

13 June 2018

Mr Kevin Duffy  
Chair  
Public Service Pay Commission  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Stephen's Green House  
Earlsfort Terrace  
Dublin 2

Dear Kevin,

I refer to your correspondence of 7<sup>th</sup> June last concerning a request for data pertaining to communications arising in the context of the recent Employer Submission (30<sup>th</sup> April) to the Commission on the issue of recruitment and retention for nurses/midwives, NCHDs and Consultants.

Firstly, I would like to assure you and the Commission members that all data gathered in response to the Commission's request of the health sector has been provided directly to the Secretariat to support the Commission's independent analysis, as envisaged by the Terms of Reference set by the Minister.

A key strength of the process is that it allows the parties to the PSSA to make whatever arguments they wish to the Commission in support of their case. It is to be welcomed in this regard that the Commission have afforded such ample opportunities to the staff representative associations in the health sector to make their particular arguments and cases through both written and oral submissions/interactions over recent months.

As is longstanding practice, it is the function of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (and before it the Department of Finance) to represent the public service as employer.

In regard to the Commission's work, this Department has responsibility for co-ordinating, articulating and submitting the employer case. This is absolutely essential to ensuring consistency and coherence of approach and the balancing of important broader public service-wide policy and fiscal considerations - not to mention for practical logistical reasons.

This requires us to make judgments in relation to what is worthy of inclusion in the support of that case and what is not, taking all factors into account.

The recent employer submission compiled by this Department is based on data and evidential inputs from a broad range of sources, including – but far from exclusively – material submitted to the Department by both the Department of Health and the HSE. It is for this Department in its capacity as public service employer to judge the quality, relevance or otherwise to the articulation of its case, of all of those various inputs it receives, and in doing that to take account of the implications for broader public service policies. This has been and will remain the Department's position going forward in respect of this process.

That said, we wish to be helpful to the Commission to the extent possible in relation to its request. We understand that the Commission may be referring to a document entitled "*Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Analysis in the Context of Recruitment and Retention 2017*" and this is attached. It is important to point out for accuracy that this document was never formally submitted to this Department as suggested. Rather an edited version of it (also attached) produced by the Department of Health formed the basis of that Department's material input at an early stage in the work on our Employer Submission. It was not sent as a 'submission' in that sense and does not have that status.

The final Employer Submission made to the Commission is reflective of the thrust of the above documents and it is to be noted in this regard that the text of that submission was agreed with the Department of Health prior to its submission to the Commission. As such the submission represents the case that the public service employer wishes to make to the Commission.

I hope this clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely,



Colin Menton  
Assistant Secretary