



Royal College of Midwives

RCM evidence to the NHS Pay Review Body 2022

Key messages

- The longstanding shortage of midwives is set to worsen if midwives are not retained in the NHS. The fall of 278 FTE midwives in England paints a worrying picture
- Midwives and MSWs are considering leaving the NHS. 57% of respondents to our member survey told us that they are thinking about leaving the NHS and the same percentage said they would do so in the next year
- This is not just the position of midwives close to retirement, of those respondents who had worked in the NHS five years or less 50% were considering leaving and 46% said they would do so in the next year
- HOMs are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit to vacancies. 77% described the process of recruiting Band 6 midwives as 'difficult' or 'very difficult'
- After a number of years of reduced use almost all HOMs (98%) told us they had to call in bank and/or agency staff 'very often' or 'fairly often'
- Excess working hours and lack of breaks is a common feature for midwives and MSWs, 85% of HOMs told us that it was difficult to ensure that all staff take their breaks and leave on time
- 97% of HOMs survey respondents said they rely on either a significant or a moderate amount of goodwill, significantly worse than in previous years
- Midwives and MSWs do not feel valued by the Government and RCM members told us that the 2021/22 pay award was not good enough
- On 1 April 2022 when NHS staff are due to receive their pay rise National Insurance contributions are set to increase. At the same time the cost of goods, services and energy are all rising and high rates of inflation are forecast to persist throughout 2022. This together with pay growing at its slowest rate since the Napoleonic wars¹ is leading to a cost of living crisis across the UK
- An urgent retention package is required, with a decent pay rise at its heart to begin to address the staffing crisis
- An inflation-busting pay rise that absorbs the impact of increases to pension contributions is required to ensure that NHS staff can cope with rising and rapidly fluctuating costs
- The PRB's recommendation should contain a commitment that the value of NHS pay scales will be restored over a clear timetable and that the 2022-23 pay rise will be a significant 'downpayment' as part of that pay restoration.

¹ [Reality Check: Is pay growing at its worst rate since the Napoleonic Wars? - BBC News](#)