

UNISON BRIEFING



FAIR PAY FOR
HEALTH WORKERS

NHS STAFF PAY OFFER 2007/2008

Background

In March 2007 the Pay Review Body for Nurses and other Health Professionals recommended a 2.5% pay increase, payable from 1 April 2007.

The UK government announced that the pay award would be staged, with 1.5% payable on the 1 April with the remaining 1% payable on 1 November 2007. A similar offer was made to other NHS staff.

UNISON rejected this staged pay award/offer at its health conference and called for an improved offer. If no improved offer was made, the conference instructed that an industrial action ballot should be held.

An improved offer has now been secured and UNISON's Health Service Executive has decided to consult all members in the NHS as to whether the offer is acceptable.

UNISON's Health Service Executive believes that this is the best offer that can be achieved through negotiation. It therefore follows that if members wish to reject the offer, they must also be prepared to support industrial action in the event of a subsequent industrial action ballot. See over for formal pay offer.

The offer

Since March, the devolved administrations (governments) of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have decided not to stage the 2.5% pay award, but the position in England remains that the offer is staged.

The improved offer is attached.

- it provides extra money for the lowest paid. From 1 November there would be a £400 flat rate increase for those on Bands 1 and 2. Those on Bands 3 and 4 will receive an additional £38 as well as the 2.5%. This will be payable in all four UK countries.
- In England only, there will be additional money for staff training targeted directly on those non-clinical staff who often lose out when training budgets are cut.
- Also in England only, there will be £38 paid to staff on Bands 5, 6, 7 and 8(a) who are required to register to practice. This money is a contribution to their professional fees.

Future years

In addition to the improved pay offer for this year, unions, employers and governments have agreed to enter into talks prior to the next pay round, to consider improvements to the Agenda for Change pay structure and its terms and conditions. While this is only an agreement to talks, it does provide an opportunity for UNISON to pursue long-standing policies such as a reduction in the working week and the abolition of Band 1.

PAY 2007/08

AGENDA FOR CHANGE GROUPS

Following discussions at meetings of the Staff Council Executive on 24 and 30 July between the NHS trades unions, NHS Employers and the Department of Health the Secretary of State has confirmed that the following offer can be made in respect of staff in England:

- £400 for staff on pay points 1-7 with 1.5% payable from 1 April 2007 and the remainder from 1 November 2007.
- 2.5% + £38 for staff on pay points 8-18 with 1.5% from 1 April 2007 and the remainder from 1 November 2007.
- 2.5% with 1.5% payable from 1 April 2007 and with the balance from 1 November 2007 for all other staff.
- Funding to the equivalent of £25 per member of staff who is not required to have clinical professional registration to practice is made available by the Department of Health in 2007/08 to trusts to support training projects for that group of staff. Projects to be agreed locally in partnership with applications for funding signed off by the trust chief executive and staff side chair.
- A payment of £38 a year to AfC clinical staff in bands 5-8(A) inclusive who are in professions where registration is a mandatory requirement of practice to support the payment of fees for their clinical registration from 2007 to 2010 inclusive, by when it will have been jointly reviewed.
- A statement (set out below) about the issues that will be discussed in multi-year pay deal talks. The statement does not pre-commit any party to agree a multi-year pay deal or to pre-agree any specific element. It does not exclude discussion of other issues but it does indicate that these issues will be addressed in good faith.

Notes

UK devolved administrations

Health departments in the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have already agreed to pay an un-staged 2.5% pay award for 2007/2008. In addition to this, they will be recommending discussions on the possibility of multi-year talks on pay and conditions together with the following measures to support lower paid staff, to their ministers:

- the difference between 2.5% and £400 for staff on pay points 1-7 from 1 November
- an additional £38 for staff on pay points 8-18 from 1 November

Training monies

In recognition of the impact of pressures on training budgets in the current year it has been agreed that funds will be made available by the Department of Health, in

England to partners in trusts. This money is particularly intended to support projects on training for those staff who are not required to have clinical professional registration to practice. The funding will be released to provide a sum per trust equivalent to £25 per member of staff in post who does not require clinical professional registration to practice upon receipt of plans signed off by the chief executive and staff side chair of the local organisation. Guidance associated with the funding will include reference to the value of providing improved access to apprenticeships and other significant training opportunities and not just short term training.

The parties to the agreement will urge local partners to ensure that dedicated resources are available locally in future years to ensure continuity of opportunity for training for these groups

Support for professional fees

This payment is intended to support the payment of clinical registration fees for those clinical staff in England who are required to be registered to practice. Payment will be made to appropriate Agenda for Change staff in bands 5-8(A) inclusive. Payment will be made from 1 November 2007 and each year until November 2010 by when it will have been reviewed.

The payment of £38 was arrived at by reference to the recent increase of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) fees and equates to 50% of the current NMC fee.

This allowance will cover relevant staff requiring registration by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), Health Professions Council (HPC), General Dental Council (GDC) and Royal Pharmaceutical Society or other body designated by the NHS Staff Council Executive.

Graduate employment

The trade unions, NHS Employers and health departments remain committed to continuing the existing talks on the employment opportunities for newly qualified health professionals, and to accelerate those talks in order to address problems for unemployed health graduates as soon as possible.

Multi-year pay talks

All parties (ie the four UK health departments, NHS Employers and the NHS trades unions) are committed to entering into discussions on the potential for a multi-year pay deal to cover all or part of the next Comprehensive Spending Review period. Any potential multi-year deal would have to be good for staff and represent good value for money for patients and the taxpayer and be affordable for the NHS. Such discussions do not at this stage

imply the commitment of any of the parties to a multi-year deal. The parties have, however, agreed that the following issues should be addressed during discussions

On pay structure

All parties are committed to reviewing the Agenda for Change pay scales with reference to the number of incremental pay points, the opportunities for incremental progression and the appropriate structure at the bottom of the pay spine.

On conditions of service

All parties are committed to review conditions of service with the aim of better matching the total employment package to the needs of staff and the Service. Within this there will be a specific review of the facilities arrangements for trades unions to take part in partnership working, and also of the future of the 'Improving Working Lives' initiative in England, and similar initiatives elsewhere in the UK.

On career development

All parties are committed to ensure that staff at all levels have appropriate opportunities to develop their careers, and play their full part in improving services for patients. The discussions will cover access to training and career progression, and how employers can work with union learning representatives to improve all aspects of staff development.

On security for staff

All parties are committed to finding ways to assist staff mobility to support service improvements for patients, without unnecessary fear over job security or conditions of service and pensions, or unjustified differences in treatment between different staff.

On productivity

All parties are committed to identify approaches to improving productivity in the NHS which will generate benefits for patients and appropriate rewards for staff at all levels.

Process

If also approved by the health ministers in the devolved administrations, a formal offer on this basis will be made to the trades unions in the Staff Council Executive and the Pay Negotiating Council.

The parties to the Staff Council Executive believe that this formal offer represents the best that can be achieved through negotiation.

1 August 2007