

## **Offer in principle**

To the Royal College of Nursing and the Society of Radiographers from the Minister for Health and Social Services

18 July 2023

Further to the two year pay deal for 22/23 and 23/24 collectively agreed on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 please see the further offer in principle regarding non-pay elements for your members.

### **Non-pay**

#### **Agency spend**

- We want to reduce the spend on Agency staff and to ensure that we offer fair pay in line with AfC (which includes wider benefits than pay alone) to our own workforce rather than fund the profits of private sector agencies.
- Robust national action will be planned and delivered in social partnership with the establishment of a Steering Group in July. The Group will explore and develop actions in a number of areas including -
  - All the items collectively agreed under point 5 of the non-pay elements of the pay offer from May.
  - Priority will be given to exploring the issues around additional hours pay, we will develop a national approach to paying bank shifts at substantive grade rates.

#### **Flexible working**

- We know that lack of flexibility about working hours drives some people to working for agencies – we will issue a statement of principles about flexible working which emphasises that requests to work flexibly should be agreed as the default position and this will be fully integrated into our policies by September 2023, for immediate implementation by employers.
- An appropriate evaluation mechanism will be developed, exploring all relevant options including the Partnership Agreement Hub, the NHS Executive etc.
- Reports will be provided through that agreed mechanism on a quarterly basis with the first report due in December 2023.

#### **Advanced rostering**

- We also know that last minute changes to shifts makes it difficult to plan your work life balance and you feel pressured to take shifts at the last minute to provide cover. This is creating extra pressure on people, and this is

unacceptable. We will drive through up to date rostering best practice to include rosters issued 12 weeks in advance, whilst recognising some degree of flexibility must be retained, and incentivisation to encourage the early filling of rota gaps in an open and transparent way so people can better plan their working hours to suit their circumstances.

- In September, Welsh Government will set up a working group with employers, nurse and other interested staff group representatives to identify and embed best rostering practice to explore all the opportunities that better management can deliver for nurses, patients and employers. This group will report by February 2024 with a view to complete implementation as soon as practical before the end of 2024.

### **On Call Standby**

- Welsh Government are committed to develop a working group to undertake a review of the use of on-call standby in out of hours arrangements in Radiology with the objective to ensure that the frequency of on-call standby does not negatively impact an individual's work-life balance.

### **Recruitment and retention premia (RRP)**

- Alongside the work on retention and limiting agency use, the Welsh Government will set up a review to develop national guidance on the appropriate and proportionate use of RRP against shortages in certain specialist areas, that review will conclude by the end of November 2023, implementation of the national guidance will be reviewed in partnership.
- This will recognise that all applications to pay RRP will need to first be endorsed by the WPF Business Committee as part of the existing governance mechanism around the use of RRP.
- Where a retention plan is developed it must contain specific reference to the national guidance on the use of RRP.

### **Roles profiles and expectations**

- We know there are concerns about whether our national role profiles are fit for purpose and whether 'on the ground' people are being asked to undertake duties that exceed the expectations of their role and pay band. We will consider the work being undertaken by the NHS Staff Council, and will undertake a review of the national role profiles and develop a national plan and methodology. This will look across teams to ensure roles are well designed, in line with the role profiles and that day to day expectations fit with the pay band of individuals.
- NHS Employers will set up a working group to plan how job descriptions can be reviewed every three years, and explore a potential mechanism to identify priorities, such as areas with a substantial number of vacancies, and how

existing Annex 20 arrangements can be applied. They will identify an appropriate reporting mechanism.

- The working group will report progress via the Partnership Agreement Hub and complete the work plan by the end of 2023.

### **Additional hours**

- We also know that people find shift overruns and working through breaks is tiring and frustrating and this is compounded by the unfairness that some of these additional hours are not remunerated. Welsh Government will work with NHS Employers to issue a pay letter by end of September 2023 to ensure that nurses are paid properly for the hours they work including their breaks and shift over runs in line with national agreed terms and conditions.
- A working group will be established in October 2023 by NHS Employers to ensure a robust system is in place for the logging and claiming of additional hours that is able to produce regular reports by April 2024. An interim solution will be put in place by employers as this work is undertaken.

### **36 hour a week proposals**

- We are committed to establishing a working group to look at this and report by Autumn 2023. As per the non-pay offer from May this will include consideration of the feasibility and implications including impacts on services provision, safe staffing levels, staff well-being and costs.
- If the 36 hour working week is found to be feasible, affordable and an agreed partnership priority, then the working group will develop a plan by March 2024 which defines a timeline for the move to a 36 hours working week without loss of earnings.

### **Ensuring safe and effective care for our service users**

- We are all committed to providing the best care for our patients and Welsh Government will establish a task and finish by October 2023 to include representatives such as, Chief Operating Officers, nurses and other staff groups working in some of our most challenging settings so that they can help us to find ways to ensure that care is delivered in safe and appropriate setting across Wales.
- We commit that onboarding (allocating extra patients to wards/departments over establishment) or corridor care will only be enacted in exceptional circumstances through the named responsible executive.
- A national escalation policy will be developed and implemented containing “must not dos” in terms of examinations/investigations/personal sensitive communications undertaken in inappropriate settings which compromise the privacy and dignity for all.