

How does the NHS pay award compare with GMB's pay claim?

After consulting GMB members on what should be included in the pay claim, the following was agreed and submitted to the previous Government on 6th February 2024 alongside a request for pay negotiations. The pay claim was sent to the new Secretary of State for Health & Social Care on 15th July 2024.

The claim was for:

- **£1.50 per hour** consolidated increase for all staff on Agenda for Change contracts (or RPI, whichever is greater).
- **Restorative Pay.** A commitment to restore lost earnings and conditions and a plan on how this will be achieved.
- **Measures to ensure the NHS never falls below the Foundation Living Wage.**
- **Unsocial Hours Enhancements.** All changes made under the 2018 pay settlement are reversed, including the application of Annex 5 for all ambulance service workers.
- **Ambulance Retirement Age.** An urgent review into the retirement age of ambulance service workers with a view to lowering the retirement age to 60, in line with other emergency service workers.
- **Free NHS Car Parking.** Restore funding for NHS trusts to provide parking at no cost for NHS workers.
- Immediate action to rectify **Job Evaluation and Equal Pay** issues.
- **Safe Staffing** levels.
- **Parity of Pay** and payment of this year's pay award to outsourced and contracted out staff.

GMB welcomes this pay award as the first step towards addressing pay across the NHS but is not making any voter recommendation in this ballot as it falls short of GMB's pay claim. NHS staff below the top of Band 8a would have benefitted more financially with GMB's pay claim of £1.50 per hour.



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Government advised in their evidence that they had only budgeted 2% for NHS pay this year. Current RPI inflation is at 2.9% meaning that this pay award is 2.6% above inflation. Therefore, the 5.5% pay award demonstrates a willingness to start to restore pay levels and it is the first above inflation pay award that has been received in many years.

The pay award puts the lowest paid on AfC 64 pence per hour above the National Minimum Wage and 8 pence per hour above the Foundation Living Wage. The AfC pay structure work to be undertaken by the NHS Staff Council will hopefully put in place measures to ensure pay does not fall below the Foundation Living Wage again.

The PRB recommendation report expresses the importance of continuing the NHS Staff Council work on job evaluation, in particular, refreshing the Nursing & Midwifery Profiles. It also expresses the need that resources and funds are put in place to carry out this work locally once the process of reviewing the profiles is complete. GMB will continue to support members through job reviews at a local level in other professions.

Whilst safe staffing levels were not specifically addressed in the PRB recommendation report, the recognition was clear that in order to recruit and retain staff in the NHS, pay needs to be improved.

The PRB recommendation report and pay award does not mention GMB's pay claim asks on unsocial hours enhancements, ambulance retirement age and car parking charges. GMB remains committed to campaigning on these issues nationally and locally.

This pay award is funded for those on AfC contracts only. GMB is currently considering how best we can pursue parity of pay for contracted out staff not on AfC. More details to follow.

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