



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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**CAMPAIGN FOR INCREASED PAY AND  
RECOGNITION FOR NHS HEALTHCARE WORKERS**  
**Statement by the Department for Health & Social Care, 4 May 2020**

Our hard-working healthcare workers do an incredible job. Many NHS staff are already benefitting from the most significant pay reforms in a decade, with similar reforms planned for other staff groups.

NHS staff are our greatest asset. In these most difficult of times and with ever increasing pressures on the NHS, they work incredibly hard, always putting patients first and keeping them safe whilst providing the high-quality care we all expect.

The overriding principle during this time of national emergency is to ensure NHS staff do not feel forced to work if they are unwell by ensuring they receive full pay if they contract the virus or must self-isolate, and for staff not to have to use their annual leave for any COVID-19 related absence. It is right that those who work well beyond the call of duty should be paid for every hour they work and receive premium pay rates for working unsocial hours. It is vital we care for those that we all rely on to care for us. The NHS has introduced a free-to-use staff support line and text service which all NHS staff can use for support, signposting and confidential listening from trained respondents. NHS staff have also been given free access to a series of apps to support their mental health and wellbeing.

In the longer term we are committed to ensuring that the NHS employment offer continues to attract and retain the compassionate and dedicated staff the NHS needs.

The independent Pay Review Bodies make annual recommendations on pay rises for NHS staff. The Pay Review Bodies are made up of experts and their recommendations are based on comprehensive assessment of evidence from key stakeholders, including NHS system partners and trade unions.

As part of our ambition to make the NHS the best employer in the world, the Department of Health and Social Care has reached multi-year pay and contract reform agreements with trade unions across the NHS workforce.

For Agenda for Change staff (including nurses, midwives, healthcare assistants and others) the agreement, supported by the majority of trades unions and their members, delivers pay





awards and contract reforms over three years from 2018/2019 to 2020/2021. The multi-year deal is already benefiting around one million NHS staff. Over the three years:

staff below the top of their pay band will receive pay increases of at least 9%; pay for most staff at the top of their pay band will rise by 6.5%;

The reforms agreed are not just about headline pay but changes that will help improve the working lives of our dedicated staff. For example, by supporting them to maintain their physical and mental health and wellbeing and introducing policies to help support staff to balance their working lives with family and personal commitments.

Junior doctors are also benefiting from a multi-year agreement (2019/20 to 2022/23) which ensures all pay scales increase by at least 8.2% over the four years; includes a new higher pay point for around 1 in 8 junior doctors to reflect their level of responsibility; increases enhancements for those working the most onerous shifts; and further strengthens safety and rest limits.

Our ambition is to reach similar multi-year pay and contract reform agreements with senior medical staff to reflect their roles as leaders in our NHS and attract and retain the specialists we need.

Turning to General Practice, in 2019 NHS England agreed with trade unions a five-year GP contract framework which fixed funding for the core practice contract for five years. The new contract provided funding clarity and certainty to practices and the settlement covers all aspects of practice income and expenses including practice staff pay. The full package for GP contract reform also sought to address workload by providing additional staff through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme and also saw the introduction of the new state-backed scheme for GP indemnity. As self-employed contractors to the NHS, it is largely up to GP practices how they distribute pay to their employees, although salaried GPs employed within the majority of practices are expected to be on terms and conditions no less favourable than those in the salaried GP model terms and conditions including the minimum and maximum salary. Employers have the flexibility to offer enhanced terms and conditions, for example, to aid recruitment and retention. We anticipate good employers would set wage rates that reflect the skills and experience of their staff.

We know pay is not the only reason healthcare workers choose a career in the NHS. The reward package also includes a pension scheme which is one of the best available. Members of the scheme can generally expect to receive around £3 to £6 in pension benefits value for every £1 they contribute.



The NHS Long Term Plan outlines the next steps in our mission to make the NHS a world class employer and deliver the workforce the NHS needs. To deliver these commitments the interim People Plan details the vision and immediate actions to make the NHS the best place to work. When published, the final NHS People Plan will set out the support and recognition that all NHS staff can expect to receive from their employer.

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