



Moving forward on NHS pay

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

4 November 2020

By email

Dear Prime Minister

You will be all too aware that tough times lie ahead for the NHS and the nation.

Winter's here, Covid-19 rates are rising fast again, and hospitals are admitting more infected patients than before restrictions were announced in March.

With a second wave upon us, intensive care units are under immense strain, with some rapidly nearing full capacity, and the Nightingale hospitals are on standby.

Once more NHS staff will be relied upon to protect and care for us all. But health workers are exhausted, with many still recovering from the first virus peak. They're anxious too, especially as they know what's coming this time.

There's also the added pressure of treating non-Covid patients from the backlog of cancelled appointments and operations from earlier in the year.

They feel stressed, burned out and fearful. It is increasingly unrealistic to ask them to carry on regardless.

As you know, NHS staff are due a pay rise in April. But if ever there was a time for their dedication and skill to be appreciated – and that increase to come early – it's now.

A significant increase this year would help health workers feel valued, by the entire country, and the government too. But bringing forward the wage rise in time for Christmas would also place the NHS in a better position to face the future.

The pandemic has affected staff profoundly and many may not stay around when the job is done. Raising pay this year could persuade them to change their minds and prove attractive to thousands of much-needed potential NHS recruits.



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The Scottish government has already made this commitment.

NHS staff are not simply motivated by pay. They do their jobs because they're passionate about making people well again, and because they want to make a difference.

Times may be tough, but you know morally this is the right decision to take. As you said at the Daily Mirror's Pride of Britain awards last weekend, NHS workers are the 'beating heart of the nation'.

It's time to do more than praise their courage and dedication. Grant them – and the NHS – the early pay increase they all deserve.

Yours sincerely

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Sara Gorton
Chair

Hannah Reed
Acting Secretary

Jon Skewes
Treasurer

NHS Staff Council (Staff Side) trade unions