



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

20th May 2021

New Complaint,

RE: NHS PAY.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of NHS pay. I have read your comments on this issue with interest and completely appreciate your strength of belief that NHS staff deserve a pay rise, and I recognise the very sincere place from which these views come.

I believe that the passion, commitment, and specialist knowledge of our NHS staff is a big part of what makes our NHS so special. In particular, I recognise the sacrifice, commitment and dedication of our NHS workers over the past year – a time that has presented massive challenges for everyone, but particularly acutely for those working tirelessly on the NHS frontline. I believe it is important to recognise and honour this, without question, but I am also mindful that the pandemic has had very real consequences on the public finances which cannot be ignored.

Having spoken to Ministers about your concerns, I have been advised that what the Government has tried to do with its recommendation for a 1 percent pay rise, is to give NHS staff as much as it can at the present time. It is also important to see this in the broader context - all but the lowest paid workers across the public sector have had their pay frozen for 2021/22. In addition, we should not forget that over one million NHS staff also continue to benefit from multi-year pay deals agreed with the trade unions, including a pay rise of over 12 percent for newly qualified nurses, with the average nurse pay now £34,000 per year. Meanwhile, junior doctors' pay has been increased by 8.2 percent.

This is of course not the end of the story, as the Government asked the independent pay review bodies for their recommendations and will now carefully consider them, but it is right that the Government does not pre-empt these recommendations.

Those on the frontline in the NHS and in care homes have made an invaluable contribution to the fight against Coronavirus and I have great admiration for those in these vital professions – as do we all. I have had the great pleasure of meeting with many of those remarkable clinical staff in my time as your local MP, and am under no illusions about the pressures they experience daily in the line of duty.



With that in mind, while I understand that a one-off bonus has not been offered in England, this is a suggestion that has been made quite frequently to address these concerns, and I have relayed that view during the discussions I have had on this.

Separately, I also welcome the investment that the Government has already made in the NHS workforce, including £513 million in professional development and increased recruitment, £30 million on staff mental health assistance, including wellbeing hubs and occupational health support, and the new bursary programme is giving at least £5,000 each year to new nursing, midwifery, and Allied Health Professional students.

As I say, no final decisions have yet been made on these pay awards and your feedback has been registered with my ministerial colleagues, who I hope will reflect upon it as part of their deliberations relating to the independent pay review bodies and their recommendations. As you would expect, I will, of course, continue to monitor this issue closely and relay local views and the strength of them.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
Tom

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**