



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Helen Whately MP
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The Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
By email to: george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk

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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 27 September to the Prime Minister on behalf of a number of your constituents about UNISON's claim for an NHS pay increase. Your correspondence has been passed to this department. Please accept my apologies for the long delay in replying, which has been caused by an unprecedented volume of correspondence in recent months.

I am incredibly grateful to all NHS staff who have stepped up throughout this pandemic. I understand the frustration and stress staff are experiencing and I am working to ensure they have the support that they need.

We have sought to reach multi-year pay and contract reform agreements with trades unions across the NHS workforce. It is important that the overall pay package recognises the hard work of staff, while allowing us to increase the NHS workforce.

In 2018, we announced multi-year pay and contract reform for NHS staff employed on the Agenda for Change (AfC) contract. This was agreed in partnership with NHS trades unions, including UNISON, and delivers year-on-year pay increases along with wider contract reforms over three years from 2018/19 to 2020/21.

At the latest Spending Review the Government announced a pause on pay uplifts for most public sector workers. However, given the unique impact of COVID-19 on the health service, the Government committed to continue to provide for pay rises for over one million NHS workers employed on the AfC contract in 2021/22 despite the challenging economic context. Recommendations on NHS pay are made by the independent NHS Pay Review Body and they will report on their recommendations in the spring.

We will continue to work to make sure NHS staff have all the support they need and a better overall experience at work, both now and in the longer term. In July we published the NHS People Plan at www.england.nhs.uk/ournhspeople, and NHS England and NHS Improvement is now working with NHS trusts to put it into practice.

I hope this reply is helpful.

HELEN WHATELY