

## Background

Under the Public Service Stability Agreement (2018-2020) (PSSA), the Public Service Pay Commission (PSPC) was tasked with conducting a comprehensive examination of underlying difficulties in recruitment and retention of staff in the public service starting with nurses and midwives and doctors. Under the Terms of Reference, the PSPC was to seek to establish the extent and nature of any recruitment and retention difficulties and, where they existed, to recommend measures to address them.

The PSPC concluded its work and published its Report at the beginning of September 2018. The Commission found that there is no generalised recruitment and retention problem in respect of nursing and midwifery, but that some difficulties exist in meeting workforce requirements in specific areas. It recommended several measures to address these difficulties which are outlined below.

The PSSA also provided for a direct national-level engagement between the public service unions and Department of Public Expenditure Reform in relation to the increased length of the salary scale in respect of post January 2011 new entrants. Most new entrants to the public service, including nurses and midwives, have a pay scale that includes two additional increments and therefore, it takes new entrants two additional years to reach the merged salary maximum that they share with colleagues hired at an earlier time. The Process involving the examination of the length of new entrant salary scale issues was completed in late September 2018, the outcome of which is also outlined below.

### **Q.1 What is the ballot about?**

A: The PSPC has made recommendations to address Recruitment and Retention difficulties by increasing existing allowances and reduce service period to access the Senior Staff Nurse/Midwife. The INMO Special Delegate Conference and the INMO Executive Council has considered this proposal and has recommended that they put the proposals to members with a **recommendation to reject them because** the proposals themselves will not solve the nursing and midwifery shortages or assist in the retention of nurses and midwives.

### **Q.2 If ballot rejects the proposal what happens next?**

A: If the proposals are rejected, the Executive Council will consider the outcome and notify members of future options which may include a ballot for Industrial Action. If accepted, then the terms outlined will apply but no further progress will be made on addressing the Recruitment and Retention crisis until discussions take place on a new agreement in 2021.

### **Q.3 What does the report of the PSCP Recommend for Nurses and Midwives?**

A: The main recommendations are as follows:

- Location Allowances currently paid to nurses in 13 service areas in the health service should be increased by 20% (€371.60 PA or the equivalent of €7 a week before tax).
- Location allowance (€2229.60) extended to cover maternity services.
- Specialist Qualification Allowance currently paid to nurses and midwives who acquire postgraduate qualifications in their relevant disciplines should be increased by 20%. These are now worth €2,791 per year and would increase by €558 a year – the equivalent of €11 a week before tax.
- Staff nurses and midwives should be eligible to attain the grade of Senior Staff Nurse/Midwife after 17 rather than the current 20 years post qualification experience.
- The HSE and Department of Health review the anomaly whereby the pay of Directors and Assistant Directors of Midwifery/Nursing is determined by the hospital's banding: pay should be based on the level of

responsibility associated with the specific role. No firm proposals have been provided but the HSE states it would meet the INMO on this issue in October to discuss banding.

**Q.4 How much is the proposed 20% increase in Allowances worth?**

A: Example:

Current Location Allowance: €1,858.00  
 Proposed 20% Increase: € 371.60  
€2,229.60

Specialist Qualification Allowance: €2,791.00  
 Proposed 20% Increase: € 558.20  
€3,349.20

**Q.5 Who will benefit from extension of Location Allowance to Maternity Services?**

A: Mostly direct entry midwives and single qualification registered nurses who do not currently receive any allowance. The value of the location allowance is €2, 229.00.

**Q.6 What about the recruitment and retention crisis and our claim to solve the problem?**

A: Under their Terms of Reference, the PSPC was tasked with seeking to establish the extent and nature of any recruitment and retention difficulties in nursing and midwifery, and where they existed, to recommend measures to address them. Incomprehensibly, the Commission found that there is no generalised recruitment and retention problem in respect of nursing and midwifery. It could not, therefore, recommend an increase in pay in respect of nurses and midwives. However, the Commission outlined “significant limitations in the data available on Recruitment and Retention in the Health Service.”

It did, however, conclude that some difficulties exist in meeting workforce requirements in specific areas, and in so doing, it could recommend several measures to address these difficulties. Also, the report outlines that the Minister of Finance met the Commission on 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2017 stated, “this is not a pay review, nor can it be.”

This fundamentally changed the emphasis of the Public Service Pay Commission and we believe placed undue influence in contradiction of the Terms of Reference, which were agreed in August 2017.

**Q.7 What measures are proposed to address the New Entrants pay scale?**

A: A new entrant is a public servant including a nurse or midwife who joined the public service after January 2011 as a staff nurse or midwife. These public servants suffered a lower rate of entry pay than those that came before and consequently were required to serve more years to reach the max of the scale. There are proposals to address this which involves removal of two increments (4&8) which are applied differently depending on your current point on the increment scale. The details are set out in the following tables:

**New Entrant Staff Nurse/Midwife Salary Scale**

Current Point	On next incremental date after 1 March 2019	1 year later on next Incremental Date	*Value	1 year later on next Incremental date	1 year later on next Incremental Date	1 year later on next Incremental Date	*Value
2 <sup>nd</sup> point €30802	3 <sup>rd</sup> point €31853	5 <sup>th</sup> point €34531 (skip Point 4)	€1494 (4.5%)	6 <sup>th</sup> point €36023	7 <sup>th</sup> point €37508	9 <sup>th</sup> point €40080 (skip point 8)	€1288 (3.3%)

\*not inclusive of normal increment progression

Current Point	On next incremental date after 1 March 2019	*Value	1 year later - on next Incremental Date	1 year later - on next Incremental date	1 year later - on next Incremental Date	*Value
3 <sup>rd</sup> point €31852	5 <sup>th</sup> point €34531 (skip point 4)	*€1494 (4.5%)	6 <sup>th</sup> point €36023	7 <sup>th</sup> point – €37508	9 <sup>th</sup> point – €40080 (skip point 8)	*€1288 – (3.3%)

\*not inclusive of normal increment progression

Current Point	On next incremental date after 1 March 2019	*Value	1 year later - on next Incremental Date	1 year later - on next Incremental date	*Value
4 <sup>th</sup> point - €33037	6 <sup>th</sup> point – €36023 (skip point 5)	*€1492 (4.3%)	7 <sup>th</sup> point - €37508	9 <sup>th</sup> point – €40080 (skip point 8)	*€1288 – (3.3%)
5 <sup>th</sup> point – €34531	7 <sup>th</sup> point – €37508 (skip point 6)	*€1485 (4.1%)	9 <sup>th</sup> point – €40080 (skip point 8)	10 <sup>th</sup> point -	*€1288 – (3.3%)

\*not inclusive of normal increment progression

Current Point	On next incremental date after 1 March 2019 (skip 2 increments)	*Value
6 <sup>th</sup> point - €36023	9 <sup>th</sup> point – €40080	*€2572 (6.9%)
7 <sup>th</sup> point - €37508	10 <sup>th</sup> point - €41361	*€2569 (6.6%)
8 <sup>th</sup> point - €38792	11 <sup>th</sup> point - €42644	*€2564 (6.4%)
9 <sup>th</sup> point - €40080	12 <sup>th</sup> point - €43904	*€2543 (6.2%)
10 <sup>th</sup> point - €41361	12 <sup>th</sup> point - €43904 plus – only two years waiting period on LSI	*€1260 (3.0%)
11 <sup>th</sup> point - €42644	12 <sup>th</sup> point €43904 Plus – only 1 year waiting period on LSI	*€1260 (+2.95%)
12 <sup>th</sup> point - €43904	LSI point - €45248	*€1344 (+3.06%)
LSI - €45248	No change	

\*not inclusive of normal increment progression

## Q.8 What happened after we received the report?

A: The Report of the PSPC issued in early September. The INMO met with representatives from the HSE, Department of Health and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on 19th September 2018, in relation to the recommendations contained therein.

Several clarifications were sought by the INMO in respect of the ongoing recruitment and retention difficulties in nursing and midwifery. The employer side confirmed that they accept the outcome of the PSPC in so far as the recommendations, relating to increase in allowances, the reduction of service requirements from 20 years to 17 years for the Senior Staff Nurse/Midwife and the extension of the location allowance to maternity services. The INMO expressed our strongly held view that, of themselves, these measures will not address the recruitment and retention crisis that exists in the nursing and midwifery professions.

#### **Q.9 What did the INMO SDC decide?**

A: Delegates at the Special Delegate Conference, which the Executive Council of the INMO convened for Wednesday, 26th September 2018, have decided that the **proposals will be put to a ballot of members with a recommendation that they are rejected** as those measures themselves will not solve the recruitment and retention crisis in nursing and midwifery.

#### **Q.10 What are the balloting arrangements?**

A: Balloting on the proposals will commence on the week of the 1st of October 2018 and the count will take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018. Full details will be provided locally. Regional and workplace meetings will be scheduled from that date.

#### **Q.11 What are the Executive Council Recommending?**

A: The Executive Council in compliance with the SDC decision are **recommending rejection**.

#### **Q.12 Are there penalties for taking industrial action?**

A: Yes. When we signed up to the PSSA, we undertook to abide by the provisions in respect of industrial peace. Penalties may apply if you breach those provisions. The Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017 gives legal effect to the Agreement.

The following are the range of measures and financial penalties as provide for in the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017 in respect of those public servants who are not covered by the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020:

- Scheduled pay increases may be delayed,
- Non-application of increase in pension levy threshold,
- Scheduled increments may be suspended,
- Increment progression delayed during the period of the PSSA up to the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021 may never be recovered,
- PSPC proposals and new entrant proposals may not be applied.

#### **Q. 13 What can I do next?**

We recommend doing three things:

1. Inform yourself. That means going to information meetings, following the INMO on Facebook and Twitter (@INMO\_IRL), and setting aside some time to read through the documents on our website. Information is power.
2. Talk to your colleagues, discuss the proposals. Make sure everyone you work with is in the INMO. The more nurses and midwives are together in the union, the more power we have to stand up for our professions, our patients, and for ourselves.
3. Vote! When the ballots are open, be sure to cast your vote and have your say.

# **United We Stand, Divided We Fall**

# Comparisons between the Pay of Nurses and Midwives and other Public Sector Workers

<b>Grade</b>	<b>After 1 year</b>	<b>After 5 years</b>	<b>After 10 years</b>	<b>After 15 years</b>
Staff Nurse	€30,802	€36,023	€42,644	€45,248
O/T and other AHPs	€37,410	€42,539	€48,114	€51,543
Radiographer	€35,869	€40,850	€46,284	€49,544
Respiratory Technician	€37,052	€42,936	€49,355	€52,843
Teacher (using scale of those appointed after 1/1/2011)	€37,430	€42,261	€49,999	€58,081
* Garda (using scale post Oct 2013 scale with LRA)	€31,382	€41,495	€47,793	€49,512