

Model letter for MP's - NHS Pay 2007/8

I am writing to you as a voter in your constituency and as an employee in the health service who has always been committed to the work and principles of the NHS. My loyalty and commitment to the NHS has now been greatly tested with the government's decision to interfere with the independent pay review body's recommendations for NHS pay in 2007/8.

The review body recommended a 2.5% increase from 1st April having taken evidence from the Department of Health, the NHS Employers and the NHS trade unions. It is independent and is highly valued by NHS staff. The government's decision to stage the award with 1.5% on 1st April and 1% on 1st November reduces the pay award to 1.9%. Yet in Scotland a decision has been made to award staff the 2.5% from 1st April and this will apply to all staff whether or not covered by the pay review body. Joined up thinking is a mantra often promoted but how about a joined up United Kingdom where the Scottish decision is applied across the NHS?

This decision has been made at a time of highly skilled NHS staff facing redundancies due to financial deficits and the reconfiguration and mergers of primary care organisations and health authorities. The impact on the morale of staff - those same staff who are praised by ministers for achieving the plethora of health targets set in Whitehall - is already significant and morale will suffer further.

I ask you to support all NHS staff who are facing a below inflation pay increase and put pressure on government to honour the independent pay review body's recommendations instead of acceding to interference which can only be seen to denigrate the work, skills and loyalty of NHS staff.