

21 September, 2007

**PRESS RELEASE**

### **NHS PENSIONS REVAMP WELCOMED BY UNITE**

The revamped NHS Pension Scheme unveiled today (Friday, 21 September) has been welcomed by Unite (Amicus section), the third largest trade union in the health service.

Unite Head of Health, Kevin Coyne said: 'We welcome the agreement on a revised basis for NHS Pensions which maintains final salary benefits for current and new NHS staff and creates a continuing basis for high quality pensions which the government, employers and unions have agreed is sustainable in the long term.'

The main points of the agreement are:

- it maintains all the headline benefits, including pension age, for existing staff on an unchanged basis.
- for new staff joining after April 2008, there will be a new NHS Pension Scheme in which the pension age will be 65, but there are some compensating changes, such as a slightly faster rate of pension build-up and greater flexibility on when pensions can be drawn
- in 2009/10, members of the NHS Pension Scheme will be given an option to transfer to the New NHS Pension Scheme
- the agreement also extends dependants' pension to cover unmarried partners in both schemes
- a new basis of members' contributions has been agreed which will mean a small overall increase
- the majority of members will pay 6.5%, but those on lower salaries may only pay 5%, while those on the highest level of salaries will pay 1% or 2% extra
- the changes will only affect members who are active as contributing members after 1 April 2008.

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