



THE NHS PAY REVIEW

BODY:

WHAT IS IT/WHAT

DOES IT DO?

**NHS PAY
JUSTICE**



GMB is negotiating and campaigning for better pay for NHS workers.

You might hear the term 'Pay Review Body' when pay in the NHS is talked about. We know that can be confusing, so here's a little explanation of what the Pay Review Body is, what it's role is in NHS pay talks and how the Pay Review process works.

What is the Pay Review Body? (PRB)

The PRB was created in 1983 as a way for the government to get around collective bargaining (which is unions directly negotiating with employers on behalf of their members).

It is supposedly an independent body, free from government control (though in practice that is rarely the case and GMB have often challenged this).

It is made up of members who are appointed by the Secretary of State from various backgrounds, including those with experience in senior leadership roles within the NHS, public and private sector, sometimes even trade unionists as well as economists. Members are accountable to the Secretary of State via the Chair for carrying out their duties and for their performance.

The PRB covers all workers on Agenda for Change terms (Agenda for Change is the name of NHS staff pay and grading structures) and reports into the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Health and ministers of the Scottish government, the Welsh Assembly government and the Northern Ireland Executive.

Doctors and Dentists have similar pay review bodies as well.



What does the PRB actually do and how does it work?

The PRB collects 'evidence' from employers, unions and NHS workers. It takes that evidence, then recommends a pay offer. The government kicks off the process by telling the PRB what the 'remit' is – that basically just lays out the timetable for what will be happening. But it also sometimes includes restrictions on what the PRB can recommend.

So basically, the PRB talks to everyone, we all make our cases for what we want then the PRB makes a decision about what the pay offer should be and recommends that to government.

BUT (and it's a big BUT), the government have the final say. They can accept the recommendation of the PRB or not. That's why we're campaigning for the government to make a decision, not the PRB (though we will give evidence to the PRB to make our case).



Timeline

Stage 1

December 2020

Government send the 'remit' to the PRB in the form of a letter

Stage 2

January 2021

Government, employers and Unions submit written evidence into the PRB

Except for Government, who submitted theirs 6 weeks late!

Stage 3

March 2021

Oral evidence collection by the PRB from employers and unions

Stage 4

Due **May 2021**, expected **June 2021** due to the delay

PRB makes its recommendation on pay

Stage 5

Expected **June / July 2021**

Government decides what the pay award will be.



What GMB does at each stage

Stage 1 (Remit letter)

Ahead of the remit letter, GMB consults extensively with members about your expectations through meetings, surveys and your national rep structures. Reps speak to members and recruit non-members.

Stage 2 (Evidence collection)

Collect evidence, conduct research and provide that in writing to the PRB in order to influence their recommendation. We also start bringing together a campaign to influence the government decision, reps encourage more people to join.

Stage 3 (Evidence collection)

Collect further evidence, conduct further research to present verbally to the PRB to support our written evidence and apply further pressure to influence their recommendation. We continue to campaign publicly and politically to influence the government decision, reps encourage more people to join.

Stage 4 (PRB recommendation)

We talk to members to see what you think about the recommendation. You might think it's great, you might say it's not great. We continue to try to influence the governments decision. We are always led by you.

Stage 5 (Government decision)

We ask you to have your say on your pay. If you are not happy, we continue to campaign and organise. This might mean taking industrial action.





An example:

In 2014, the PRB recommended 1% pay increase.

The Health Secretary **Jeremy Hunt** said the government would not accept even the recommendation on pay at 1%, he thought that was too much (can you imagine?).

GMB and other unions went into dispute. We campaigned.

GMB threatened a **48 hour walk out of ambulance service members** (who were also taking government to court about removing unsociable hours payments – Annex E)

We won!

1% increase. Ambulance staff kept their unsociable hours payments.

We know 1% wasn't enough then, we had to fight hard to get that really modest increase. We need to do the same now, for more and the respect you deserve.