

Press Release

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Slow Agenda for Change in General Practice

A recent holiday entitlement survey for nurses in general practice by www.practicenursing.co.uk indicates that few general practices are embracing Agenda for Change (AfC). The survey indicated that only 15% of practices offered the same holiday entitlement as nurses who work for the NHS.

The www.practicenursing.co.uk AfC index indicates that only 2.5% of practices are offering their nurses the same pay and conditions as those nurses who work for the NHS. The holiday entitlement survey is a follow up survey to the 2008 salary survey which indicated that based on pay factors alone 10% of practices had embraced Agenda for Change.

The average annual leave entitlement for practice nurses in the survey was 25 days. No respondents received the maximum AfC holiday entitlement of 33 days despite 68% of the survey having over 10 years nursing service. 62% of the respondents received less annual leave than a new starter working for the NHS.

Dr Peter Carter, Chief Executive & General Secretary of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), said:

"The Government is going to have to rely heavily on general practice nurses to deliver future reforms and improvements to patient care. It is important that staff receive a fair holiday entitlement in order to ensure there are sufficient general practice nurses to bring about these improvements."

"It's disappointing to hear that most practices are still not embracing Agenda for Change, however, the RCN is working with the BMA to ensure GPs realise that fair pay and conditions for their staff means more highly motivated nurses and ultimately, better care."

Bernie Campbell of practicenursing.co.uk said

"It is clear from the survey that general practices are ignoring Agenda for Change. We believe that the government should incentivize general practices to attract and retain the best nurses with at least NHS pay and conditions."

Notes for editors

Survey

158 surveys were completed. The survey was carried out on a sample of respondents to the 2008 salary survey carried out by www.practicenursing.co.uk. The holiday entitlement survey report is available at www.practicenursing.co.uk/salary/mailholiday.aspx

A pay estimator is provided on www.practicenursing.co.uk to help practices review the pay for their nursing team using the salary survey data. The salary survey report is available at <http://www.practicenursing.co.uk/salary>

Agenda for Change

The agenda for change holiday entitlement is as follows

Length of service	Annual leave + General Public Holidays
On appointment	27 days + 8 days
After 5 years service	29 days + 8 days
After 10 years service	33 days + 8 days

The Agenda for Change (AfC) is the NHS pay and career structure negotiated between UK health departments, the NHS Confederation and health service unions. Negotiations on the proposals began in 1999 when the health departments of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales published a document called Agenda for Change. This document highlighted the need for changes to pay, career structure and conditions of employment within the NHS. The RCN has expressed the view that practice nurses and nurse practitioners employed by GPs should be paid at AfC rates of pay.

www.practicenursing.co.uk is the largest on-line community of nurses working in UK general practice. It has over 9000 registered members. The website acts as a daily meeting place for practice nurses who often work alone or in very small teams. The website provides a forum, job page, medical supplies finder and has published its first salary survey.

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