ENOUGH’S ENOUGH

THE RCM SAYS FAIR PAY FOR THE NHS

NHS PAY BALLOT VOTE ‘YES’

For the latest information check www.rcm.org.uk/pay
Dear Colleague

**VOTE YES FOR FAIR PAY FOR NHS STAFF**

I am writing to ask you to take part in this historic ballot and VOTE YES FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION to secure fair pay for NHS staff working under Agenda for Change terms and conditions.

This is the first time in our history that we have made the decision to ballot you for industrial action. We did not take the decision lightly and we understand that it won’t be easy for you to vote for industrial action. But we believe that we need to stand together and say enough is enough and try to get a better deal for midwives and maternity support workers.

This document explains what has happened to your pay and why it is so important that you VOTE YES FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION.

We have been campaigning for fair pay in the NHS but so far without adequate response. We believe that if midwives and maternity support workers use their vote and vote YES in this ballot we can send a very clear message.
WE ARE CAMPAIGNING FOR:

- PAYMENT OF THE 1% UPLIFT FOR ALL STAFF, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE NHS PAY REVIEW BODY;
- AN ABOVE INFLATION PAY RISE FOR 2015-2016
- A COMMITMENT TO FUTURE PAY RISES THAT WILL RESTORE THE VALUE OF NHS PAY.

I believe that NHS staff have to be valued and fairly rewarded for the work they do. Staff who are demoralised cannot deliver the quality of care that NHS users, including mothers or babies, deserve. Investing in staff is an investment in better care. In our recent consultation, 94.3% of the members who responded voted that they would be prepared to VOTE YES FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION over this issue.

Let me put your mind at rest, our industrial action will not put women and babies at risk and will not ask you to break your code of conduct. We are currently proposing to start our action in mid October with a work stoppage of less than one day’s duration. We are also proposing to take action short of a strike which will highlight the goodwill that you give to the NHS every day, for example all the times you work unpaid overtime and miss your breaks. Our Workplace Representatives will work with managers to ensure there is cover during the initial work stoppage (it is intended to be similar to the cover on a bank holiday) and action short of a strike.

I am asking you to VOTE YES TO BOTH STRIKE ACTION AND ACTION SHORT OF A STRIKE because this will enable us to take the forms of action I have highlighted.

Please make sure you use your vote, I want to send a strong message to the Government that midwives and maternity support workers deserve to be valued and deserve fair pay.

Best Wishes

Cathy Warwick
Chief Executive Officer, The Royal College of Midwives
FIVE GOOD REASONS WHY THE RCM IS SAYING ENOUGH IS ENOUGH AND WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE YES.

1. THE NHS PAY REVIEW BODY’S RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN REJECTED
The NHS Pay Review Body is an expert, independent body that makes recommendations concerning your pay uplifts. This is the first time your pay award does not follow the Pay Review Body’s recommendations. There is also a very real threat to the current pay structures in the NHS, and incremental progression in particular. The fact that increments are paid for increased skills, knowledge and experience is being ignored.

2. THE AWARD IS DIVISIVE AND UNFAIR
This is the first time that an annual uplift has only been paid to some staff and the first time that uplifts have been one off payments (what they call ‘non consolidated’). This essentially moves the NHS closer towards a bonus style pay structure with uplifts that are only temporary and do not get awarded to everyone.

3. THE VALUE OF NHS PAY IS FALLING
This is the fourth year of pay restraint in the NHS which has had a devastating effect on the value of your pay. Our figures show that a midwife at the top of band 6 would have a salary over £4,000 higher if they had increases in line with inflation.

4. TREATING NHS STAFF UNFAIRLY HURTS NHS USERS
There is clear clinical evidence that shows NHS staff who are demoralised cannot deliver the quality of care that NHS users, including mothers and babies, deserve. NHS staff have to be valued and fairly rewarded for the work they do. Investing in staff is an investment in better care.

5. WE BELIEVE WE NEED TO STAND UP AND SAY ENOUGH IS ENOUGH
We have never asked you to vote for industrial action before and we would not ask if we did not believe it was absolutely necessary. We are asking now because this is the time to say enough is enough. This is a fundamental attack on your pay and we have to make a stand. We are working with the other NHS Trade Unions to all campaign together for fair pay. We believe that if midwives and maternity support workers stand together and vote yes we have the best chance of getting a fair deal for NHS staff.

We are urging you to vote YES TO INDUSTRIAL ACTION AND VOTE YES TO BOTH STRIKE ACTION AND ACTION SHORT OF A STRIKE. But whatever your view please make sure you use your vote and have your say. The ballot closes at noon on Monday 29th September 2014.

If you have any questions about the ballot, pay or industrial action you can:
• check the FAQs on our website www.rcm.org.uk;
• read the September edition of Midwives Magazine;
• ask your Workplace Representative;
• ring RCM Connect on 0300 303 0444; or
• email paycampaign@rcm.org.uk.

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www.rcm.org.uk/pay