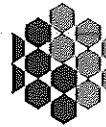


FROM THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH,
SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY
Jim Wells MLA



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 90 520642
Fax: 028 90 520557
Email: private.office@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Professor Paul Curran
Chair of the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists'
Remuneration
Office of Manpower Economics
8th Floor
Fleetbank House
2-6 Salisbury Square
LONDON
EC4Y 8JX

Our Ref: SUB/1063/2014

Date: 5 November 2014

Dear Professor Curran

Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB) Remit 2015/16

I wish to convey my thanks to the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB) for its work on the 2014/15 pay round. My Department values the work of the pay review body in delivering its recommendations on remuneration in this important role. This is true, even where, as in the previous round we were unable to accept all your recommendation due to the exceptionally challenging financial position in which we find ourselves and HM Treasury's call for continued pay restraint

The Northern Ireland Executive has endorsed the principle of adherence to the UK Government's public sector pay policy and enforcement of pay growth limits is devolved to the Executive within the overarching parameters set by HM Treasury. The financial situation within Northern Ireland continues to present challenges which we are seeking to manage and it is within this context that I believe that pay restraint will continue to be required for 2015/16. Therefore I am not seeking a recommendation from the pay review body specifically in relation to pay for salaried doctors and dentists.

For independent contractors, the DDRB are, however, invited to make recommendations on appropriate uplifts. Specifically, DDRB are asked to make recommendations on what allowance should be made for GPs' and dentists' pay and for practice staff in the context of public sector pay policy for 2015/16. Northern Ireland will make their final decisions on the gross uplift for GMS and dental contracts in the light of the DDRB's recommendations and taking into account any efficiency gains obtained through the relevant contract negotiations.

In view of the demands placed on you to support the pay review round in the devolved administrations, and the lateness of this request, my officials would be very happy to work with you to agree a realistic timeframe for you to report on your findings for Northern Ireland.

I note that negotiations for the reform of consultants' and junior doctors' contracts and for doctors and dentists in training applying in Northern Ireland have not resulted in

agreement. However, I believe that much good work was achieved during these negotiations. Accordingly, I consider it is now appropriate to invite DDRB to make observations and recommendations that take into account the work undertaken during these negotiations.

For 2015/16, for consultants, DDRB is asked to make observations, based on information and data presented on pay-related proposals for reforming the consultant contract to better facilitate the delivery of health care services seven days a week in a financially sustainable way ie without increasing the existing spend. In the context of the policy aim to deliver financially sustainable seven day services, I am aware that the DDRB has been invited by the Department of Health to consider and critique proposals which they and the NHS Employers will present. Supplementary information and data reflecting the particular Northern Ireland context will also be provided.

The DDRB should also consider the following, including work already completed by the DDRB and work undertaken by the parties to the negotiations:

- the work by the DDRB on the payment of clinical excellence awards (CEAs), and the Government's response to that;
- proposals for pay progression to be linked to responsibility and performance; and
- arrangements in other sectors which provide seven day services.

For doctors and dentists in training, DDRB is asked to make recommendations on new contractual arrangements including a new system of pay progression with, as DDRB has proposed, *"a strengthened link between pay and better quality patient care and outcomes"*. In doing so, DDRB should consider information submitted including:

- proposals for pay structures that include the ending of time-served incremental progression;
- information on the working patterns of doctors in training; and
- how the current pay envelope could be used differently to increase basic pensionable salaries, providing appropriate reward of additional work, while supporting services and training across the seven day week.

In undertaking both strands of this work, the DDRB should have regard to the Heads of Terms agreed by the parties prior to the contract negotiations. It should also have regard to the read-across to the work that I have asked the NHS Pay Review Body to undertake on observations on the barriers and enablers within the Agenda for Change pay system for delivering health care services every day of the week in a financially sustainable way.

In considering your observations on seven day services, I would also wish you to consider the extent to which they would read across to other medical staff groups such as specialty doctors and associate specialists. I would expect the Review Body's observations for Northern Ireland to follow the same timetable as that for England and be included in their report in July.

My officials look forward to continued engagement with you throughout this process and I look forward to receiving your reports in due course.



Jim Wells MLA

Minister for Health Social Services and Public Safety