

25th January 2017

Public Service Pay Commission,
3rd Floor,
St. Stephen's Green House,
Earlsfort Terrace,
Dublin 2

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Dear Members of the Public Sector Pay Commission,

I understand that one of the issues you will examine as part of your review of public sector pay is pay levels for identifiable groups within the public sector. I wish to make a submission about nurses, a very clearly identifiable group within the public sector.

Everyone is aware of the crisis within our healthcare system and one huge element of this crisis is the shortage of nurses and midwives. We simply cannot get nurses and midwives to work in our hospitals; the abysmal failure of the campaign to bring Irish nurses back from overseas is proof of this. If the Government and HSE are serious about trying to sort out the problems in the healthcare sector then they have to recognise and value the work that nurses and midwives do.

I attach a document comparing salary scales at 1/1/16 for different entry level health care professionals. This makes pretty stark reading and shows how poorly paid and undervalued nurses and midwives are in comparison to our colleagues in healthcare. I obtained the information from <http://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/1st-January-2016-Consolidated-salary-scales.pdf>.

Some key points:

- Nurses and midwives with honours degrees start on salaries that over 23% lower than other healthcare workers qualified to degree level (e.g. physiotherapist, occupational therapist etc.), over 15% lower at the top of the scale, and over 14% lower when the LSI is included.
- Our starting salaries are just under 23% lower than physiologists (previously called technicians), who take only 7 years to reach the top point of their scale which is over 4% higher than ours. After LSI technicians salaries are over 20% higher than ours.
- A "professionally qualified" social worker starts on a salary 41.25% higher than a nurse or midwife. The social worker reaches the top of their scale after 9 increments compared to 12 increments for the nurse/midwife. After 9 increments the social worker is earning 44.33% more than the nurse/midwife. When the nurse reaches the top of the salary scale they are still earning 31.36% less than the social worker and 29.88% less after LSI.
- A social care worker **without qualifications** starts on a salary 10% higher than nurses and midwives. They achieve the top point of their salary scale in a shorter time and this figure is 2.3% higher than the top of our incremental scale.
- Pharmacists start on a salary almost 16% higher than nurses and midwives. The top point of the scale is almost 44% higher yet we are obliged to have extensive knowledge of every drug we administer - <https://www.nmbi.ie/nmbi/media/NMBI/Guidance-medicines-management.pdf>. Drug administration is just one small component of our job, not our only job.

- Nurses and midwives were the only group with degree qualifications to qualify for a salary increase following The Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2015. This brought the first point of the salary scale up to €27483.00. In fact the first three points of the nurses and midwives salary scale were all below the cut-off point of €31000.00 and were all increased by 1%.

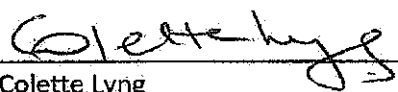
The differences in salaries for healthcare professionals in promotional positions are even more pronounced. Many "senior" non-nursing healthcare professionals earn more than nurses in management positions. Most non-nursing healthcare professionals in management positions earn significantly more than their nursing counterparts in management positions. I attach a document comparing salary scales at 1/1/16 for different promotional positions for healthcare professionals. It is difficult to compare grades in promotional positions as I do not know the precise roles and responsibilities of particular non-nursing grades. Therefore I have made a number of comparisons for each grade. This also makes pretty stark reading and shows how poorly paid and undervalued nurses and midwives are in comparison to our healthcare colleagues. The differences were even greater before the Haddington Road Agreement as the only nursing post to have salary adjustments as a result of that agreement was Director of Nursing where as many of the higher paid non-nursing healthcare professionals had reductions in their salaries.

Nurses and midwives work a 39 hour work week and are not paid for lunch/tea break yet frequently end up being interrupted during it, called back from it, or missing it altogether. I don't know what hours constitute a "working week" for other healthcare professionals qualified to degree level and could not find this information online however it would be useful to do a comparison. If their working week is shorter than 39 hours then the disparity between salaries is even greater. Perhaps you have access to a table that outlines hourly rates rather than annualised salaries? This would allow a more accurate comparison of salaries.

Nurses and midwives are the glue that holds everything together. We are essential to patient safety and care. We are the ones that are there 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing ongoing care to patients. We are the ones that liaise with and report back to higher paid colleagues. We are usually the ones who become aware of problems and highlight them to our higher paid colleagues. We are the ones who, in addition to being nurses/midwives, are expected to be able to fulfil many of the duties of our higher paid colleagues outside hours. We fulfil a multiplicity of roles in tough working conditions. Patients cannot get by without nurses or midwives. We are indispensable to the delivery of healthcare and we should be recognised and treated as such. Surely that warrants parity with other similarly qualified healthcare personnel?

I am now asking you, the Public Service Pay Commission, to recommend in your report that we nurses are recognised for our crucial role in the delivery of healthcare and given parity of pay and hours with other similarly qualified healthcare personnel. This can be done outside the Haddington Road or Lansdowne Road agreements and might go some way toward helping to ameliorate the recruitment/retention crisis currently existing within nursing and midwifery.

Yours Sincerely,


Colette Lyng

Comparison of entry level salary scales 1/1/16: <http://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/1st-January-2016-Consolidated-salary-scales.pdf>

Occupation / Point on scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	19	
Staff Nurse, Staff Midwife	27483	29497	30537	31710	33189	34666	36137	37408	38683	39952	41222	42489				43800	
Chiroprapist, dietician, Occupational therapist, Orthoptist, Physiotherapist, Play therapist, Speech & Language therapist	33969	36040	37743	38982	40031	41118	42191	43293	44389	45484	46638	47851	49062	Start 23.6% higher Finish 15.52% higher After LSI 14.23% higher 13 v 12 point scale After 12 point 12.67 % higher		50033	
Pharmacist	31831	34438	35368	36265	41016	43799	46595	49425	52271	55171	58122	61130		Start 15.82% higher Finish 43.94% higher After LSI 42.32% higher		62338	
Radiographer	32567	34514	36186	37256	38344	39446	40518	41586	42695	43777	44825	45901	47011	Start 18.5% higher Finish 10.69% higher After LSI 9.71% higher		48054	
Cardiac Catheterisation Physiologist, Neurophysiologist, Respiratory Physiologist, Vascular Physiologist	33719	35686	37466	38273	39168	41511	42931	44355						Start 22.69% higher Finish 4.44% higher After LSI 12.7% higher After LSI 20.84% higher 8 v 12 point scale After 8 point 18.57% higher		47886 LSI2 51320	
Social Worker	32351	34939	35945	37841	39802	41767	43723	45707	47666	49171	50680			Start 17.71% higher Finish 19.33% higher After LSI 17.99% higher 11 v 12 point scale After 11 point 22.94% higher		51630	
Professionally Qualified Social Worker, Medical Social Worker, Psychiatric Social Worker	38819	41667	43132	45242	47351	49462	51570	53677	55789					Start 41.25% higher Finish 31.36% higher After LSI 29.88% higher 9 v 12 point scale After 9 point 44.22% higher		56889	
Social Care Worker (no qualification)	30293	31652	33325	34550	35788	37031	38294	38577	40851	42148	43451			Start 10% higher Finish 2.31% higher After LSI 0.8% lower 11 v 12 point scale After 11 point 5.4% higher		51039	
Dental Hygienist	34074	36379	37860	39188	40406	41670	42945	44232	45677	48440	47756	48895	50054	Start 23.98% higher Finish 17.86% higher After LSI 16.52% higher 13 v 12 point scale After 12 point 15.13% higher		51039	
Physicist	35491	38185	39435	41435	43420	45764	47308	48789	52560	54165	55860	57553	59242	After 12 point 15.13% higher 60951	61893	Start 29.13% higher Finish 45.73% higher After LSI 41.3% higher 15 v 12 point scale After 12 points 35.51% higher	
Radiation Therapist	32568	34020	36187	37255	38345	41488	44068	45783	47567	49379	51213			Start 18.5% higher Finish 20.58% higher After LSI 16.92% higher 11 v 12 point scale After 11 point 24.23% higher			

Occupation / Point on Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Senior Staff Nurse / Midwife (SSNM)	45954											
CNM1 / CMM1	43288	44100	45245	46408	47554	48708	49993	51191				
CNM2 / CMM2 / CNS	47089	47886	48559	49659	50874	52067	53260	54604	55852			
CNM3 / CMM3	54336	55430	58199	59288	60382	61491						
Asst. Director of Nursing (Band 1)	54870	55952	56996	60201	61210	62382	63477	64566	65066			
Director of Nursing (Band 1)	70031	71978	73928	75864	77758	79659	81552					
Other similarly qualified HCP												
Senior Chiropodist, Dietician, Occupational Therapist, Orthoptist, Physiotherapist, Play Therapist, SALT	50134	51224	52348	53463/	54576/	55750/	56987/	58220/	59208			
Clinical Specialist: Chiropodist, Dietician, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, SALT	55564	56654	57776	58893	60006	61180	62415	63648	64638			
Physiotherapist, SALT												
Manager Dietician, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, SALT	60641/	62858/	65000	65000	65583	67623	69659/	69660	Compared to CNM1 Start 40% higher Finish 36.1% higher	Compared to CNM2 Start 28.8% higher Finish 24.7% higher	Compared to CNM3 Start 11.6% higher Finish 13.3% higher	Compared to ADDN Start 10.5% higher Finish 7.1% higher
Manager in Charge III – Dietician, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, SALT	67254	68317	69377	70494	71669	72843	73783					
Senior Pharmacist*												
	59427	62204	63093	63979	65000	65000	65000	66089	Compared to SSNM Start 29.3% higher Finish 43.8% higher	Compared to CNM1 Start 37.3% higher Finish 29.1% higher	Compared to CNM2 Start 26.2% higher Finish 18.3% higher	Compared to CNM3 Start 9.4% higher Finish 7.5% higher
*No space in columns: Senior pharmacist starts 8.3% higher and finishes 7.5% higher than ADDN (Band 1)												
Pharmacist Chief I	65000	67319	69723	72695	75863	79062			Compared to CNM2 Start 38% higher Finish 41.6% higher	Compared to CNM3 Start 19.6% higher Finish 18.6% higher	Compared to ADDN Start 18.5% higher Finish 21.5% higher	Compared to DON Start 7.7% lower Finish 3.2% lower
Pharmacist Chief I	71573	74856	76128	77860	79781	81740			Compared to CNM3 Start 31.7% higher Finish 32.9% higher	Compared to ADDN Start 30.4% higher Finish 25.6% higher	Compared to DON Start 2.2% higher Finish 0.2% higher	
Senior Radiographer												
	44068	45782	47567	49379	51215				Compared to SSNM Start 4.3% lower Finish 11.4% higher	Compared to CNM1 Start 1.8% higher Finish 0.05% higher	Compared to CNM2 Start 9.3% higher Finish 10.4% higher	Compared to CNM3 Start 5.5% lower Finish 0.25% higher
Clinical Specialist Radiographer	49591	52162	54345	56530	58758				Compared to CNS Start 5.3% higher Finish 5.2% higher			
Radiography Service Manager 1	51484	54324	56733	59165	61644				Compared to CNM1 Start 18.9% higher Finish 20.4% higher	Compared to CNM2 Start 9.3% higher Finish 10.4% higher	Compared to CNM3 Start 3.4% higher Finish 7.4% higher	Compared to ADDN Start 2.4% higher Finish 1.5% higher
Radiography Service Manager 2	56177	58842	62495	66187	66010				Compared to CNM2 Start 19.3% higher Finish 18.2% higher	Compared to CNM3 Start 3.4% higher Finish 7.4% higher	Compared to ADDN Start 2.4% higher Finish 1.5% higher	

