

“Remove the 1% pay cap and give us the money to give NHS Wales staff the pay rise they deserve” – Vaughan Gething

Welsh Health Secretary Vaughan Gething has called on the UK Government to remove the pay cap and make funds available to the Welsh Government so NHS Wales staff get the pay rise they deserve.

Tuesday 27 June 2017

Vaughan Gething said:

“I’ve today written to the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt, urging him to make the case to the UK Treasury to remove the cap on pay and make funds available across the UK to allow hard working NHS staff to receive a pay uplift of greater than 1%.

“Yesterday, the UK Government found more than £1bn to effectively end austerity in Northern Ireland. I fully expect them to make money available so that we can give our hardworking health service staff the pay rise they deserve. They deserve nothing less.”

Appointment to Human Tissue Authority announced

The appointment will run from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2020.

The Human Tissue Authority is responsible for the regulation of activities concerning the removal, storage, use and disposal of human tissue for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Vaughan Gething said:

“I am pleased William Horne has agreed to continue work on the Human Tissue Authority Board.

“I am confident he will continue to actively contribute to the Board and his wealth of experience will remain of great benefit to the Authority.

“I wish him well in the continuation of his role.”

[Award winning social business to launch new service and create 66 new jobs in South Wales Valleys](#)

The new service, which will create 66 new jobs over the next eighteen months in the South Wales valleys, is backed by £222,600 from the Welsh Government and will enable Connect Assist to launch the service imminently.

There is a high demand for such a service following a number of high profile allegations of mal-practice by fundraising agencies in recent years. As a consequent a number of charities pulled their contracts with these agencies, many of which ceased trading.

The new service for charities will include the provision of emergency appeal response lines and fundraising appeals. It will also handle enquiries around the work that each charity undertakes as well as enquiries around supporting charities.

Connect Assist, which is based in Nantgarw and celebrated its 10th anniversary last year, was set up with the main aim of making a positive difference to people living and working in the Valleys

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“The Welsh Government is pleased to support Connect Assist in launching this new service which will be creating a significant number of local jobs and offering a range of career opportunities for people.

“Connect Assist currently employs 100 people and its work over the past ten years has made a real impact, supporting and helping people into employment which has been recognized through a number of well deserved awards.”

Ron Moody, Client Services Director said:

“We are delighted to be launching this much needed ethical fundraising service. Having worked with the charity sector for over a decade helping charities to help their beneficiaries, this new fundraising and supporter care service is a natural extension to

our offering. Support from the Welsh Government is a very important element to the launch and our objective of creating sustainable jobs.’’

The organization focuses on providing information, advice guidance and support to individuals facing challenging circumstances. It has a strong track record of providing professional multi-channel helpline and contact centre services, web systems and consultancy services to not for profit organisations throughout the UK.

Connect Assist delivers 365 days a year 24 hours a day running professionally staffed charity helplines for organisations enabling people to contact the service at any time and in the way that suits them best.

[If you can't go Superfast yet – let us know](#)

Over 645,000 premises in Wales can already access superfast broadband thanks to Superfast Cymru, and by the end of the year this figure is expected to reach 690,000.

From 2018 the Welsh Government will be working on how to reach the final few per cent of premises without access to superfast broadband. So that this work is as accurate as possible it needs to hear from those not yet connected.

A list of potential premises has been published and is open for comments until July 13. An interactive map can help residents and businesses check if they are already included on the list. The Welsh Government also wants to hear from communities who have an interest in driving their own solutions.

Minister for Skills and Science Julie James said:

“With over eight out of ten premises in Wales now able to access superfast broadband, the situation has improved greatly. This compares with just over half in 2014. This progress has been largely thanks to Superfast Cymru which is continuing to the end of this year.

“However, we are now at the stage where we are looking at the final few percent of premises not covered by the Superfast Cymru rollout or by the telecommunications companies’ own plans. So that the work we carry out from 2018 onwards is as effective as possible we need those without access to superfast broadband to let us know and take part in the consultation.

“The consultation will help us to further refine the list of unconnected premises. The more response we receive, the more comprehensive the list will be.

“If there are communities that have an interest in driving their own solutions, I want to hear from them.

“This is your chance to influence what happens with the final few per cent of premises in Wales who are not yet able to access superfast broadband.”

The consultation is available on:

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/next-generation-access-broadband>.

Welsh Government appoints new Chief Optometric Adviser

Mr O’Sullivan qualified as an optometrist at Glasgow Caledonian University and Leeds General Infirmary.

He has served as Optometric Adviser to Hywel Dda University Health Board for over 14 years, where he has helped lead work to set up schemes and services to improve ophthalmology and optometry across Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion. Most recently, he has served as Optometric Adviser to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

As Chief Optometric Adviser, he will provide the Welsh Government with independent professional advice relating to optometric services and eye health matters in Wales. He will also lead the development of Welsh Government policy and legislation relating to the optometry profession and eye health.

Announcing the appointment, Dr Frank Atherton said:

“I’m very pleased to announce the appointment of David O’Sullivan as the new Chief Optometric Adviser to the Welsh Government.

“He will play a key role in helping to improve eye health in Wales, and will provide professional leadership of the optometry profession across the country. I very much look forward to working with him to further improve eye health and reduce inequalities.”

David O’Sullivan said:

"I am delighted to take up this post and to continue the excellent work to date. Wales is a very exciting place to practice optometry and the profession has worked tirelessly to improve the eye health of the population of Wales.

"I am privileged to be working with such a dedicated group of professionals who continue to push boundaries across primary and secondary care for the benefit of their patients. I look forward to being able to help facilitate further change and improvement for the good of all citizens across Wales."