

Private and confidential

By email

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SD/spw

Dear Colleague

8 February 2024

Re: The 2023-24 in-year general practice salaried staff pay award

As you may know, the Royal College of Nursing represents over half a million nursing staff across the UK, of which 22,000 are GPNs in England. As you will be aware, last year, UK Government confirmed that all salaried practice staff including General Practice Nurses (GPNs), would receive a 6% pay rise following acceptance of the recommendation of the Independent Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration.

However, as you may know, a vast majority of general practice nurses have not received this uplift. This has widened the gulf between nursing staff working in general practice and those working in the National Health Service on NHS pay terms and conditions who received their uplift last year.

We are writing to ask that you support general practice nursing staff by encouraging the practices within your LMC constituency to pass on the proportionate share of the uplifts received in November, backdated to April 2023. Where this is not financially possible, we ask that you support our call for practices to be transparent with the nurses over what they are able to pay.

To better understand the experiences of our members, we surveyed those employed in general practice to ask if they had received a 6% rise, a lower rise or nothing at all for 2023/24. In a survey with nearly 1,500 RCN member responses from nurses employed in general practice we found that:

- 2 in 5 respondents (44%) did not receive any pay increase in 2023/2024
- A third of respondents (33%) said they received less than 6%, with the average pay uplift being 3.2%.
- Only 1 in 5 respondents (20%) received a pay award of 6%, of these, 20% did not receive back pay to April 2023.

Nearly two thirds (64%) of members who responded said that they were concerned that their employer was not being transparent about their total pay award for 2023

and of those, three-quarters (78%) had asked their employer to communicate with them about the pay award with only a third of these having received a response. Of those that received a response, more than a quarter indicated that their employer told them the funds are needed for other running costs.

It is clear the way the expenses uplift is applied and distributed via the Global Sum, leads to inequity amongst general practices. We recognise that some practices are not receiving enough additional funding to cover the total 6% increase for all salaried staff members, whereas others will in fact get more than they need to do so.

We continue to call on Government to ensure that funding for general practice is applied in an equitable way and are committed to working with General Practices to ensure practices are able to pay nursing staff appropriately to ensure a sustainable general practice model and future for nursing staff working in general practice.

We have been working closely with the British Medical Council General Practice Committee for England (BMA GPCE) to ensure a collective response to this issue. We are both in agreement general practice is not funded sufficiently to pay nursing staff at a level to be able to recruit and retain the staff needed to deliver the services your patients need. In addition, we agree that practices are underfunded to the extent that they cannot pass on much needed cost-of- living pay uplifts to their employees.

We ask that you join us in raising these issues with Government.

Nursing staff working in general practice provide vital primary care to their local communities and are the bedrock of the services available in general practice surgeries. The disparity in pay, coupled with difficult working conditions and staffing shortages has meant that general practice has more and more nursing staff leave. It is important that our members believe they are valued by the practice and that general practices can be the employer of choice for nurses in their area.

I ask that you work with us in supporting general practices in paying their staff the uplift promised to them and ensure that the government hears our collective call for a better funding system for nursing staff salaries in general practice.

If it would be helpful to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Dodsworth
Regional Director
RCN Northern and Yorkshire & the Humber regions