

HEALTHWORKER BULLETIN

All unions • All bands • One fight



**A one-off payment and only 5%
for 2023/24 is not good enough**

REJECT

the pay offer

After finally agreeing to direct negotiations with the unions on NHS pay, the government has offered Agenda for Change staff an additional 6% on the 2022/23 as a non-consolidated lump sum, and a 5% across the board offer for 2023/24 (except for the bottom of Band 2 which will be abolished and therefore receive a bigger rise).

Almost all the unions nationally are recommending that staff accept the offer. We say that we should reject it.

Why?

We recognise the hard work of the unions in getting to this position against a government that wasted months refusing to even directly negotiate. This has been the result of thousands of NHS staff taking strike action across the service in pursuit of a restorative pay offer.

The additional offer for 2022/23 is non-consolidated, meaning it is a one-off payment and will not be in our pay packets going forward. This is

NOT pay restoration. It does not make up for everything we have lost in real terms since 2010, let alone since the cost of living started to spiral out of control last year.

A 5% offer for 2023/24 means that, after this year's one off payment is over and done, we may end up with **less** in our pay packets next year than this year. The government has already made noises about "only being able to afford" a 1% offer for each of the two years after that.

Again, this is **not pay restoration**. At best it is keeping up with inflation. At worst it is more real terms pay cuts. It will do little to address the long term recruitment and retention crisis in the service.

Nevertheless it is a significant movement from what the government were initially prepared to offer. This comes after relatively few strike days from only certain sections of the workforce. Think what we could achieve if we reject this offer, re-ballot to renew and extend our strike mandates to cover more staff, and step up the action.

We've come so far, why stop now?

When the #NHSpay15 campaign was launched in 2020, we chose the 15% pay demand because that represented a restoration of what we had lost in real terms since 2010. These were the days before runaway inflation ate into our pay packets even more.

Through engagement with our unions we managed to win first GMB then Unite to back the 15% demand, and helped shift other unions to a position of putting in proper pay claims.

Grassroots organising in the RCN delivered a fantastic strike mandate despite the anti-union laws. Other unions delivered mandates where they are best organised, for example in the ambulance Trusts and physios in the CSP.

We have won the argument that the Pay Review Body (PRB) process simply provides a smokescreen for governments to continually make insulting pay offers to NHS staff.

Through relatively limited strike action we have forced a hostile government into direct negotiations where they have made concessions. But now most of our unions are telling us to accept a pay offer far short of the claims they put in. They have a deal on the table that includes a woolly promise to make the PRB process work better but with no guarantee of a return to direct bargaining in future years.

Make no mistake - it was strike action that got the unions in the room with the government, and it is strike action that will deliver full pay restoration.

Rather than winding down our dispute we should be stepping it up:

- When your union ballots you on the pay deal, **vote to reject**
- Re-ballot for strike action. Organise in every Trust to meet the 50% threshold
- Through your union branches and committees, push for the fullest possible co-ordination of action between different unions. Say no to divide-and-rule tactics
- Escalate action from a day's strike here and there to a proper programme of rolling strike action with minimal derogations
- Build unity between clinical and non-clinical staff, across different grades and unions. We **all** make the NHS work, we **all** deserve a proper pay rise.

JUNIOR DOCTORS GO FOR #PAYRESTORATION

A BMA member writes...

Junior Doctors across England held their first national strike in 7 years with a 72-hour walkout from 13-16th March.

Pay has been degraded by 26% in real terms in the past 15 years, and this is contributing to low morale and understaffing as doctors leave the NHS to practice in other countries or choose alternative careers.

The BMA membership, following a grassroots campaign in the union, are seeking full pay restoration from the government to reverse this trend, as well as safeguards against future below-inflation pay offers.

What is *Healthworker Bulletin*?

Healthworker Bulletin is a new bulletin for all health and care workers - doctors, nurses, AHPs, paramedics, porters, admin staff - produced by the NHS Workers Say No campaign.

Contact us to find out more:

Email: nhsworkerssayno@gmail.com

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