

Lack of pay rise for NHS staff “an absolute insult”, say Greens



Green Party

21 July 2021

- **Amelia Womack: “For the government to once again delay any pay rise at all after a decade of falling pay is disgraceful”**

The lack of any pay rise for NHS staff in the government’s announcement today is “an absolute insult” to those who have risked their lives throughout the Covid pandemic, the Green Party has said. [1]

It had been widely reported that the government was due to announce an inadequate 3% rise for NHS staff in an address to the House of Commons today. But health minister Helen Whately made no such offer during a statement on the NHS this afternoon.

According to research by *London Economics*, most NHS staff on Agenda for Change [2] contracts to which the expected offer would have applied, have seen their pay fall by between 10% and 15% in real terms since 2010 [3]. The 3% proposal that had been reported was just 0.6% above the rate of inflation, and would have failed to reverse the trend of stagnating pay in the NHS [4].

Unions and grassroots campaigners are demanding pay offers of between 12% and 15%, to restore pay levels and address the understaffing crisis. In March the Green Party of England & Wales became the largest political party in the UK to support a 15% pay offer for Agenda for Change staff, by passing a motion at its 2021 Spring Conference. [5]

Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack said:

“NHS workers have just worked the hardest year of their lives in incredibly difficult conditions. The reported 3% was nowhere near adequate, but for the government to once again delay any pay rise at all after a decade of falling pay is disgraceful.

“The NHS’ amazing staff have kept this country going throughout the pandemic, overcoming chronic understaffing and underfunding in order to provide critical care. The government’s lack of announcement today is an absolute insult for the same key workers they clapped on their doorsteps just months ago.”

Green Party Health spokesperson, Peter Cranie said:

“We face a shortage of at least 84,000 key NHS staff in England, and we should be making every effort to attract people to health professions. Instead, this government has shown disdain for key health workers and exacerbated the threats posed by underfunding and understaffing.”

Jordan Rivera, an Occupational Therapist at Homerton Hospital in London, UNISON workplace representative and grassroots campaigner, said:

“After months of delays, leaving us to wait for a pay offer over the summer holidays is simply cruel. Poor pay is contributing massively to short staffing and now is the time for the government to show us that we are valued. The public recognise the role we’ve played in helping to fight covid over the last year, often at a huge cost to ourselves, and they know that we deserve a decent pay rise. Why doesn’t the government realise this?”

The news comes amid a recruitment crisis in the NHS, which faces a shortfall of 84,000 staff in England according to the King’s Fund[6]. The UK currently ranks 27th out of 36 OECD countries for the number of physicians per head of the population[7].

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/breaking-tories-scrap-nhs-pay-24584579>

2

Agenda for Change is the NHS pay scale and employee grade system. Introduced in 2004, it covers more than one million staff. Staff on Agenda for Change contracts include nurses, occupational therapists, and other directly employed NHS staff. It does not cover doctors, dentists, or senior manager roles.

3

‘The Net Exchequer Impact of Increasing Pay for Agenda for Change Staff’ (18th January 2021), London Economics. [The Net Exchequer Impact of Increasing Pay for Agenda for Change Staff | London Economics](#).

4

‘Consumer price inflation, UK: June 2021’ (14th July 2021), Office for National Statistics. [Consumer price inflation, UK – Office for National Statistics](#)

5

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/03/06/green-party-supports-calls-for->

[15-pay-rise-for-nhs-workers/](#)

6

'NHS workforce: our position' (26th February 2021), The King's Fund. NHS workforce: our position | <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/positions/nhs-workforce>

7

'Global Health Indicators', World Health Organisation. Medical doctors (per 10 000 population) [https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GH0/medical-doctors-\(per-10-000-population\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GH0/medical-doctors-(per-10-000-population))

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