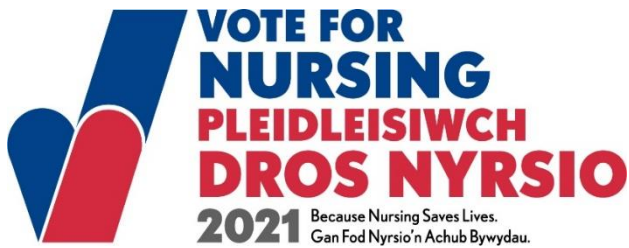




Coleg Nyrsio Brenhinol
Cymru
Royal College of Nursing
Wales



Fair Pay For Nursing in Wales

TÂL TEG AR GYFER NYRSIO

FAIR PAY FOR NURSING

#FairPayForNursing



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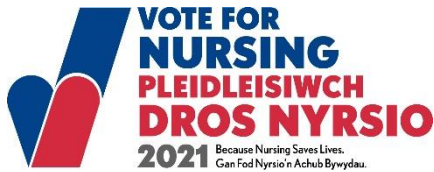
Executive Summary and Recommendations

The Royal College of Nursing has launched the Fair Pay For Nursing campaign. This calls on the UK Governments to recognise the highly skilled, caring profession of nursing and to reward nursing staff with an early, fair and meaningful pay rise.

Nursing is critical to the health and wellbeing of the country and nursing staff have been crucial to the pandemic response. The nursing profession has been at the forefront of the response to the pandemic, leading on innovation, working long hours in stressful conditions and improving the quality of treatment and care. However, this level of commitment is not new for nursing. Nurses and nursing staff have always strived to deliver high-quality patient care in all settings at all times. COVID-19 has simply highlighted this to the public in a new way.

The Fair Pay For Nursing campaign is about more than nursing's response to the pandemic. Its aim is to ensure nursing staff are recognised for the complexity of skill, responsibility and expertise they demonstrate every day.

Reducing the workforce shortage by encouraging nursing staff to stay and increasing the attractiveness of the nursing profession are also central to the campaign.



1

All political parties should make a clear public statement of intent that the valued contribution of all nursing staff, whatever their grade or setting, will be reflected in future conversations about pay.

2

The UK Government must fully fund, and the next Welsh Government must commit to a 12.5% 2021 pay increase for all staff covered by Agenda for Change, as part of a one-year deal that applies equally across all bands.

3

The next Welsh Government must commit to improving pay and terms and conditions for nursing staff not covered by Agenda for Change. All nursing staff should have fair pay, good employment terms and safe working conditions. This should compare fairly across all settings.

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Current NHS Agenda for Change pay deal (2018-2021)

On 1 April 2018 a restructuring of NHS Pay was set in place. It was called the 2018 Contract Refresh and set out a three-year process where NHS Agenda for Change staff would receive a pay increase of at least 6.5%.

Agenda for Change is the current grading and pay system for the majority of NHS staff with the exception of doctors, dentists and senior management.

Agenda for Change is comprised of nine bands, with an increase in pay dependent on how long the individual has been employed. Agenda for Change covers various professions including drivers, porters, nursing staff, consultant paramedics and physiologists.

The 2018 Contract Refresh set out a three-year tiered approach with the lowest-paid on Agenda for Change receiving the biggest rise.

The Welsh Government matched the 2018 Contract Refresh made in England and went beyond this in certain aspects, including:

- a continuing commitment to look at the annual Living Wage Foundation recommendations so that NHS pay scales remain fair in the future

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- recognising the specific commitments to improve the health, wellbeing and attendance of NHS staff in Wales, the Welsh offer provides better payments during sickness absence than in England.

A new rate of £17,460 was introduced from 1 April 2018 as the minimum basic pay rate in the NHS and the lowest starting NHS Agenda for Change salary increases to £18,005 in 20/21.

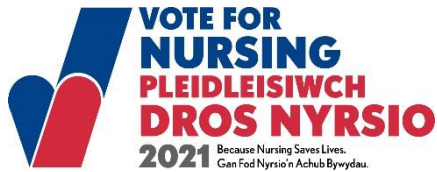
This pay deal is set to run out on **31 March 2021**.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the complex roles that nurses undertake and the level of autonomous clinical decision making that is undertaken to keep patients safe. In recognition of this, the RCN with 13 other Trade unions wrote to the UK Governments to call for the 2021 NHS pay round to be brought forward and to deliver a fair and meaningful pay rise.

The RCN is calling on HM Treasury to fully fund the next NHS pay deal.

DID YOU KNOW

The existing three-year 2018 Contract Refresh is due to run out on 31 March 2021.



Workforce shortage

The nursing workforce in Wales was already facing widespread and well recognised shortages before the additional pressures of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The additional pressure and risks associated with dealing with the first wave of COVID-19 have had an even greater impact on supply, recruitment, retention and remuneration going forwards, for all nursing staff.

Those nurses that returned to the profession have once again chosen to retire, nursing students have resumed their studies and the workforce has once again been experiencing considerable shortages.

In July 2020, the Royal College of Nursing launched a nationwide survey into working conditions and pay. The RCN received 42,000 responses including 2,011 response in Wales. The following information is provided by this survey.

Figure 1 highlights the loss of staff morale and increase of stress levels as a result of pressures felt during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Three quarters of members surveyed (75.9%) reported experiencing an increase in stress levels, whilst over half (58%) voiced that staff morale had worsened.

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The combination of stress and reduced morale is not conducive to a happy work environment and may lead to a worsening of the workforce shortage as nursing staff consider leaving the profession.

Fig. 1. Compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic, has your stress level and staff morale increased/improved, decreased or stayed the same? (RCN Survey, July 2020)

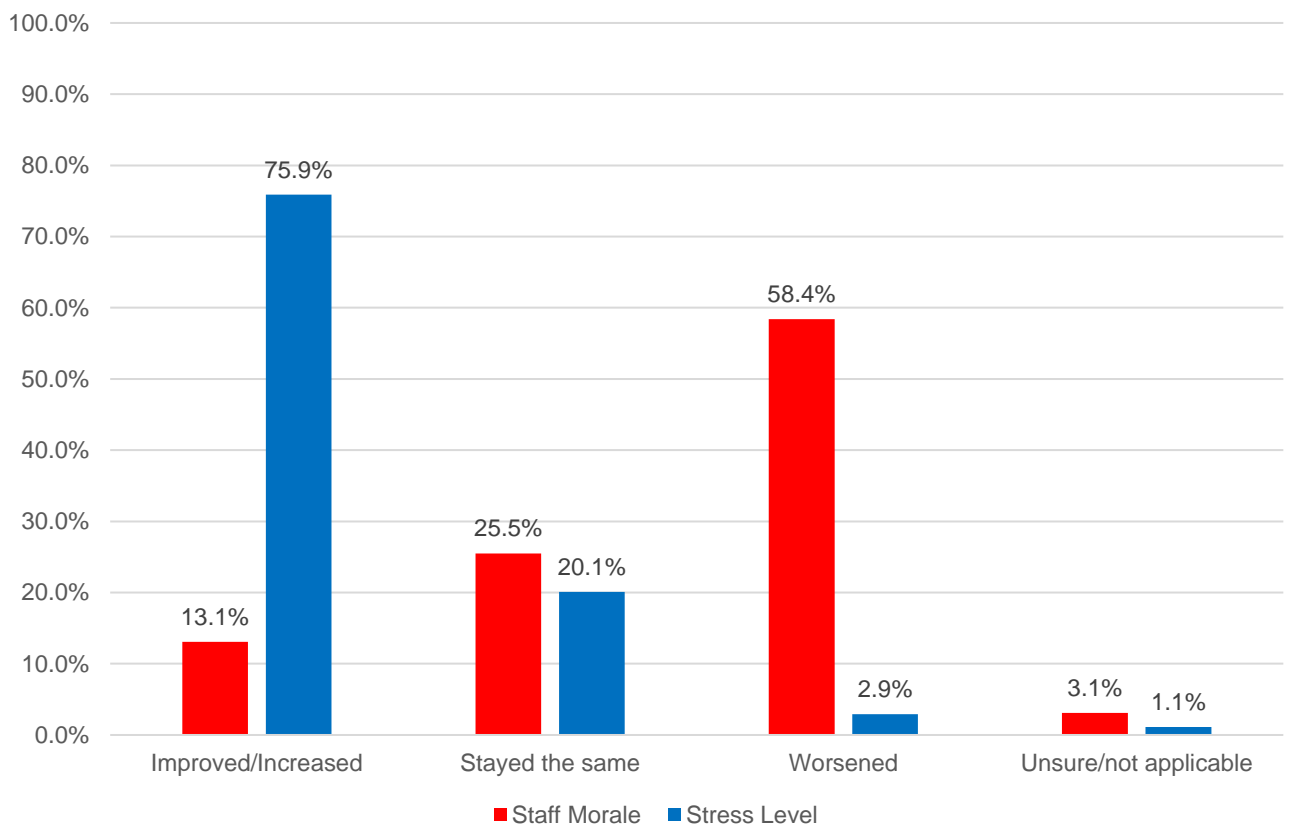
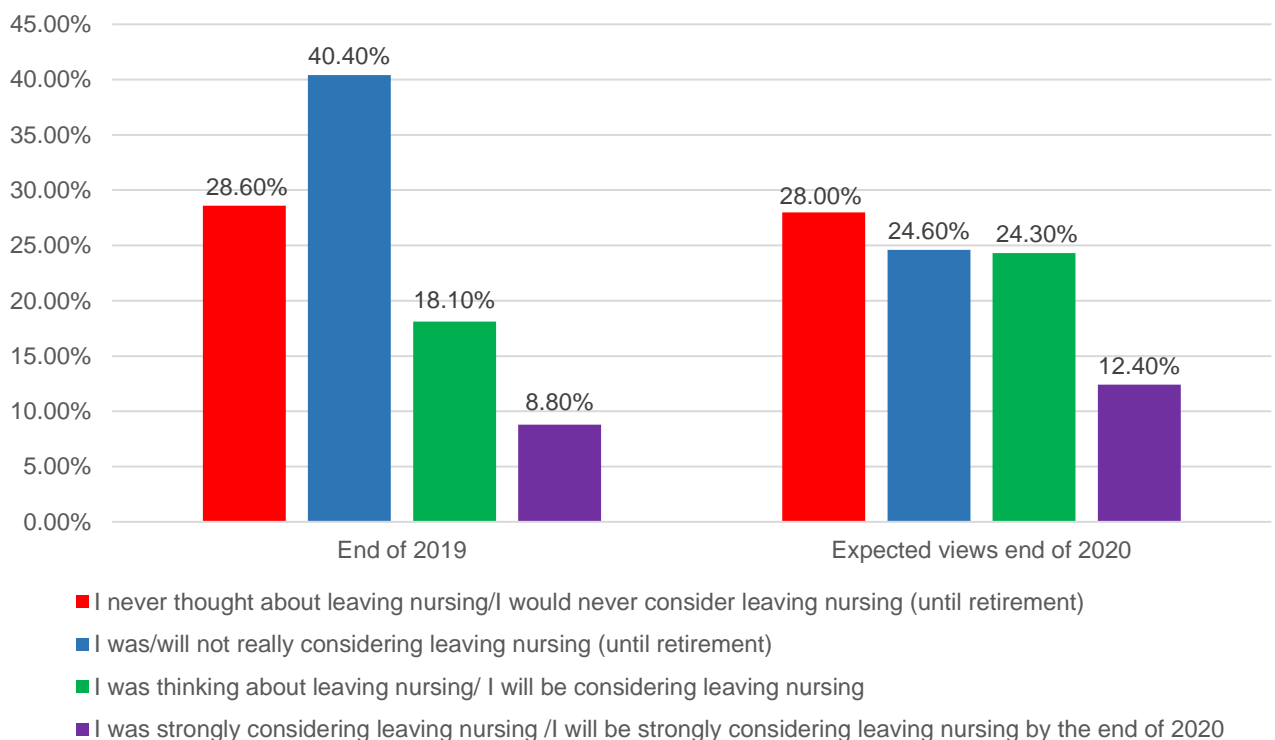




Figure 2 highlights the perceptions of nursing members who want to stay and leave the nursing profession. The survey posed two questions: the first asked how the individual felt about remaining in or leaving the profession at the end of 2019, whilst the second asked how they expect to feel at the end of 2020.

Fig. 2. How did you feel or expect to feel about staying in or leaving the nursing profession, end of 2019 and end of 2020? (RCN Survey, July 2020)



F.2 excludes those that are no longer working in the nursing profession (retired) and those that don't know or are unsure. This accounts for 4.2% of answers in 2019 and 10.7% in 2020

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It is noticeable that there has been a significant drop in the number of nurses who would not consider leaving nursing until retirement. When asked, 'thinking back how did you feel about staying or leaving the nursing profession at the end of 2019', 40.4% of nursing staff said they were not considering leaving until retirement. However, when asked again regarding how they expect to feel about staying or leaving the nursing profession at the end of 2020, only 24.6% responded saying they were not considering leaving until retirement. That is a reduction of 15.8% in one year

Over a third of members surveyed (36.7%) are considering leaving the profession, with 12.4% strongly considering leaving by the end of 2020. This is a 9.8% rise in the number of members considering or strongly considering leaving compared to how members felt at the end of 2019.

It has never been more important to encourage the workforce to stay. There are numerous ways this could be achieved, including improving working conditions, developing a retention strategy and driving up staff morale.

However, whilst staff morale had worsened and stress levels increased, over 57.4% of those who are considering leaving the profession cited pay as a contributing factor.

The current workforce shortage expands beyond retention into the inability to recruit and fill vacant Registered Nurse posts.

DID YOU KNOW

Over a third of members surveyed (37.6%) are considering leaving the nursing profession. Over half (57.4%) cited pay as a reason for considering leaving.



The Welsh Government and/or NHS Wales have historically failed to publish national figures for nursing vacancies in the NHS using an agreed definition of what constitutes a vacancy. This is a critical indicator of the pressure specific health boards or specialities are under as these figures are published in the other countries of the UK.

Nevertheless, RCN Wales has estimated that there are currently 1,600 registered nurse vacancies in Wales in the NHS. This figure was estimated through the collection of data published by health board's and trusts within their board papers, a health, social care and sports committee inquiry and Audit Wales reports.

It is vital for the health of our nation that Wales is able to attract the very best future nursing staff into the profession. The dominant route into nursing remains through a 3-year university degree (BSc Hons).

The expansion of nursing education and improvement of staff retention remain the only sustainable ways to address the severe workforce shortage within nursing.

By investing in nursing pay, this will greatly improve the attractiveness of nursing as a career for younger people and school leavers and will show nurses currently working in the NHS that they are valued and respected.

Furthermore, investing in fair pay demonstrates that nursing is a profession respected by Welsh Government.

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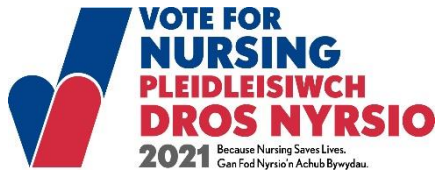
The Fair Pay For Nursing campaign is about recognising that Wales has a chronic workforce shortage and is failing to attract sufficient number of individuals into the nursing profession whilst also failing to encourage nursing staff to stay.

The Welsh Government must tackle these existing workforce shortages and ensure that nursing is an attractive career option, well-paid and meaningfully supported. This should be done by ensuring fair pay for nursing, a retention strategy and increasing financially sustainable routes into nursing education.

The Fair Pay For Nursing campaign recognises that these vacant roles need to be filled so that health boards and trusts can reach safe staffing levels and keep patients safe whilst providing highly skilled sensitive care.

DID YOU KNOW

There are over 1,600 registered nurse vacancies in Wales. The workforce shortage combined with the lack of ability to recruit is concerning for the future of the profession.

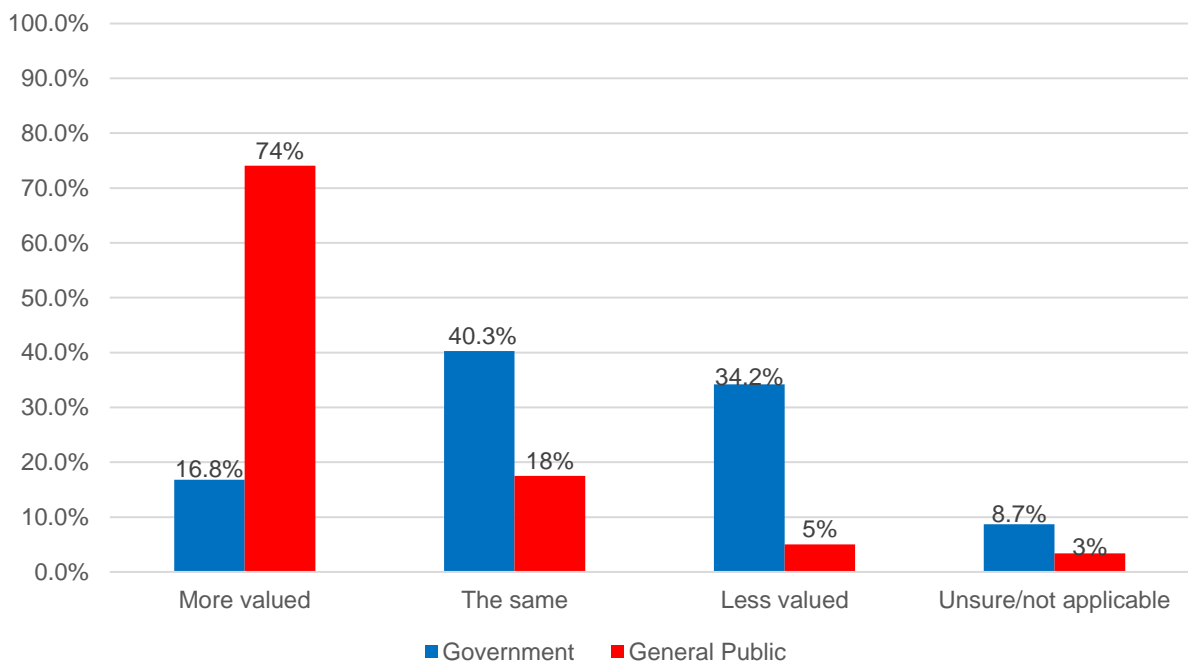


Value of Nursing

The Fair Pay For Nursing Campaign asks the UK Governments to recognise the value of nursing.

RCN Wales members currently do not feel valued by the Welsh Government. In fact over a third of members surveyed (34.2%) felt less valued by the Welsh Government now than before the first wave of the pandemic. In comparison, 74% of members felt that the general public valued them more since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 3. Compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic, do you feel valued more, less or the same by the general public and the government in your part of the British Isles?



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When asked how they would feel more valued, the overwhelming response from members (69.9%) was by improving pay.

Every political party in Wales should make a clear commitment to improving nursing pay. This should include campaigning for the current Welsh Government to commit to early conversations regarding a meaningful pay rise for nursing staff on NHS Agenda for Change for the 2021 pay round.

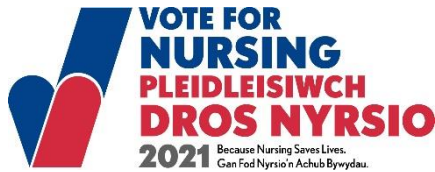
An early pay discussion is necessary, not only for recognising the dedication of the profession throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, but also ensuring that nursing staff receive the continued respect that they deserve.

Investing in nursing research

There are many ways that the value of nursing should be improved. This document has focused on fair pay, but others means such as improving leadership opportunities and investing in nursing research should also be considered. The next Welsh Government should pledge to invest in the evidence base needed to extend the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016.

DID YOU KNOW

69.9% of nursing staff surveyed said that improved pay would make them feel more valued.



Investing in leadership opportunities

Nurses and nursing staff, like many other professions, want to progress throughout their careers and need to have these opportunities to feel valued.

In order to progress, not only does continued professional development (CPD) need to be consistently available, but ~~there needs to be an~~ expansion of leadership opportunities is also required. There should be opportunities for all those that seek a leadership role and education available to ensure nursing staff are prepared to be leaders at every level.

RCN Wales is aware that there is a lack of diversity within leadership and senior roles in health and social care in Wales. It is therefore extremely important to ensure the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) workforce have access to leadership roles, educational opportunities and feel supported in applying for these.

Flexible working

Flexible working arrangements help create a healthy work-life balance for employees and their families. There are numerous benefits of flexible working, which include recruiting and retaining the best staff and reducing absenteeism and work-related stress. A key factor to improve retention and value among the nursing workforce is providing them with the opportunity to work flexibly.

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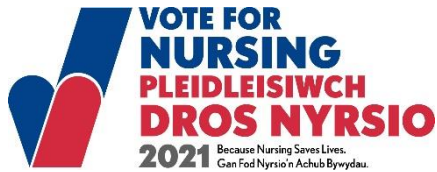
How pay and reward is calculated for nursing staff in the NHS

Newly-qualified registered nurses are employed at Band 5 on the NHS Agenda for Change pay scale, the starting point of which is currently £24,907 per annum in Wales. Health care support workers are usually paid at Band 2 or Band 3 which starts at £18,005 or £19,737 per annum respectively in Wales.

Pay for health and care staff working in the NHS is determined by the Governments across the UK. In Wales the pay of health and care staff working in the NHS is determined by the Welsh Government.

The Royal College of Nursing is calling on the UK Governments to commit to an early and meaningful pay rise for nursing staff on NHS Agenda for Change for 2021.

The next pay round to determine how nursing staff in the NHS are paid is set for 2021/2022. The method by which pay is determined is a political decision for governments. In previous pay rounds before the 2018 three-year deal, the UK Pay Review Body made a recommendation after taking evidence from trade unions, government and NHS Employers. Governments across the UK then decide whether or not to accept the recommendation.



However, the UK Government or a devolved government could also decide to instigate a negotiated pay award for NHS staff. In this scenario, if the UK Government made a decision solely for spending on NHS England staff pay, this would trigger a Barnett 'consequential' fund to the devolved nation's government, which would then decide whether to use this funding for the same purpose as in England.

Clearly it is more challenging, but not impossible, for devolved governments to instigate negotiation of NHS pay without an additional funding pot identified. The Welsh Government should bring forward pay discussions.

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Independent Sector

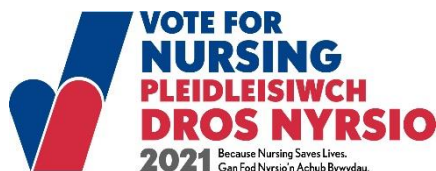
The independent sector covers all health care services that are not provided or managed by the NHS. Such services can be funded by private companies, local authorities and charities and can also receive funding from the Welsh Government and/or NHS Wales.

The independent sector is best described by the type of setting care is provided. This section includes social care, general practices and charity care provision.

Social care settings

There are long-standing challenges with low and unfair pay, unsatisfactory employment terms and working conditions within independent health and social care. There is no consistency within the sector as a whole (or between providers) and the NHS. This means that pay offered for equivalent roles can vary significantly by employer.

According to Social Care Wales, 66% of the commissioned care workforce are care workers, care officers or care assistants (many of whom will be providing nursing care).



Only 3% of all staff employed by commissioned care providers in Wales are registered nurses¹. In 2018 there were only 1,545 registered nurses employed by commissioned care providers in Wales.

The Royal College of Nursing has consistently called for fair pay, good employment terms and safe working conditions in social care. This should be competitive with the NHS. Pay structures should be underpinned by the Real Living Wage. Staff should be paid properly for all the hours they work – including applying overtime rates to hours over 37.5 a week e.g. shift overruns.

The social care workforce special payment scheme announced by the Welsh Government provides eligible individuals with a one-off flat rate payment of £500. The scheme was a result of the dedication of care home staff during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, RCN Wales expects the Welsh Government to ensure that this scheme is extended so that the additional effort and goodwill of staff is recognised.

Care Forum Wales, a social partnership group in Wales, is committed to embedding fair work and improving terms and conditions for those working within the social care sector. RCN Wales is a member of the group and expects the group to push forward the fair work agenda and ensure terms and conditions are improved.

¹ https://socialcare.wales/cms_assets/file-uploads/SCWWDP_commissioned-services_2018_eng_Final.pdf

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General practice nursing staff

The majority of general practice (GP) nurses and nursing support workers are directly employed by general practitioners who are subcontracted by the health boards in Wales to deliver the General Medical Service (GMS) contract. There are a small number of GP nurses and nursing support workers that are employed directly by health boards.

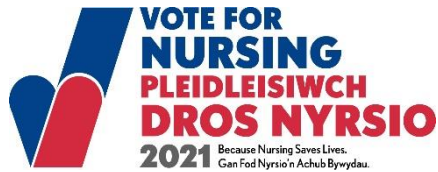
In September 2020, the Welsh Government announced an agreement with the British Medical Association's Welsh GP Committee (GPC) that included a pay uplift of 2.8% for practice staff. This includes nursing staff.

It will be the responsibility of the individual GP surgeries to administer the pay uplift, and there will need to be transparency in this process. The process should be monitored by the Welsh Government to ensure that it is delivered smoothly.

Charities

Charities cannot be discussed as a homogenous group when referring to pay, terms and conditions. The reason for this is because funding streams for the charities all differ as certain charities and settings are supported better than others.

Macmillan (cancer) nurses for example are employed by the NHS but their posts are initially funded by Macmillan for a set period.



After this time the long-term funding is taken up by the NHS or other partner organisations, although the nurse continues to be called a Macmillan nurse. Macmillan then continues to support the nurses by providing funding for their education and development. Therefore Macmillan nurse are often paid on Agenda for Change contracts.

However, in terms of hospice care, charities such as Marie Curie have always strived to match Agenda for Change terms and conditions, but as the charity is reliant on funding it may not always be possible to achieve this.

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How pay and reward is calculated for nursing staff in the independent and social care Sector

There is no UK-level or Welsh national mechanism to determine or negotiate pay for those employed by independent providers.

Charities are often reliant on their individual and unique funding streams and therefore pay and reward differs per charity.

Pay is determined by individual employers, the exception being social care staff directly employed by local authorities whose pay will follow the Welsh Government rates and general practice staff directly employed by health boards on Agenda for Change contracts.

In the independent sector, basic pay for registered nurses often matches the lowest NHS rates but can be higher or lower, whereas most nursing care assistants are employed on or around the national minimum wage. In general, the terms and conditions for nursing staff in the independent sector are often less favourable than the NHS, e.g. pensions and sick pay.

In 2018 the average earnings of an individual working in the adult social care sector in Wales were estimated to be £16,900².

DID YOU KNOW

There are only 1,545 registered nurses employed by commissioned care providers in Wales (2018).

² https://socialcare.wales/cms_assets/file-uploads/The-Economic-Value-of-the-Adult-Social-Care-Sector_Wales.pdf



About the Royal College of Nursing (RCN)

The RCN is the world's largest professional organisation and trade union of nurses, representing around 435,000 nurses, midwives, health visitors, health care support workers and nursing students, including over 26,000 members in Wales. RCN members work in both the independent sector and the NHS. Around two-thirds of our members are based in the community.

The RCN is a UK-wide organisation, with its own National Boards for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.