work in health. That means recognising the importance of all NHS staff and the diverse roles they play in delivering patient care. A fair pay award now not only makes today's workers feel valued but also helps to attract and retain the many that will be needed for the future. The government can now show it is committed to that.

GMB members rejected the last NHS three year pay deal and we want the next pay deal to form part of a long-term strategy to reward existing staff who have faced a decade of low pay and to attract the best people to join the NHS workforce and build a health service fit for whatever the future holds.

The government must seize this opportunity to look at a longer-term strategy for the NHS including pay increases in future years and work with the NHS unions to build a service that is fit to face anything the future throws at it. Now the priorities must be keeping staff and patients safe and ensuring that the NHS is properly resourced and safely staffed to meet the current and future demands placed upon it.

NHS staff want to be able to look forward to a brighter future and to move forward with the government and the public alongside them.

We are not looking for a 'Covid bonus' payment. The government has not supported NHS pay to keep up with the increased living costs staff have experienced since 2010. We want the government to now recognise the hard work and skill of NHS staff and the right to be paid fairly for it.

GMB and other NHS trade unions have always said that pay is key to enabling the government deliver its recruitment and retention targets. This is the chance for ministers to show that they have received and understood that message. There are currently vacancies across all sectors of the NHS workforce - from Paramedics and Nursing, ancillary staff to AHP'S and support staff -in every ward team, clinic and department. Lengthening waiting lists have been extended by the COVID lockdown. We need experienced staff to stay in the NHS where they are needed, and we need those who returned to help the NHS in its hour of need to consider staying. We can't afford for staff to walk away because of stress, inadequate resources and pay that hasn't kept up with the cost of living since 2010.

We are asking the government to work with us to move NHS pay forward by:

1. Making an immediate commitment to pay talks to show staff how much they are valued. Because warm words and applause simply aren't enough.
2. Recognising the importance of pay in tackling the vacancies that exist across all sectors of the NHS workforce in every ward, team, department and clinic.
3. Using the delivery of an early pay deal as part of the strategy for meeting the government's recruitment and retention targets and delivering safer staffing levels for patients.
4. Integrating an early NHS pay deal into plans for helping the economy move forward given the size of the NHS workforce and the positive effect for local businesses of giving these staff more money in their pockets.
5. Guaranteeing and providing the funding needed to deliver an early, meaningful and much-deserved pay rise for all staff in the NHS, including those who are employed by private contractors.

GMB members will now receive a second NHS pay consultation survey, due to be launched on Tuesday 7th July 2020 so you can **Have Your Say on Pay** and determine what the pay claim should be.

Not a GMB member? Join today - www.gmb.org.uk/join

Want more information on being a GMB Representative in your Workplace? Email NHS@gmb.org.uk

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