



Campaign Briefing

This briefing sets out what's been happening to NHS pay since 2010; shows the impact of a 1% pay freeze on your pay; explains who the NHS Pay Review Body are; and why unions and their members must focus on pay.

NHS Pay in the Scottish Parliament

In May 2017 the Scottish Government made two important statements on pay.

- Cabinet Secretary for Health offered to prepare and submit joint evidence to the NHS Pay Review Body
- Cabinet Secretary for Health, repeated a previous offer that the Scottish Government would negotiate directly on NHS pay with NHS unions, providing all NHS unions agreed.

What is the NHS Pay Review Body (PRB)?

The NHS PRB is a non departmental public body (or Quango) which is supposed to be independent of Government and make recommendations on pay for all staff who are under Agenda for Change (150,000 workers in Scotland). They reach a recommendation after hearing from and taking evidence on pay from NHS employers, Government (incl devolved governments) and unions.

What has the PRB done for NHS pay recently?

Using Retail Prices Index (a measure of inflation used by govt) since 2010 wages in the NHS have fallen. (see table below) Even with measures in Scotland to try and mitigate some of the pressure on the lowest paid, UNISON members in the NHS are worse off with the PRB.

If the PRB is so bad why are NHS unions still in it?

UNISON Scotland does not support the PRB, recently UNISON wrote to the PRB questioning its independence and calling on it to ignore the government pay cap and deliver real wage rises for NHS workers. Whilst UNISON welcomes Scottish Pay Bargaining, other unions have so far refused to agree to this – as a result of the Governments requirement that ALL unions must agree to pay bargaining, at this point NHS workers remain wedded to the unfair PRB.

UNISON continues to lobby other unions to leave the PRB and in a twin track approach we have indicated that we will not support any joint submission which does not 'scrap the cap'.

Can't the government just make better awards than the PRB recommend?

In theory the Scottish Government has total control over pay in our NHS, in recent years this has allowed them to bottom weight some pay awards and to respond to the UNISON campaign which all but removed Band 1.

But it's important to note that the same government has also recommended that the PRB remain with the UK Treasury 1% cap. The nature of industrial relations in Scotland also means that the government are unlikely to move towards collective bargaining whilst some bigger 'staff organisations' refuse to break away from PRB.

Time to get active

UNISON branches across our NHS in Scotland have launched a campaign on pay. With opportunities to lobby Cabinet Ministers during this year's round of NHS Board Annual Reviews; social media campaigning and post-cards/petitions there's something for everyone.

You can find out more about the campaign at

<http://www.unison-scotland.org/service-groups-and-sectors/health> or call your local branch and see what they've got planned.

Social media user?

You can use the UNISON 'Twibbon' to let friends know what you think about the NHS Pay Cap <http://twibbon.com/support/scrap-the-cap-on-nhs-workers> Just log in using your Facebook or twitter account and follow the simple instructions.

Table NHS Pay Bands showing wage loss, per year, between 2010-2017

NHS PAY BAND	2010 PAY	2017 PAY	RPI PAY	TOTAL % LOSS	OVERALL LOSS PER YEAR
Top of Band 2	£16,753	£18,503	£20,305	8.9	£1,802
Top of Band 4	£21,798	£22,683	£26,419	14.1	£3,736
Top of Band 5	£27,534	£28,746	£33,371	13.9	£4,625
Top of Band 6	£34,189	£35,577	£41,473	14.1	£5,222