



Agenda for Change

London Ambulance Service NHS Trust working in partnership with UNISON, GMB, Amicus and TGWU

17 March 2005

Issue 5

Update regarding annual leave, London allowance, 'frozen' leave, and specific arrangements for emergency medical dispatchers and A&E staff

This bulletin outlines recent decisions taken by the Agenda for Change Project Board regarding annual leave entitlement for 2005/06, London allowance, 'frozen' leave payments, and specific arrangements for emergency medical dispatchers and A&E staff.

The arrangements for annual leave and London allowance apply to all staff except emergency medical dispatchers and those PTS staff who have retained previous terms and conditions of employment under the TUPE regulations.

Emergency medical dispatchers – Central Ambulance Control

The Project Board has given careful consideration to the position of emergency medical dispatchers (EMDs) and has agreed that this group of staff will be able to 'opt out' of Agenda for Change and preserve their current terms and conditions of service should these prove to be more favourable.

This has been agreed on the basis that the EMD grade and structure is unique to London and does not reflect national arrangements. It is felt to afford EMD staff the best opportunity to consider whether Agenda for Change or Service terms and conditions of employment offer the best package for them individually.

This does mean, however, that until staff are in a position to choose whether to opt out or not, arrears of pay or changes in existing terms and conditions cannot be made.

Annual leave entitlement for 2005/06

Although we are only just starting to assimilate staff on to Agenda for Change terms and conditions, all eligible staff will be permitted to apply for the new leave entitlements from 1 April 2005.

The entitlements for the 2005/06 leave year are:

On appointment	27 days annual leave plus 8 days general public holiday
After 5 years' service	29 days annual leave plus 8 days general public holiday
After 10 years' service	33 days annual leave plus 8 days general public holiday

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These entitlements include the two statutory days which are currently linked to annual leave, and will be converted into hours for operational staff in line with the Agenda for Change agreement.

Detailed guidelines will be issued in the near future to staff who are responsible for administering leave entitlements.

Staff should note that no agreement has yet been reached on additional annual leave accrued between 1 October 2004 and 31 March 2005, and this leave may not be booked at this stage.

Pay in high cost areas (London allowance)

After many months of negotiations regarding the high cost area payments within the Agenda for Change final agreement, the Staff-side and Management-side have been unable to agree an option that would be acceptable to all.

Both sides accept the only way forward is to concede to the default position; that is to adhere to the letter of the agreement and pay inner and outer London payments.

The new arrangements will replace existing London weighting and congestion charge allowances, and rates will be allocated based on a member of staff's contracted place of work.

Service sites within inner London are Battersea, Bloomsbury, Bow, Camden, Chiswick, Deptford, Forest Hill, Fulham, City and Hackney, Islington, Lee, North Kensington, Oval, Poplar, Putney, Rotherhithe, Shoreditch, Smithfield, St John's Wood, Streatham, Waterloo and Westminster.

All other sites except Buckhurst Hill are in outer London. However, for the purposes of this pay enhancement, staff based at Buckhurst Hill will be considered as outer London.

Agreement on London allowance now paves the way for those staff whose roles have been matched and evaluated, and placed on pay bands, to be assimilated to their new terms and conditions.

We understand that whatever decision was reached, it would not satisfy everyone. This has proved to be a divisive issue that was forced upon the Service. With that in mind we have agreed to jointly approach the Agenda for Change National Joint Secretaries and the Agenda for Change Pan-London Reference Group to raise our concerns and hope that a more acceptable method to compensate staff who work across London can be found.

'Frozen' leave

Those staff who have annual leave which was 'frozen' as a result of the introduction of the salaried pay arrangements in 1986 will be paid for that leave shortly after they are assimilated to Agenda for Change. The rate of pay for this leave is currently subject to consultation.

Arrangements for A&E staff

▪ **Easter bank holiday pay arrangements**

Operational staff will be paid at double time for any overtime worked on the Easter bank holidays whilst those undertaking rostered duties will receive the normal enhanced rates and day in lieu.

These payments will be made under the existing Whitley provisions rather than the Agenda for Change agreement, the same as special weekend double-time overtime, and will therefore be excluded when calculating any arrears due under Agenda for Change.

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▪ Pay arrears

Despite the absence of final national profiles and confirmed banding for ambulance staff, it is clear that under Agenda for Change terms and conditions, many operational staff will receive a significant pay increase.

We are conscious of the impact the delay in moving over to the new arrangements is having for all staff. We have agreed to make a payment of £1000 (gross) to the A&E operational staff groups indicated below, to be offset in full against any arrears due when they are assimilated.

The payment, which is subject to deduction of tax and national insurance, will be made to the following staff in their March salaries:

Emergency medical technicians level 2 and 3
Paramedics
Team leaders
Emergency care practitioners
Clinical advisors
Paramedics and technicians seconded to MAIAT
Resource centre coordinators and senior coordinators

Note: Bank staff will not be eligible for this payment.

The following conditions and adjustments will apply:

- Only current staff in-post for the full period from 1 October 2004 will qualify for the full payment, and only in the staff groups stated. No payment will be made to staff who have left the Service since 1 October 2004. In such cases, arrears due will be calculated after the assimilation of existing staff has been completed
- Anyone joining the Service in one of these posts within this period will be paid pro rata to the time in post
- Part-time staff will receive a payment pro-rata to their contracted hours of work
- Since this payment is based upon an assessment of arrears due, periods of half pay or no pay, whatever the reason, will be taken into account and the payment will be adjusted. For example, someone who has been on no pay throughout the whole of this period would not qualify for a payment

It is vital staff recognise that this payment is made on the basis that arrears will be due once the new Agenda for Change pay arrangements are in place and this payment will therefore be offset against the full arrears after assimilation.

Where to find out more about Agenda for Change

This bulletin is one of the ways we will keep you updated about Agenda for Change. There is further information on the Service's intranet - *the pulse* (<http://thepulse>) - as well as your trade union's website. Another site to visit is the Department of Health's website at www.dh.gov.uk. If you have any comments or questions about Agenda for Change, email agendaforchange@lond-amb.nhs.uk.

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