

GMB slams Matt Hancock's scrooge NHS pay letter



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GMB, the union for workers in the NHS, has hit out after the Health Secretary's **remit letter** to the NHS Pay Review Body for 2021/22 was published late this Friday afternoon [18 December 2020].

GMB said that Matt Hancock's much-delayed 'Scrooge' letter lays the grounds for another real terms pay cut for NHS workers next year.



The union also slammed the Health Secretary's misleading use of statistics.

The Health Secretary claimed in his letter that public sector earnings were 'ahead of the private sector.'

According to the same ONS estimates quoted by Hancock: Public sector workers earned three percent less than comparable private sector workers last year when bonuses and overtime payments were taken into account.

Average private sector earnings **grew by 3.3 per cent** in October – compared to the Health Secretary's claim that private sector earnings had fallen by nearly one per cent.

The threat of a reduced pay rise in the NHS follows almost a decade of sharp real-terms cuts to health workers' earnings.

Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer:

"The Health Secretary's 'Scrooge' letter in the week before Christmas will leave NHS workers worried that they will not receive the fair pay rise next year that they were promised.

"NHS staff will be rightly angry to see Government interfering with the pay process before any evidence is submitted.

"It is outrageous that this letter has been slipped out late on a Friday when Ministers hoped that attention was elsewhere.

"Our NHS workers deserve pay justice after years of real terms pay cuts. That's why GMB is calling for a 15% increase to restore NHS workers' pay to what they should be and GMB will be submitting evidence to back this pay claim.

"There are clear economic benefits to awarding NHS workers a pay rise that the Government are once again refusing to acknowledge.

"But there is also a principal obligation to award a pay rise to the workers who are still putting themselves in harm's way to keep us safe."

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