

The RT Hon Theresa May MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

Monday 19th June

Dear Prime Minister,

By your own admission, austerity, and a lack of investment in the public sector was a significant factor in the general election result. Many have said that the pay freeze in the public sector was in part to blame for your failure to secure a parliamentary majority, alongside senior health leaders who agree that people who work in our NHS should be fairly rewarded for the work they do.

Organisations that represent patients and our NHS workforce are calling for the Queen's Speech to mark a clear change in direction.

People who are working in the NHS are delivering care to the best of their ability but we are very worried that care is becoming unsafe. Our services are struggling to make do without the staff they need.

The Public Sector Pay Cap has forced professionals out of jobs they love. Those who stay are overstretched and under pressure to do ever more with less. The longstanding cap stands in the way of recruiting and retaining the best in health care. It is having a profound and detrimental effect on standards of care for people at a time when the NHS is short of staff across every discipline. This is alongside an uncertain future for EU nationals working in health and care.

Next month, our vital national service turns 69. In its seventieth year, you have the opportunity to show the country how much you value the lives of people who work in the NHS, and the people they serve.

We call on you to prioritise patient safety by guaranteeing safe staffing across all of our services and changing your policy on NHS pay. Government should remove the pay cap and address the real-terms loss of earnings so the NHS can retain and attract staff, resolve the workforce shortage and ensure safe patient care.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Davies, Chief Executive & General Secretary  
**Royal College of Nursing**

Dave Prentis, General Secretary  
**UNISON**

June Chandler, Lead Officer  
**British Association of Occupational Therapists**

Jon Restell, Chief Executive  
**Managers in Partnership**

Mick Armstrong, Chair  
**British Dental Association**

Steve Gillan, General Secretary  
**Prison Officers Association**

Annette Mansell Green, Head of Employment Relations  
**British Dietetic Association**

Jon Skewes, Director for Policy, Employment Relations and Communications  
**Royal College of Midwives**

Dr Mark Porter, Chair  
**British Medical Association**

Richard Evans OBE, Chief Executive  
**Society of Radiographers**

Lesley Anne Baxter, Chair  
**British & Irish Orthoptic Society**

Martin Furlong, Interim Head of Employment Relations  
**The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists**

Karen Middleton CBE, Chief Executive  
**Chartered Society of Physiotherapy**

Gail Cartmail, Assistant General Secretary  
**Unite**

Geoff Lester, National Negotiator  
**Federation of Clinical Scientists**

Kevin Brandstatter, Public Services Section and National Lead Organiser  
**GMB**