



Prime Minister ①

Agree the written answer?

PRIME MINISTER

Yes mh

MLs 26/7


NURSES' REVIEW BODY

Your Private Secretary's letter of 19 July contained your general agreement to my proposals on the establishment the new pay Review Body for nursing and midwifery staff and the professions allied to medicine and I now attach a draft statement. It would be helpful to make this statement before the House rises and it could be by way of a written answer.

I very much agree that the statement should give notice that staff who take industrial action will be liable to lose the benefit of the Review Body. However this would not necessarily involve an amendment to the terms of reference. We might, for example, be faced by some local industrial action by a small group of staff, possibly nursing auxiliaries or possibly trained staff, and the dispute might or might not be connected with pay. There might be more widespread industrial action, related to pay, by the minority of trained nurses who are trade union members. In circumstances such as these it would probably be more suitable to take administrative action to withhold pay increases from the individuals concern than to define classes who should be removed from the terms of reference. The form of words that I have suggested should leave us free to take either course and I hope this is acceptable.

I am sending copies of this minute and the draft statement to other members of E(PSP), the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

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PRESS RELEASE

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NEW PAY REVIEW BODY ESTABLISHED FOR NURSES AND OTHER NHS PROFESSIONS

The Government today announced the establishment of a new independent Review Body to advise on the pay of nursing and midwifery staff, and the professions allied to medicine such as physiotherapists and radiographers. The Prime Minister set out the terms of reference in a reply (attached) to a written Parliamentary Question from Sir Hugh Rossi, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green.

Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, said "This marks a major step forward for industrial relations in the National Health Service. The new Review Body offers for the first time a stable system of pay determination for these major groups of health service staff. Under the new arrangements nurses, midwives, health visitors and the professions allied to medicine will, like the doctors and dentists, have their own independent Body to advise the Prime Minister on pay levels. This should avoid past difficulties which were resolved at intervals of four or five years only by setting up special ad hoc inquiries into their pay. I am sure that the staff will welcome this new system and will cooperate fully with it".

Sir Hugh Rossi (Hornsey and Wood Green)

To ask the Prime Minister what progress is being made with the establishment of a Review Body for Nurses, Midwives, Health Visitors and the Professions Allied to Medicine.

Prime Minister

The Government have completed consideration of the response to the consultative document issued by my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Social Services on 22 February and will be establishing the Review Body without delay. Its terms of reference will be:-

"To advise the Prime Minister on the remuneration, with effect from 1 April 1984, and subsequently, of

- i. Nursing staff, Midwives and Health Visitors employed in the National Health Service;
- ii. Physiotherapists, Radiographers, Remedial Gymnasts, Occupational Therapists, Orthoptists, Chiropodists, Dietitians, and related grades employed in the National Health Service".

The names of the Chairman and members will be announced as soon as possible.

The Review Body will be independent and free to determine its own method of working and to take evidence from interested parties. The secretariat will be provided by the Office of Manpower Economics.

The Government will, as proposed in the consultative document, submit evidence on economic and financial considerations, and on such factors as recruitment, retention and motivation of the staff concerned.

The establishment of a Review Body for these groups recognises their special position within the National Health Service and in particular

the fact that the great majority of staff in these groups have not engaged in industrial action. Accordingly the Government must reserve the right to exclude from the scope of the Review Body recommendations any groups that do resort to industrial action.

In fulfilment of our commitment to provide new pay arrangements for all nursing staff, the Review Body will deal with the remuneration of both qualified and unqualified nursing staff, but it will be asked to deal separately with these groups. The nursing and allied professions expressed concern about being combined in a single Review Body. The Government is satisfied that a single Review Body is appropriate but it will be asked to provide separate reports on the nursing staff and on the allied professions. Some other groups of professions sought inclusion in the Review Body arrangements but we have not thought it right to go beyond the groups outlined. The speech therapy profession, at its own request, will not be included.

The Government have decided that the Health Departments should assume responsibility for negotiating changes in terms and conditions of service with the Staff Sides of the groups covered by the Review Body and for keeping it fully informed of any agreed or proposed changes in terms and conditions of service. The Department will look to NHS management for advice and assistance on such negotiations. No change is envisaged in the composition of the Staff Sides. There will no longer be any need for the Nurses and Midwives or the Professional and Technical 'A' Whitley Councils. The Health Departments in consultation with NHS management and staff interests will take the lead in devising new negotiating arrangements for speech therapists and other staff groups on the PT'A' Council who are not included in the Review Body arrangements.