

Briefing for the Petitions Committee

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 17 Ionawr 2017
Petitions Committee | 17 January 2017

Research Briefing:

Petition number: P-05-718

Petition title: NHS Wales Pay

Text of petition: How can it be right that NHS workers in Wales some earning as low as £7.80 per hour doing much needed jobs when the Welsh Government is funding such non jobs as Future Generations Commissioner on 100k per annum and a Welsh Language Commissioner on 90k and many such newly created non jobs. These new layers of silly non jobs should be abolished and the money given to low paid NHS staff.

Background

The NHS Pay Review Body (NHSPRB) is an independent body that makes recommendations to the UK Government on the pay, terms and conditions of all staff paid under Agenda for Change and employed in the NHS. This includes making recommendations to the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport in Wales. In reaching its recommendations the Review Body takes evidence from the 4 UK governments, trade unions and NHS Employers. It has to consider the following in making its recommendations:

- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified staff;
- regional/local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff;
- the funds available to the Health Departments, as set out in the Government's Departmental Expenditure Limits;
- the Government's inflation target;
- the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in the NHS;
- the overall strategy that the NHS should place patients at the heart of all it does and the mechanisms by which that is to be achieved.

The NHSPRB published '[NHS Pay Review Body. Twenty-Ninth Report 2016](#)' which sets out its 2016/17 recommendations on the pay uplift for NHS staff, including a **1 per cent increase** to all Agenda for Change pay points from 1 April 2016 in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The report emphasises that the NHSPRB has to produce recommendations at a time of complex change for the NHS across the UK:

All four countries are aiming simultaneously to meet demanding efficiency targets and deliver transformational change through service redesign and new models of care, whilst continuing to respond to every day service requirements and meet the demands of regulators.

Public sector pay policy has been set out by the UK government for the next four years and provides the context for our recommendations in England. The policy position for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is short term for this year's remit, given that these countries all have elections in May 2016. However, with public money remaining constrained, it seems highly likely that public sector pay restraint will continue for some years. We will have an increasingly important role to monitor the sustainability of this policy for our remit group, in whole or in part. Agenda for Change pay scales need to be seen as competitive, to attract and retain the calibre of staff required to support and deliver high quality patient care. This means taking a longer term view as well as making our annual recommendations.

Welsh Government action

The previous Health and Social Services Minister, Mark Drakeford AM accepted the recommendations on pay from both the NHS Pay Review Body and the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration – in line with the offers made elsewhere in the UK.

The Welsh Government issued its pay circular [AfC\(W\)1/2016](#) to NHS Health Boards/ Trusts on 30 March 2016, informing them of the pay arrangements for employees covered by the Agenda for Change agreement in Wales and of the agreement to implement the Living Wage increase. It states that:

1. The living Wage will increase from 1 January 2016 for all directly employed NHS staff to £8.25 per hour. Eligible staff will have their pay for January – March 2016 adjusted and arrears paid accordingly. From 2017 onwards, any future changes to the Living Wage hourly rate, which are accepted for implementation in NHS Wales, will be aligned to the NHS pay award date.
2. The revised pay scales for 2016–17, set out in this circular, apply from 1 April 2016.
 - All pay spine points have increased by one per cent, consolidated
 - The on-call allowance will increase by one per cent to £18.54 per session for weekdays and weekends and £37.09 per session for public holidays with effect from 1 April 2016
 - The sleeping-in allowance will increase by one per cent to £31.93 with effect from 1 April 2016.
3. The provisions of incremental pay progression will continue to apply.

The Welsh Government estimated that pay rises, including the living wage, will cost an estimated £40m a year. In highlighting the 1% consolidated pay increase for all Agenda for Change staff in the Welsh NHS, the Welsh Government also stated that there would be no pay rise for NHS Senior Executives.

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.