

**FAIR PAY
FOR NURSING**



Your NHS pay in England - next steps



The journey to England's indicative ballot:

The RCN submitted evidence to the Pay Review Body to inform its recommendation to the UK Government on NHS pay. The RCN's evidence made clear that a 12.5% pay award is necessary to rectify **decades of underfunding**, fill **thousands of nursing vacancies** and recognise the **skill and professionalism** of your work.

In July 2021, the UK government awarded NHS staff in England a **3% pay award for 2021-2022**. With inflation forecast to be 3%, this is a pay cut in real terms.

In a consultation this summer, a significant majority of members who voted said the pay award is unacceptable. The RCN is clear that to recruit and retain enough staff to deliver **safe and effective care to patients, the government must pay nursing what it deserves**. This is a political choice.

In an **indicative ballot - running from 4 November to 30 November 2021** - you are being asked if you're prepared to take industrial action to achieve change on pay. Industrial action is always the last resort and patient safety is always paramount.

What is an indicative ballot?

An indicative ballot asks members whether they personally would be willing, in principle, to take any form of industrial action. This ballot does not authorise industrial action.

If enough members say they are willing to participate in some form of industrial action a statutory ballot may be the next step. A statutory ballot is a legal requirement before industrial action can take place. In a statutory ballot, there are strict thresholds that need to be met. In particular, at least half of all members eligible to vote must do so, and in addition, there are other rules on how large a majority is needed for industrial action to be authorised. **An indicative ballot is a crucial test of whether these thresholds could, in theory, be met.**

Industrial action is always a last resort but the current staffing challenges are causing unacceptable risks to patients and staff. The UK government has had many opportunities to do the right thing by nursing.

What is industrial action?

Industrial action can take two forms: action short of a strike and strike action.

Read more about industrial action so you can make an informed choice:

Find out more:
rcn.org.uk/IAHandbook



What is action short of a strike?

Generally, it means working strictly to the terms of your contract of employment and is often referred to as “working to rule”. This can include taking all of your contractual breaks and/or starting/finishing your shifts strictly on time and/or refusing to undertake paid or unpaid overtime.

By working to rule, you are withdrawing the goodwill that the UK government and employers often rely on. Therefore, action short of a strike can result in disruption if carried out by a significant number of the workforce. This may place pressure on the UK Government to reconsider their position on the pay award.

What is strike action?

Strike action involves a complete withdrawal of labour from the workplace. This could be for half a day, a day or even longer, depending on the dispute. Strike action will almost certainly result in disruption to NHS services.

Protecting patients

If the RCN was to take industrial action, patient safety would be paramount. The RCN would work with employers to ensure they maintain safe staffing levels and service provision at all times during any period of industrial action.



Use your vote to decide the way forward on pay

This ballot is an opportunity for RCN members like you to send a strong message to the UK government about what you're willing to do to secure the pay you deserve. Don't miss the chance to be part of important change for your profession and your patients.

**Look out for an email from Civica Election Services
RCN@cesvotes.com
and use the unique link provided to vote. Remember to check
your junk and spam folders if you don't see the email
in your inbox.**

The ballot is open 4-30 November 2021.

Update your details

You can only take part in the ballot if the RCN can confirm that you are employed in England and your workplace and employer mean you're eligible to vote because you are employed in the NHS and on an Agenda for Change contract.



Confirm your details are correct and encourage colleagues to do the same.



rcn.org.uk/MyRCN

rcn.org.uk/pay

Find out more about the
#FairPayForNursing campaign



 @royalcollegeofnursing  @theRCN  @theRCN  RCNOnline