

## **Final Offer for junior doctors in NHS Wales**

This sets out the Welsh Government's offer to resolve the industrial dispute over pay during 2023/24. As a government we have listened and understand the concerns from doctors, we have worked together in social partnership to find a solution to the dispute so that junior doctors can return to work to continue delivering care and treatment to patients.

Welsh Government will invest in the junior doctor pay bill and additional funding has been identified in 2024/25 budgets to enable this to happen, this additional investment will be subject to additional contractual and operational reform.

### **Uplift to junior doctors pay in 23/24**

Welsh Government recognised the strength of feeling from junior doctors in Wales over the pay award in 2023/24, and that a significantly increased offer would need to be made akin to the offer accepted by junior doctors in Scotland to resolve the pay dispute.

The offer recognises the balance between the funding available and the affordability of the offer going forward.

Our starting point for formal pay negotiations has been to recognise the additional 1.5% consolidated increase Welsh junior doctors gained from 2022/23, match the pay uplift given to junior doctors in NHS Scotland and limit backdating of any offer above the 5% already paid. However, we have listened to the junior doctor committee representatives during these negotiations regarding previous pay awards and their views around backdating of the offer.

We have now arrived at the following final offer which is the best offer we can make within the remit we have been set -

***An additional 7.4% to be paid to all junior doctors and backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. This offer if agreed is outside of the DDRB recommendation for 2024/25. If DDRB recommendations in relation to junior doctors are below the annual inflation rate at April 2024 (as defined by the main measure used by the Office of National Statistics), then the Welsh Government commit to further talks with the BMA Welsh Junior Doctor Committee regarding pay for 2024/25. This will make the totality of the pay offer to juniors for 23/24 a 12.4% pay uplift.***

### **DDRB reform**

The Welsh Government recognises and has engaged with the BMA on concerns regarding the independence of the Review Body for Doctors' and Dentists' Pay (DDRB) and is committed to restoring the profession's confidence in the pay review body. As part of this, from the 2025/26 review round, the Welsh Government commits to progressing the actions in the report produced in social partnership by the BMA and the Welsh Government in late 2023, including taking actions within their own power or, where appropriate, writing to the UK Government to confirm they are supportive of further changes within the remit of that government. These actions include but are not limited to:

- Support for all changes to the pay review process agreed as part of the England Consultants pay deal in April 2024.
- To ensure that any remit letter is neutral and solely to start the process and indicate that Wales wants pay recommendations without reference to affordability.
- To agree that recommendations of the DDRB are only rejected rarely and due to a compelling reason.
- To ensure that the Welsh Government participates in the review process in a timely manner in accordance with the timelines set out by the DDRB.
- To promptly implement the recommendations of the DDRB upon publication.

### **Study leave and budget**

A task and finish group will be established, led in social partnership by the Welsh Government, the BMA and NHS Wales Employers with the involvement of HEIW, to agree changes to the study leave and study budget system. The group will consider: the barriers to accessing educational/development time including study leave and budgets, the amount of budget allocated to each trainee, and improvements to systems, processes to develop a new system that will enhance access to and transparency of study budgets.

### **Fatigue and facilities**

All parties recognise that large parts of the NHS Wales Fatigue and Facilities Charter remain unimplemented in health boards and trusts, and that successful implementation of the charter will improve working conditions and provide a strong foundation for and greater confidence in future contract reform. Therefore, the Welsh Government, NHS Wales Employers and BMA Wales will recommit to the provisions outlined in the charter and work in social partnership , under the auspices of the MDBG, in monitoring implementation plans and timelines within health boards and trusts.

As part of this work an assessment will be undertaken to establish implementation to date and to understand the barriers/gaps in achieving full implementation. Once this assessment has been completed a costed achievable plan to achieve full implementations will be developed.

As part of monitoring, annual reports detailing each health board's implementation toolkit returns (including progress so far and action plans for outstanding implementation) will be published on the Partnership Hub and be publicly available by the end of 2024/25.

**However, this offer is dependent on the following being agreed -**

### **Contract Reform**

Both parties will commit to re-entering contract negotiations as soon as practicable once a new committee is appointed later this year with the ambition of reaching an

agreement that, subject to approval by BMA members, would begin implementation in 2025/26. The contract negotiations will build upon the contract rejected in 2022, whilst recognising that significant changes will be required.

**BMA Recommendation** - all offers are subject to the three BMA branches of practice recommending the offer to members for acceptance.