



Royal College
of Midwives

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1 May 2024

Dear Colette

STATES OF GUERNSEY 2025 PAY AWARD

We refer to your letter of 29 February 2024, inviting us to put forward our thoughts on pay for 2025 and potentially beyond.

After careful consideration, we are requesting, from 1 January 2025, an increase in all pay, bonuses and allowances for Agenda for Change (AfC) staff of RPI (as at 30 September 2024) plus 3%.

In support of this, we continue to assert that pay for AfC staff is generally lower than that paid to other States' employees, especially Established Staff, and therefore that an above inflation award is justified to continue to try and close that gap. This assertion is supported by the initial work done on pay parity arising from the last pay settlement. Until the conclusion of that work and consideration of its findings, we do not wish to enter into a pay deal for any longer than twelve months.

Additionally, we ask that the employer agrees:

- 1) *to establish a joint employer/union working party to investigate and make recommendations on a scheme to assist States' employees and their immediate families with the costs of primary health care, the terms of reference for which are to be agreed no later than 31 March 2025*

While the Specialist Health Insurance Scheme addresses the costs of secondary care, the financial assistance provided for GP and nurse appointments is minimal and has not increased for many years. The costs of private health insurance are prohibitive for many, with the result that access to primary care becomes an issue for those whose household budgets are tight. As the island's largest employer, using its purchasing

power to provide assistance with these costs for its employees would be very welcome.

- 2) *routinely, to consult with each union on: (i) the provision of 'key worker' accommodation; (ii) the eligibility criteria for its occupation; and (iii) any schemes of financial assistance with mortgage or rental costs provided to States' employees or agency staff, e.g. rent allowance*

Particularly within health and social care, the difficulties in recruiting staff have been exacerbated by the lack of available and/or affordable housing such that the provision of key worker housing has become a priority for government action. Given the significance of housing costs as a proportion of household expenditure, it is essential that unions are involved in conversations around its provision and who is eligible to occupy it.

Similarly, unions should be consulted on the assistance provided towards mortgage costs and rent allowances, as these are effectively part of the pay package currently offered to some – but not all – States' employees. More HSC staff than ever are receiving rent allowance; while this is reported to be assisting with recruitment and retention, it is questionable whether this is solving a problem or simply deferring it. Furthermore, given the resultant increased expenditure, we query whether this is the most effective way to address recruitment and retention issues.

We look forward to constructive and meaningful negotiations commencing as soon as possible on the above.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Langford (Prospect, Negotiations Executive)
Jacqueline Carr (Senior Regional Officer, RCN)
Vicky Richards (National Officer, Royal College of Midwives)
Dave Bourgaize (Regional Officer, Unite The Union)

cc Lynne Duckworth, HR Business Partner