

NHS Pay

Proposed by Councillor Matt Collins,

Seconded by Councillor Michael Collins,

This Council notes with concern the 3% pay offer set to be made to health workers. This offer falls way short of satisfying the health union's demands for a substantial pay uplift.

Our health workers deserve a real pay increase for their efforts throughout the pandemic. A 3% pay increase is only 1% above the UK inflation rate and is not nearly enough recognition for health staff and their efforts in these difficult times.

The Council notes that this offer comes at a time when health workers are under considerable strain, with Northern Ireland currently struggling with one of the highest Covid -19 death rates across the world.

The Council also notes with concern the recent reports of understaffing in our health service, with 1,800 nursing positions currently vacant in the North, while a further 1000 vacancies exist in the social work and domiciliary care sector.

In order to retain a vibrant and world class health service, we must reward staff for the vital work which they carry out. Pay disparity with other jurisdictions has left many seeking employment elsewhere and low pay has contributed to staff resigning from the profession altogether.

The pandemic has shown how vital our health service is. Yet many NHS staff still suffer poverty wages and continue to be paid less when compared with other regions in the UK.

The Council resolves to write to Health Minister Robin Swann and the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, urging them to not implement the planned offer of 3%, for health workers and implores the Executive to explore ways to fund a more substantial pay uplift for health workers here.

The Council also resolves to convene a cross party meeting with Political Parties in Belfast City Council and Trade Unionists in the Health service, to discuss the urgent need for a more substantial pay uplift for NHS staff, and the practical steps which can be taken to achieve this.

(To be debated by the Council)