



Royal College of Nursing
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25 October 2022

Helen Whyley, RN, MA
Director, RCN Wales

Eluned Morgan, MS
Minister for Health & Social Services
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Dear Minister

Thank you for your letter of the 13 October 2022.

As you are aware RCN Wales is currently balloting members on possible strike action because of the insufficient pay award from the Welsh Government.

This is a distressing situation for us to have reached and potentially damaging to the successful social partnership relationship that has previously proven extremely beneficial to NHS Wales.

As we head into winter, we can both agree that the situation within NHS Wales is deeply concerning with risks to patients from insufficient nursing staff and a struggling, exhausted workforce. The RCN believe that the public deserves better and the way to retain and attract nursing staff is to reward them appropriately for their knowledge, skills, and commitment. The nursing workforce must be supported to provide high quality patient care. This must start with an above inflation pay rise.

In your letter to me of 13 October, you agreed that *'there have been substantial increases in funding for our NHS in 22/23 and onwards'*. You went on to state: *"a significant proportion of that spend will be directed towards improvements in services and recovery from the pandemic"*.

Continued

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Mae'r RCN yn cynrychioli nrysys a nyrsio, gan hyrwyddo rhagoriaeth mewn arfer a llunio polisiau iechyd
The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies



Mae'r Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol yn Goleg Brenhinol a sefydlwyd drwy Siarter Frenhinol ac Undeb Llafur Cofestr Arbennig a sefydlwyd a dan Ddeddf Undebau Llafur (Cydgrynhoi) 1992.

The RCN is a Royal College set up by Royal Charter and a Special Register Trade Union established under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

I strongly believe that without investment in the nursing workforce, by which I mean an above inflation pay rise, improvement in service for patients will not be possible. Following research by RCN Wales I am aware that there are currently 3,000 registered nurse vacancies in NHS Wales alone, an increase of over 1,200 from November 2021. This trend cannot continue. Without a workforce, the NHS will not be able to function.

I would urge you to consider your responsibilities for the nursing workforce in NHS Wales. The Welsh Government must find Welsh solutions to the problems that affect the Welsh people and find ways to protect our NHS services. RCN Wales is ready and waiting to open discussions if you have a genuine commitment to improve the current pay award.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Whyley', written in a cursive style.

**HELEN WHYLEY, RN, MA
DIRECTOR, RCN WALES**

cc: Russell George MS, Chair, Health & Social Care Committee