

Council report for members

Report to members of the special meeting of RCN Council meeting held on Wednesday 4th March 2015 at RCN HQ, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN and by teleconference.

1. This special meeting of RCN Council was held to receive the outcome of the member consultation on the Government's pay offer to NHS staff in England.
2. Members voted to accept the Westminster Government's offer by 60 to 40 in favour.
3. The key elements of the proposal are as follows:
 - 1% consolidated pay rise for all staff up to point 42 from April 2015 – up to and including the 2nd point of band 8c.
 - an increment freeze in 2015/16 for staff on pay point 34 and above for one year only – 2n point on 8a
 - urgent talks to take place with a view to the proposed redundancy changes being implemented from 1 April 2015, including a floor for calculation of redundancy payments of £23,000 and a ceiling for calculation of £80,000 with an end to employer top up for early retirement on grounds of redundancy.
 - abolish pay point one
 - a new minimum for pay point 2 of £15,100
 - 1% plus £200 for pay points 3-8 meaning that pay point 3 gets to £15,363
4. What happens next will be decided at the NHS Staff Council meeting on 9th March when all 13 trade unions with AfC staff in membership will share the results of their consultations. The RCN's delegation, including Chair of MRC, Anne Wells, the UK Steward's Committee Chair, Graham Revie and Josie Irwin Head of Employment Relations and National Staff Side Secretary will be at the meeting and report the RCN's position.
5. If there is agreement to accept the offer the proposals will be implemented in England with effect from 1 April 2015.
6. The RCN will be making it clear that the agreement does not make up for years of pay restraint of for the intense pressures nursing staff are facing.
7. Council expressed disappointment that only 16% of those who were given the chance to express a vote on this crucial decision took the opportunity to do

so. By offering options to vote on-line; by post or by text we hoped that more members would have their say.

8. We agreed to spend time at our April meeting reviewing lessons learned from the consultation process and how in particular we reach out to engage more of our membership to emphasise the importance of exercising their vote in May and in the next stage of our campaign.
9. This current offer only came after sustained campaigning and lobbying work by the RCN alongside other unions. Members may have accepted it but it does not mean we are happy with it. It certainly does not mean that the RCN's fight for fair pay for nursing staff is over.
10. With the pay review body now focusing on seven day working we know there could be yet another attack on our working conditions. Of course we support the principle of improving patient care but we should not be subsidising that improvement by relying on good will.
11. Council needs your help to get members to engage with their boards and branches. We need their support for the next phase of our campaigning work if we are to be heard and be successful in demanding the respect of Government for the invaluable contribution we make to society.