PAY MODERNISATION - AGENDA FOR CHANGE

At the 2003 HR Conference in Dunblane workshops were held on Agenda for Change. Questions on the three main strands of the new pay system were identified and you will find below questions and answers covering:

- The New NHS Job Evaluation Scheme
- The Knowledge and Skills Framework and its links to Development Review
- Conditions of Service, eg new hours, overtime payments etc

THE NHS JOB EVALUATION SCHEME

When will all 500 job profiles be complete?

500 posts were benchmarked and condensed into approximately 200 profiles of which 168 have been published to date (30 June 2003). We would hope to have at least 200 profiles published over the next few months.

There are different roles for various staff groups across the four countries, eg Community Psychiatry Nurse - how has this type of issue been addressed?

Where there are major differences in roles, a national profile would not normally be agreed. However, if there is a national profile for a CPN, we still have to go through the process of matching and if the posts in Scotland do not match the national profile, they will be evaluated locally.

How do timescales fit in with consultation exercises?

The first stage of consultation was concluded by early June when EI sites in England commenced implementation. Across NHSS, project plans will be put into place to ensure that the Service is fully prepared for implementation in October 2004. A number of unions will be balloting their members again in the summer of 2004.

How will partnership commitment to the matching process be guaranteed?

Matching panels will be joint panels with equal representation of staff side and management. All panel members will be fully trained before sitting on a panel. Decisions will be made by consensus.

Locally developed evaluations - how will they add into national profiles?

Locally evaluated posts will not automatically become profiles. If it is felt that the post, once evaluated, may reflect a post which could be regarded as a National Profile, the evaluation will be sent to the National Profiling Group for consideration. It will go through the same process as the current profiles, ie to the Joint Secretaries Group and to staff side to consult locally, and if agreed, it will be published as a National Profile.

How will organisations add to national profiles?

As above.
Matching versus Evaluation - can you explain the processes?

The Job Evaluation process is a two stage process. The first stage will be to match and if posts are reviewed against national profiles by a panel and the outcome is an agreed match then the post will be allocated the relevant pay band.

Only if there is no match will a local evaluation take place. It may be worth pointing out that by local we mean either across regions, health systems or NHS Boards within NHSScotland.

How does Agenda for Change relate to practice nurses and other staff in GP practices?

Agenda for Change will not automatically apply to staff who are employed by GPs. Staff working within a GP practice but employed by the NHS will be covered. This is a difficult issue but many practice staff wish to retain the conditions of service they already have and they have that choice. The GMS contract will form further discussions for Practice staff and it would be the intention to ensure that the principles of Agenda for Change would be reflected in any agreements reached by Practices.

Training requirements - what will the time commitments, resource requirements etc be around training in the JE processes?

The training for matching panels is 3 days and for evaluators/analysts it is 5 days. For evaluators/analysts who have been trained as matching panel members this is reduced to 4. This includes specific training on the computerised tool being developed.

It is accepted that this will require a considerable time commitment and dedicated resource. NHS Boards are currently drawing up proposed project plans which will outline and highlight the likely resource requirement as we prepare for implementation.

What are protection arrangements for posts that fall into bands which are lower than current earnings?

Where an evaluation under the new system results in reduced earnings, protection will apply. This will be for one year with a pay uplift from date of implementation, ie it will include the 3.225% pay increase in 2005, and thereafter on a mark time basis. What this means is that an employee's earnings will be frozen until such time as the rate for the job/band catches up with what you are earning. This applies to Scotland only as the national agreement only allows for 5 years on mark time. This ensures that nobody in Scotland will face a reduction in earning because of Agenda for Change.

Where will the materials come from for profiling?

If posts do not match, the local process will be to evaluate, not profile. It will only become a profile, if agreed by a profiling group across the UK. Local evaluations will be carried out by employee(s) completing questionnaire assisted by a trained analyst. The questionnaire, which will be agreed by both employee and manager before being put forward for evaluation, will then be evaluated by a trained panel.
Senior managers – where do they fit?

Senior managers with a salary up to £65,000 (2002/03 rates) or 720 points will come under Agenda for Change. Those above that will be evaluated separately and discussions are ongoing at the moment with regard to the process for this. This is being done through the Executive Managers Group which has staff side representation.

Is there a role for the Central Evaluation Committee?

The CEC are involved in the discussions mentioned above and are likely to have a continuing role which will be determined by the HR Forum.

Computer Aided Job Evaluation

There is a nationally agreed computer aided job evaluation system which will be used for both the matching and local evaluation processes. This is a new system for Agenda for Change and must not be confused with other computer job evaluation systems which have been used in the NHS in the past.

How will people be trained to understand system?

There are various levels of training for the Job Evaluation System - a half day course which gives detailed awareness of the scheme and is sufficient to allow staff to understand the scheme and how it is operated. More detailed training is available for matching panel members and job evaluators/analysts. This training will commence in NHSScotland as soon as possible.

How will profiles play into other sectors - eg General Practice?

The national job profiles are only for posts held by NHS employees. Where practices operate systems where they pay an equivalent to the local Trust, they may wish to pay an equivalent to the new pay band under AfC should this benefit staff but this will be for local agreement.

What ability is there to be flexible with national profiles?

There is no opportunity to change national profiles - if our posts in NHSS do not match a profile then it is local evaluation. The matching process allows some marginal variations and still provide match and this will be governed by the process.

Matching panels in NHSScotland - will these be local or national?

Final decisions are yet to be made about matching panels for NHSS. These are likely to be across NHS Boards but there may be some specific staff groups that need to be evaluated across Scotland.

Will normal re-grading continue once JE starts?

Normal re-grading will continue until implementation of AfC.
How will consistency of approach be ensured in identification of posts and processes?

The training itself should ensure a high degree of consistency and the central pay modernisation team will have a role in working with all sites ensuring consistency in approach to the new system, reviewing outcomes of matching and local evaluation processes and addressing any differences. This review process will be overseen by the Scottish Pay Reference and Implementation Group.

What are the timescales for the various stages?

Subject to the outcome of the consultation exercise, training will commence in August/September and matching panels will be established as soon as possible thereafter. It is difficult to put exact timescales on the job evaluation process but we would expect that the vast majority of posts, will be matched or evaluated prior to the union ballots taking place in the summer of 2004.
Training – When and who will be trained?

As stated above we hope to start training in August/September although it will take some months to get everyone who needs to be involved fully trained. As the matching panels and the evaluation groups must be partnership groups we will need to ensure that both line managers and trades union representatives are identified for training.

If not all work is done by October 2004 will there be backdating and what is the final deadline for implementation?

The date for implementation is October 2004. Any jobs that are not evaluated by that date will be backdated to October 2004. Everything should be completed by April 2005.

Is there an update on Early Implementers (EI) in Scotland?

We are not having an actual EI site in Scotland but we have agreement of four sites, West Lothian Healthcare, Highland Primary Care, Common Services Agency, Golden Jubilee Hospital to undertake some preparatory project work which will be closely monitored and evaluated in order that we can share experiences across the wider NHSS. At the same time, however, all of NHSScotland will need to put in place project plans and commence the process of preparing for implementation in October 2004.

Will the Payroll system operate tandem systems?

The Scottish Payroll Reference and Implementation Group has representation from Payroll and this issue is being considered.

A sum of £3.5 million is being distributed to NHS Boards. Is this linked to other pay modernisation projects?

The £3.5m is to cover implementation of all strands of Pay Modernisation over the years 2003/4 and 2004/5. This includes Agenda for Change, Consultants' Contract and the General Medical Services Contract.

How will the job evaluation training be cascaded across NHSScotland?

Final agreement on how we deliver training is yet to be agreed but it is likely that a training provider, possibly members of the national Job Evaluation Working Party, will train appropriate personnel in organisations who will have responsibility to cascade this throughout their organisations.

Will all factors apply to all jobs?

There are 16 factors and all jobs will have all 16 factors applied to them at whichever level is appropriate.
Is there an appeal framework?

The position with regard to matching is that a matching panel will review posts and, if they agree a match with a national profile, the post will be placed in the allocated pay band and the employee informed. If the employee does not agree and can produce evidence that not all the job information was available for the panel, the post will be reviewed by a second panel, the majority of whom should be different members. If that second panel agree with the outcome of the first panel, then the post is placed in the pay band and there is no further right of appeal.

In a situation where there is no match to a national profile or the two matching panels disagree, a local evaluation will take place. The only right of appeal in this process is through local grievance mechanisms where there is a complaint by the employee that the processes used were incorrect.
THE NEW KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FRAMEWORK

How will people be trained to understand system?

*Training in the KSF is not as well advanced as that for Job Evaluation but a detailed awareness session has already been agreed and delivered in the EI sites in England. Staff will be fully trained in the use of the KSF and this will include staff who are being reviewed as well as staff reviewing.*

Will the review process match PDP guidelines?

*Yes. The new Knowledge and Skill Framework has guidance on the review process and PDPs which relates very closely to the PIN guideline on PDPs.*

Who will produce detailed outlines?

*KSF outlines for posts will be developed both nationally and locally and some of these will start to emerge throughout the early implementer phase. KSF outlines for individual employees will be produced locally.*

What about differences in posts between regions?

*If there are differences which necessitate a different KSF outline for the post this will be recognised and a separate outline agreed.*

Have resource and time issues for implementation been considered?

*It is recognised that there will be a requirement for considerable resource and training to implement the KSF and it is for this reason that a final implementation date of 2006 has been agreed. It is, however, essential that plans for implementation of the KSF are included in all project plans.*

Is this a competency based system?

*The KSF is designed to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills required to ensure that they are competent in their posts. What it does not cover is behavioural aspects.*

What will happen if we identify people with skills/ability/potential, but there are no jobs for them to progress to?

*The KSF is intended to ensure that staff are given every opportunity to achieve skills necessary for their job and also to progress in their career. It will not, in itself, create new posts but ensure that the employee is fully skilled to apply for posts as and when they arise.*
What will happen if we identify skills required in order to undertake duties of current job, but there are no resources to provide them?

The PDP should outline the requirements and funding should be sought. If there are no resources then staff will progress throughout the gateways regardless but every effort must be made to identify resource to ensure staff development. Funding should cover the cost of backfill cover as well as the cost of the actual training and development.

If employee doesn’t want to develop can they still move up salary scale.

The first gateway is intended to be probationary to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills that they need to do the job and which should have been agreed at interview. The scenario above would most likely occur at the second gateway and if the employee has a skills/knowledge gap and is not willing to address it, then they stop progressing at the gateway. They should not be stopped from progressing if they have adequate skills and knowledge to fully carry out the duties of the post.

Is there a difference between annual PDP and gateway PDP?

There is no major difference between these but an employee would want to be developing on an ongoing basis in line with the requirements of the job at the point where the gateway would apply.

Why are gateways at different points for different grades?

This is in line with rate of development that would be expected in the different bands.

Why does band 1 only have one gateway?

There are two gateways in all pay bands.

Will knowledge and skills framework reflect issues between new and long term staff? (presumption length of service =knowledge of skill)

Yes. It is expected that an employee will have a KSF outline at the beginning which reflects the minimum knowledge and skills to undertake duties of the post. They will then have a second outline which will apply when they have been in post for a while and are fully developed in the job.

How do we balance personal development versus service development?

The KSF is all about personal development but it will be expected that new roles will be created to support service development and that the KSF will facilitate this.

How rigid is knowledge and skills framework and how can you adapt it to new posts?

The KSF is very flexible and can, and should, be used to help create new posts.
Will the KSF be able to adapt and cross over into other areas e.g. Joint Futures?

*It is hoped that through time new roles will be created using the KSF which will be roles undertaken within the NHS and related organisations, eg joint futures, GP Practices etc.*
OTHER NEW CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Lothian Low Pay Agreement – how will this impact on Agenda for Change?

The introduction of the low pay agreement, which is now Scotland-wide, not just Lothian, has introduced pay levels which are very close to those offered by Agenda for Change. This may make the package being offered seem less attractive in Scotland than in the other three countries.

Please explain Organisational change protection versus AfC protection?

Protection for organisational change is and will remain to be "no detriment". Under Agenda for Change the protection will be for one year with a pay uplift and thereafter on a mark time basis until the protected earnings are overtaken by the new earnings under Agenda for Change. It should be noted that this is for Scotland only as the national agreement for Agenda for Change only provides for five years on a mark time basis.

Is AfC adequate to recruit and retain staff?

This remains to be seen and certainly for some staff groups it will improve recruitment and retention. The EI sites in England will be closely monitoring any affects on recruitment and retention as part of their ongoing exercise. There is, of course, within the agreement the facility to award recruitment and retention premia where this is deemed to be necessary and appropriate to address market forces issues.

On call. Local agreements v AfC agreement - what will impact be on recruitment and retention?

Should the new method of payment for unsocial hours result in a reduction in income, there is a special provision to allow staff with on-call arrangements that are better than AfC to retain these for four years in recognition of this. Again this must be closely monitored. In addition to this, we have the Minister's agreement to apply protection on a mark time basis under protected earnings are overtaken by new earnings under Agenda for Change.

What will happen if out of hours, weekend staff, enhancements, etc are unfavourable to compete in local labour market?

As above, the likely impact of this will have to be monitored and addressed if the new arrangements create a recruitment and retention problem for NHSS.

Same job, same salary – 2 tier rates will apply. Is this correct?

The job evaluation system considers, among other factors, the daily responsibilities of the job and this is reflected in the different pay bands. Although the out of hours work may result in staff being paid different amounts if they are doing different jobs throughout the day this is reflected in the daily responsibilities of the job.
How will we recognise partnership role in organisations in implementing AfC?

*Project plans will be agreed and delivered by Area Partnership Forums to ensure that staff side are fully involved in the process.*

Medical Technical Officers in Job Evaluation – very low number of benchmark jobs available - how will this be addressed?

*At the moment there is an inadequate number of profiles and this is an area where further information is required. The work being done in the Early Implementer sites and the work being done across NHSScotland as we prepare for implementation will ensure that we develop necessary evaluations for this staff group.*

If AfC rejected could Scotland have its own AfC agreement?

*No - if rejected, it will be rejected nationally.*

Reference period for out of hours/on-call periods?

*The agreed reference period should be reflective of normal working pattern.*

How will change in hourly rate affect part-time staff?

*The hourly rate for part-time staff will be protected for as long as necessary to ensure that no reduction in salary is applied*

What is the position for new employees?

*New starts after the date of implementation will go straight onto the new pay system and the conditions of service that apply.*