



The Independent Federation of Nursing in Scotland

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4th July 2017

IO'N/ai

Mr Dave Watson
Office of the First Minister
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Dear Mr Watson

I am receipt of your letter dated 27th June 2017, although sadly there are no specifics as to your position within your organisation.

Please be assured I am fully conversant with the remit of the Minister responsible for NHS pay, however the lifting of any cap on NHS workers' pay would be put before the Scottish Parliament and ratified therein. I note with interest, the content of your letter and the example offered in terms of the low pay threshold. That having been said, nurses and carers earning above that low pay threshold have not benefited, as you so rightly declared in Para 4 of the said letter.

It is the view of the Independent Federation of Nursing members, that the arrangement of jointly commissioned work to be undertaken, to assess the effects and impact of pay restraint will not only be time consuming and an unnecessary expense, but will be nothing more than an exercise in semantical argument, when at the end of the day, the issue will then attract procrastination. There is no credible debate against presenting data, namely exit figures in nursing exceeds input figures. Inflation rate exceeds pay awards.

The issue of health, being devolved, empowers the Scottish Government to lift the pay cap. Adverting to the above, can you please state whether it is the intention to lift the said cap. It is our members view that little work is necessary to justify what is already known, namely the need for a significant pay rise for NHS staff.

Whilst we are waiting for your response, relative to the specific question, we shall post your reply of 27th June 2017 on the Independent of Federation of Nursing website.

Yours sincerely

Irene F. O'Neill (Mrs)
General Secretary



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30 JUL 2017

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Your ref: IO'N/ai
Our ref: 2017/0019633
27 June 2017

Dear Mrs O'Neill

Thank you for your letter of 23 May 2017 to the First Minister concerning the 15 pay uplift. NHS pay, terms and conditions come within the remit of Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, and I have been asked to reply.

It may be helpful if I provide some detail around the recent 1% pay uplift, although I appreciate that you may be aware of much of this. The basis for determining and implementing pay settlements for Agenda for Change NHS Scotland staff is the NHS Pay Review Body (NHSPRB), which independently makes recommendations on pay for public sector workers. For 2017-18 the NHSPRB recommended a 1% pay rise, which the Scottish Government accepted. We supplemented this with an increase of at least £400 for those earning under and up to £22,000 a year, which places all NHS Scotland staff above the Scottish Living Wage and demonstrates our commitment to continue to target and prioritise resources towards those on the lowest incomes. Unlike other parts of the UK, the Scottish Government has consistently accepted the NHSPRB recommendations, and in consequence NHS Scotland staff, including nurses and midwives, are better rewarded than their counterparts elsewhere in the UK.

Pay restraint has, without doubt, been difficult, and over the last few years the Scottish Government has tried to strike a balance between delivering real but modest pay increases to staff and managing the very tight settlement which we receive from the UK Government.

Having said this, staff who have been earning above the low pay threshold for each of the last seven years will not have benefitted from the Scottish Government's low pay measures mentioned above and will have been subject to pay restraint. We have therefore undertaken to set up a partnership process with various stakeholders, which will jointly commission work to help assess the effects and impact of pay restraint and feed into the evidence which we provide to the independent NHS Pay Review Bodies.

It is also significant that, unlike other parts of the UK, we have a no compulsory redundancy commitment, which we know staff value highly. As you and your members will no doubt be aware, the no compulsory redundancy agreement for NHS Scotland has been extended for a further year from April 2017.

I hope that this response clarifies the position and has been of interest.

Yours sincerely

Dave Watson

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