

Pay award announcement and impact on GP contract agreement for 2018/19

Dear Colleague,

Earlier in the year I wrote to you about the agreement for changes to the contract negotiations. That letter is available [here](#).

As part of that letter I notified you that we had reached a deal for a pay uplift which meant that an interim 1% uplift for GP and staff pay was awarded, as well as agreement for a further uplift subject to the government's decision on any DDRB recommendation.

The government announced its decision yesterday and so this letter provides you with the updated elements of the deal.

What the DDRB recommended

The DDRB has acknowledged the concerns raised in our written and oral evidence submissions specifically regarding GP workforce issue and the need for greater outputs from training, overseas recruitment and improving the retention of existing GPs.

The report noted that despite the commitment in England to increase the number of GPs by 5,000, the full-time equivalent number of doctors working in general practice in England has fallen since 2015. Furthermore, overseas recruitment is unlikely to be helped by the uncertainty surrounding the UK's exit from the EU and the recent difficulty that some potential employers had with obtaining certificates of sponsorship which allow them to employ GPs from overseas.

The DDRB expressed its concern about the increasing numbers of GPs in England saying they were likely to leave direct patient care in the next 5 years and the vast majority reporting considerable or high pressure from increasing workloads. They noted that all these factors make traditional GP career paths, like practice ownership, less attractive, which is concerning given the renewed emphasis being placed on the role of the GP in addressing demand for health services and delivering productivity improvements.

The DDRB recommendations were:

- For independent contractor GPs across the UK a minimum increase in pay, net of expenses, would have been 2 per cent

- The maximum and minimum of the salary range for salaried GPs would have been increased by 2 per cent
- the GP trainers' grant and rate for GP appraisers would have been increased by 2 per cent

A further uplift was recommended as part of 'targeted pay incentives':

- a further 2 per cent would have been added for independent contractor GPs pay, net of expenses
- an additional 2 per cent would have been added to the minimum and maximum of the salary range for salaried GPs
- the GP trainers' grant and the rate for GP appraisers would have been increased by a further 2 per cent

Effectively this would have meant a 4 per cent increase for independent contractors pay, a 4 per cent increase to the minimum and maximum of the salaried range for salaried GPs and a 4 per cent increase to the GP trainers' grant and the rate for GP appraisers. For this pay round the DDRB again made a recommendation on pay net of expenses and so this recommendation does not account for non-GP pay or other practice expenses.

What the government decided:

- A further 1% to the value of the GP remuneration and practice staff expenses through the GP contract, supplementing the 1% already paid from April 2018 and making a 2% uplift in all; this will be backdated to 1 April 2018.
- the recommended minimum and maximum pay scales for salaried GPs will be uplifted by 2%; this will be effective as of 1 October 2018.
- the GP trainer grant and GP appraiser fees will be increased by 3% and the same approach for clinical educators pay; this will be effective as of 1 October 2018.
- the potential for an additional 1% to be added to the baseline, to be paid from 2019/20 conditional on contract reform, through a multi-year agreement from 2019/20. This would be in addition to the funding envelope for the contract negotiation for 2019/20 onwards. This would be reflected in respect of GP remuneration, practice staff expenses and the recommended minimum and maximum pay scales for salaried GPs.

What this means for GPs and general practice

General practice will receive an **additional £61.5m into global sum**, for the extra 1% for GP and staff pay. You will remember in the previous letter we recommended practices pass on the 1% secured through negotiations and so this extra 1% should now be passed on to staff, backdated to 1 April 2018.

The effect of this uplift is to increase the overall uplift from £256m to £317m, therefore adding an additional £1.04 to global sum, bringing **global sum up to £88.96**.

While this is more than secured in previous years (£238m for 2017/18 and £220m for 2016/17) this is still significantly short of the DDRB recommendations.

The above uplifts do not account for the 3% uplift to the trainers grant and appraisers fees (from October 2018). It also does not account for the additional 1% promised from 1 April 2019 contingent on reaching agreement in the next round of negotiations.

The DDRB makes recommendations for all doctors. This year's recommendations and government decision are outlined below. You can read the BMA's full response for all doctors [here](#).

	DDRB recommendation	Government decision*
SAS doctors	3.5% pay uplift	3% pay uplift
Junior doctors	2% pay uplift	2% pay uplift
Consultants	2% pay uplift	1.5% pay uplift plus 0.5% uplift for CEAs

* The government's decision for SAS doctors, junior doctors and consultants is for the pay uplifts to be brought in from October 2018, rather than backdated as for GPs