

## **Ambulance national discussions – November 2017 joint update**

Ambulance employers, national trade unions and NHS Employers have been working closely together over recent months to progress the requirements of the national agreement on Band 6 paramedics. Specifically, we have been working to resolve issues relating to:

- agreeing a fast track scheme for the Newly Qualified Paramedic (NQP) consolidation of learning programme: and
- agreeing a national Band 6 Job Description.

In addition, concerns have been raised regarding those NQPs, who have been affected by the retrospective application of the national agreement (agreed on 8 December 2016, partly backdated to 1 September 2016) and we have engaged in joint discussions to address these concerns constructively.

This briefing seeks to provide an update on each of these points in respect to the ongoing discussions and improved offer which trades unions have now accepted.

### **Agreeing a fast track scheme for the Consolidation of Learning Programme**

Agreement has also been reached on development of the fast track programme for newly qualified paramedics. Some NQPs may be able to gain confidence and capability, particularly if they have previous relevant experience, to move through the consolidation of learning period in less than two years. Candidates will need to provide evidence they have met all competencies and undertake a panel review. Following extensive discussions, a process document will be published which will provide information on how the programme will operate in practice. Employers and local trade unions will work together to implement the programme as soon as possible in each of the respective Trusts.

All Trusts have now launched their consolidation of learning (COL) and clinical validation/support processes. A commitment from the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives has been given to now fully embed these programmes. Progress will continue to be monitored through the NHS Improvement and NHS England Ambulance Improvement Programme.

### **Agreeing a national Band 6 Job Description**

The national agreement referenced the development of a new paramedic job description and this has been undertaken with feedback from across Employers and Unions, including a local consultation process. As a result, agreement has now been reached on the final version of the national Band 6 Paramedic Job Description. Joint discussions are continuing in respect of the implementation of this aspect of the national agreement and further information will be circulated shortly.

## **Resolution for NQPs impacted by the retrospective application of the national agreement**

Following extensive discussions, the Trade Unions have accepted an offer from employers which relates to the NQPs who were impacted by the retrospective application of the agreement. As a result of the agreement reached, the following actions will be applied to newly qualified paramedics, employed between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 and 31 March 2017. This refers to newly qualified paramedics, registered with the HCPC and who commenced employment in one of the 10 English ambulance trusts or Isle of Wight NHS Trust as a paramedic between these dates at Band 5, not subject to the job matching process.

- for these staff, at their 12-month anniversary of employment (the Start Date) as a newly qualified paramedic, they will automatically progress to Band 6 (spine point 21), and
- for these staff, at their 12-month anniversary of employment (the Start Date) a review will also be undertaken to consider what remaining elements of the consolidation of learning programme they require to support their ongoing development. This includes the consolidation learning outcomes of clinical, professional practice, leadership, mentoring, wellbeing and resilience and reflective practice. A commitment to undertake any outstanding training or development will be required over the following 12 months, with appropriate support and/or training put in place by employers.

Employers are working to implement this agreement. NQPs will need to participate fully in the review process and commit to undertake outstanding training or development. The processing of this agreement will be undertaken and communicated locally and will be completed by 28 February 2018. For newly qualified paramedics, employed between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 and 31 March 2017 pay at band 6, spine point 21, will be backdated to their 12-month anniversary of employment (the Start Date).