



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

*From the Rt Hon Matthew Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health*

*39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU*

Mr Christopher Pilgrim

Chair Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration  
Office of Manpower Economics  
Fleetbank House  
2-6 Salisbury Square  
London  
EC4Y 8JX

16 October 2019

Dear Mr Pilgrim,

I am writing firstly to express my thanks for the valuable work of the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB) on the 2019-20 pay round and to welcome you as the new Chair.

I write now to formally commence the 2020-21 pay round.

The NHS Long Term Plan and the 2019 Spending Review provide the context for the long-term funding of the NHS. The affordability of pay recommendations will have to be considered within the context of the affordability assumptions underpinning the NHS Long Term Plan, the importance of making planned workforce growth affordable and other financial risks facing the NHS. Given the NHS budget has been set for five years (2019/20 – 2023/24), there is a direct trade-off between pay and staff numbers and our evidence, and that from NHS England and NHS Improvement, will set out the balance.

The evidence that I will provide in the coming months will also support you in your consideration of affordability and I request that you describe in your final report what steps you have taken to take account of affordability and need for workforce growth and improved productivity. Pay awards will also be considered in the context of planned workforce reform and productivity improvements, which we will cover in our evidence.

I am also seeking your views on the targeting of available funds in pay in 2020-21 to ensure recruitment and retention pressures are properly addressed, and ask that you outline what consideration you have given to targeting in your final report.

As you are aware, we have reached a multi-year pay agreement (2019/20 – 2022/23) for doctors and dentists in training and so we are not asking the DDRB to make pay recommendations for this group. As is usual however, we would welcome your comments and observations on the evidence you receive from the Department of Health and Social Care and other parties on this group.

You are invited to make recommendations on an annual pay award for consultants.

For Specialty Doctors and Associate Specialists we are embarking on exploratory talks with the BMA with a view to negotiating a multi-year pay and contract reform deal. Any agreed deal would need to be one that gives valued staff a fair pay rise alongside improving recruitment and retention and developing reforms which better reflect modern working practices, service needs and fairness for employees. This does not prejudge the role of the DDRB in recommending the level of pay award that these staff should receive, but we would expect your recommendations to be informed by these talks with the BMA and we will update you on progress.

Independent Contractor General Medical Practitioners are subject to a five-year pay agreement between NHS England and the British Medical Association and therefore no pay recommendation is being sought for this group. You are invited to make recommendations on uplifts to the minimum and maximum of the salaried General Medical Practitioner pay scales, recommendations will need to be informed by affordability and in particular the fixed contract resources available to practices under the five year GP contract.

We invite you to make recommendations as usual for General Dental Practitioners.

As always, whilst your remit covers the whole of the United Kingdom, it is for each administration to make its own decisions on its approach to this year's pay round and to communicate this to you directly.

Yours ever,



**MATT HANCOCK**