



Our ref: KA/SHM

Date: 19th May 2020

Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Dear Deputy Minister for Health & Social care,

Social care Workforce issues

Further to my letter of 30th March 2020, and your response of the 28th April 2020 copy attached for ease of reference.

It was announced 18/5/20 by Matt Hancock Secretary of State for Health and Social Care that there will be *“£600 million extra funding which will go direct to the front line, which is not to be used by local authorities for any other purpose, but one of the purposes is to support Social care workers while they need to be away from work for infection control purposes and should not be penalised for doing so”*. I understand that £35m will be received by Welsh Government for this purpose.

GMB are seeking to be involved in the discussion that will need to take place to make sure that GMB members will rightly receive any payments while they are isolating or on sick leave due to COVID, and that these payments are backdated to 15th March 2020 to allow for members to be compensated for any losses that they have already faced

GMB recognises the work that has been carried out in Wales to increase the testing of everyone, however this now carries a further penalty for the Social care workforce who are now facing gross misconduct disciplinary action if they refuse a test because they cannot afford to be away from work receiving SSP £95.83 per week.

GMB has been campaigning for Social care to be recognised as a profession that is carried out by highly skilled, but low paid, predominantly female workforce. The COVID pandemic has highlighted that without the Social care workforce the NHS would not have been able to cope with the added pressures, yet the Social care workforce still do not enjoy parity of pay with its NHS colleagues who are carrying out similar work of equal value.

GMB has campaigned and made representations to Welsh government that Social care pay and terms & conditions in Wales should be agreed through sectoral collective bargaining. It is now time for this Labour Government to move forward and make the necessary arrangements to meet with the GMB and other Unions to make sure that the Social care workforce receive the pay and terms & conditions that they deserve.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelly Andrews', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Kelly Andrews
GMB Wales and South West Social Care Lead