

P-05-1052 Give Nurses a pay rise in line with other frontline staff during COVID-19 pandemic

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 12 Ionawr 2021
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Reference: RS20/14570

Introduction

Petition number: P-05-1052

Petition title: Give Nurses a pay rise in line with other frontline staff during COVID-19 pandemic.

Text of petition: The Welsh Government has announced it would be awarding doctors and dentists a 2.8% pay rise, stating that the pay rise 'reflects the commitment of the people who make sure our NHS is there for you'.

Despite this, nursing staff, many of whom contracted the virus while working, were not included in the pay rise.

As a newly qualified mental health nurse, I am asking the Senedd to reconsider this decision and reflect the dedication of nursing staff by giving them the pay rise they deserve.



Defence of nursing staff not being included in this pay rise is that we are receiving a 6.2% pay rise over 3 years, a pay rise that we would have received anyway and not in recognition of our hard work during these difficult times.

Two thirds of nurses who contracted Covid-19 are still experiencing the after effects of the virus while continuing to carry out their duty as a nurse (Nursing Times, 2020).

At the time of this petition, over 200 NHS staff, including nurses have died from coronavirus in the UK (The Guardian, 2020). This shows the ultimate sacrifice that nursing staff are willing to make to care for our patients, and yet they are not being given a pay rise along with their hard working colleagues.

In the last data analysis conducted by the UK Government in April 2020 of coronavirus infection rates, 16.2% of those infected were key workers who include nursing staff, accounting for nearly a fifth of confirmed cases (CEBM, 2020).

Background

Determination of NHS pay is devolved to the devolved administrations, although the NHS Pay Review Body (PRB) makes recommendations to the UK and devolved governments. In terms of increases in NHS pay and conditions during 2020, the position is as follows:

- In July 2020, all groups of doctors and dentists were awarded a 2.8% pay increase. This included consultants, doctors in training, specialty and associate specialist (SAS) doctors, salaried GPs and dentists. This was following on from the recommendations of the Doctors and Dentists Review Body, which the Welsh Government had accepted;
- In September 2020, Welsh Government confirmed that all staff working within GP practices would also receive a 2.8% pay uplift;
- 1 April 2020 began the third year of the NHS Wales three year pay deal for NHS nurses in Wales. The Welsh Government Minister for Health and Social Services has noted that pay award negotiations for nurses run on a separate cycle to doctors and a multi-year agreement has already been made with nurses. This was included in a 6.5% pay-

rise (over 3 years) in 2018 for all NHS Wales staff on Agenda for Change terms and conditions.

- NHS-employed staff were not eligible for the Welsh Government's £500 Social Care Special Workforce Payment.

Welsh Government response

In his letter to the Chair of the Petitions Committee, the Minister for Health and Social Services acknowledges the challenges and immense pressure facing the health workforce in Wales. The Minister's letter explains that:

The current three-year pay agreement sees some of the most important changes to working practices in a decade, which includes a range of pay and non-pay proposals that will benefit staff and patients. Most NHS staff below the top of their pay band will benefit from pay increases through the re-structuring of the pay bands – higher starting pay, removal of overlapping pay points and shorter pay scales. As the three-year deal comes to an end and we enter the pay rounds for April 2021 for all NHS staff, including Agenda for Change staff, we are committed to working with our NHS union and employer partners through the independent pay body review process to ensure the best possible reward package.

The Minister confirms that he has asked for the pay review round to be brought forward to report as soon as possible in 2021, but explains that the ultimate timing of the pay review bodies is set by UK Government. There needs to be UK Government support for the funding of any increased pay settlement for the NHS and all public sector workers to ensure they are rewarded fairly.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.