



Mr Christopher Pilgrim
Review Body on Doctors and Dentists Remuneration
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December 2022

Dear Mr Christopher Pilgrim

Thank you for the DDRBs hard work and independent report and observations which have been invaluable.

I would like to take this opportunity to say I truly value the hard work and commitment of all of our dedicated healthcare workers in Wales, at all times but particularly during this challenging time.

I am now writing to formally commence the 2023-24 pay round for medical and dental staff in Wales including general medical practitioners and general dental practitioners. In this pay round I would like your advice on what would be a fair and affordable pay rise for staff to recognise their dedication and continued hard work whilst the NHS is supporting the recover efforts. The pay award should address motivation, recruitment and retention to ensure the NHS delivers service needs. I am also very conscious of the continued inflationary pressures felt by us all and the impact on take home pay from energy, mortgage and food costs.

I urge you to make a pay rise recommendation that truly recognises the pressures on pay, the commitment and hard work of our NHS staff. However, affordability is a key issue for Welsh Government, in the absence of increased UK Government funding, any changes to NHS staff's terms and conditions will need to come from existing budgets that are already struggling with the inflationary costs, energy, and the cost-of-living crisis. Therefore, any consideration of NHS staff's pay and conditions will need to remain affordable.

For SAS Doctors I am not remitting for those on multiyear deals. However, for Specialty Doctors you will be aware that I took the decision to freeze the top of the 2008 Specialty Doctor Contract until it is aligned to the top of the 2021 contract, as explained this was on the grounds to preserve the integrity of the new contract pay scales. Also my overriding objective for making this decision was to not undermine the transition and implementation of the

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

reformed 2021 contract by discouraging doctors from transferring to the 2021 contract from the 2008 contract on grounds of pay. Welsh Government's policy is to ensure the 2021 contract benefits can be fully realised i.e. improved terms and conditions for doctors, leading to better services and patient experience along with addressing long standing safety and wellbeing concerns for this group of doctors.

However, given the strength of feeling towards this decision from the Welsh SAS Committee, I have asked the committee to work in social partnership with my officials and employers to look again if there are other options not considered to align the top pay points of the two contracts (2008 and 2021), however I stressed any proposals needs to be on a cost neutral basis and should not undermine our policy objective of encouraging movement to the 2021 contract.

I would also welcome any observations from the pay review body in relation to this. I have also noted that DHSC have asked that you give very careful consideration to the impact any such recommendations might have on the integrity of the agreed reforms to the contract and on the delivery of their intended benefits as these would equally apply in Wales.

In order to support your work, I will provide written evidence to the Pay Review Body and I will also plan to attend the oral evidence session when arranged.

I would like to receive your advice and recommendations as soon as possible to ensure that payment of any award to our dedicated NHS workforce is not unduly delayed past April 2022.

I look forward to receiving your advice and recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services