

# Junior Doctor consultative vote #2

## July 2023

### Frequently Asked Questions

No	Question	Answer
1	<b>What is the new offer under consideration?</b>	<p>The offer is for a single-year salary increase of 12.4% for all junior doctor and dentist in training, backdated to 1 April for the year 2023/24.</p> <p>Further to that, there is a guaranteed minimum uplift of inflation, over the subsequent 3 years (2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27). The agreed understanding is that there will be talks in each financial year with the aim of agreeing an uplift that is substantial enough to make credible progress on the path to pay restoration.</p> <p>If the offer is accepted, full contract negotiations will also start in Autumn 2023, which will aim to improve the working and training experience of junior doctors and dentists in training in Scotland. Part of those discussions will include the development of a new pay review mechanism which, coupled with contract reform, will enable us to achieve pay restoration and prevent erosion recurring in the future.</p>



2	<p><b>Why is BMA Scotland recommending acceptance of this offer?</b></p>	<p>Since the last offer which members were asked to vote on, SJDC has engaged in an intense period of negotiation with the Scottish Government which has resulted in this much-improved offer. The negotiating team feel they have reached the limit of what can be achieved this year and do not think strike action would result in a materially improved offer. As a result, SJDC unanimously agreed to suspend planned strike action and put this offer to members.</p> <p>The new offer commits the government to working with doctors to restore our pay and prevent pay erosion from occurring in the future. This is an unprecedented shift from the Scottish Government, which is a recognition of the huge decline in real terms pay that doctors have experienced over the past fifteen years, and the huge amount of work needed to undo the damage this has caused to the NHS. By agreeing to address the way our pay has been cut, and setting out a clear mechanism for doing so, the Government is making a serious, welcome commitment to ensuring that pay for Junior Doctors in Scotland is restored to a fair level.</p> <p>The agreement is clear that the increases above inflation over the next three years must be substantial enough in real terms to make credible progress on the path towards pay restoration.</p>
3	<p><b>How much funding is required for the pay uplift?</b></p>	<p>The funding that would be required to deliver the 12.4% pay uplift in 2023/24 (back dated to 1 April 2023) would be £61.3m.</p> <p>This is the same amount of funding under the previous offer covering the uplifts for 2022/23 and 2023/24.</p>
4	<p><b>The previous offer was described as 14.5% over two years – how does this new offer compare?</b></p>	<p>The previous offer was described as 14.5% over two years (4.5% increased to 7.5% for 2022/23 and 6.5% for 2023/24).</p> <p>The current offer is 12.4% in one year (2023/24) but can be described over two years for comparison. That would be 4.5% for 2022/23 and 12.4% for 2023/24. In aggregate, because of the compounding impact of the two uplifts, this would be a 17.5% uplift.</p>
5	<p><b>How is the percentage uplift in the current offer greater if the funding required is the same?</b></p>	<p>The previous offer would have required backpay for 2022/23. The current offer only applies to the current year (and three future years) so there isn't any backpay for 2022/23. This means that all the funding goes into 2023/24 and the percentage uplift is greater.</p>
6	<p><b>The offer says that the guaranteed minimum uplifts for inflation will give due regard to both CPI and RPI, why?</b></p>	<p>This was a compromise position reached between the Scottish Government and BMA on inflation. SG was unwilling to commit entirely to RPI and BMA was not willing to accept CPI. How exactly the minimum inflationary uplift is set each year will be agreed between SG and BMA.</p>

		BMA will continue to measure pay erosion based on RPI. And we will expect, in combination, the minimum inflationary uplift and talks each year deliver an uplift substantial enough to make credible progress towards pay restoration. If that does not happen, we will re-ballot the membership on IA.
7	<b>Why has the BMA calculated pay erosion using the RPI measure of inflation?</b>	The rate of inflation is measured in the UK by the Office for National Statistics, who publish more than one measure of this rate. RPI is the measure used to inflate many costs our members experience in the real economy. RPI is the best available measure to reflect the living costs of working people in Scotland, which is why it is the preferred measure of inflation within the trade union movement. Unlike CPI, RPI is impacted by the very real expense of housing costs. Furthermore, the government and private business continue to use RPI to increase the cost of things that junior doctors need, from the train tickets many use to get to work, to even some mobile phone plans. Index linked gilts (the main form of government debt issued by the government) still use RPI and will continue to do so until 2030. The government uses RPI to increase taxes, such as the Air Passenger duty and Vehicle Excise Duty (VED). The government also indexes student loan interest to RPI.
8	<b>What is the most up-to-date pay restoration figure? How would accepting this offer affect this?</b>	<p>The BMA's latest calculations based on full year inflation figures show that pay awards for junior doctors in Scotland from 2008/09 to 2022/23 have delivered a real terms (as measured by RPI) pay cut of 28.2% for foundation year (FY) and 28.5% for specialist registrar (StR) doctors. Inflation (RPI) was 11.4% in the year to April 2023, the rate against which the 2022/23 pay award of only 4.5% was assessed in our latest update, hence the real terms pay cut worsened. Although inflation (RPI) remains high (11.3% in the year to May 2023), the offered 12.4% pay award for 2023/24 exceeds it. The Office for Budget Responsibility predicted a fairly rapid decline in the rate of inflation over the coming months in March of this year. Following the established BMA methodology, the 2023/24 pay award would be assessed against the inflation (RPI) rate for April 2024; the nearest to that is the OBR's inflation (RPI) forecast rate of 1.6% for Q2 2024. If inflation aligns with the OBR's forecast, then the pay awards for junior doctors in Scotland from 2008/09 to 2023/24 would have delivered an improved real terms (RPI) pay cut of 20.6% for FY and 21.0% for StR doctors.</p> <p>Accepting this offer should, therefore, already begin to reverse the trend of real-terms pay erosion since 2008/09 during the current pay year.</p>
9	<b>On entering full contract negotiations – is there any specifics or principles agreed?</b>	The new offer from the Scottish Government, if accepted, would see BMA Scotland enter into full contract negotiations from Autumn 2023 aiming for implementation in April 2026.

		SJDC would be entering into full contract negotiations with the with the aim to improve the working and training experience of junior doctors and dentists in training in Scotland. No specifics have been discussed or agreed on contract reform.
10	<b>Will the pay uplift apply to my banding supplements as well as basic pay?</b>	Yes, as the contractual banding supplements are applied as a multiplier of your basic salary, then any change in the basic salary must trigger a change in your banding payments as well.
11	<b>If we vote “Yes” now and accept the pay uplift, but talks on future pay uplifts break down, would industrial action still be an option?</b>	Yes. The current offer is for more than simply uplifting 2023/24 salaries; it also includes agreement to protect against inflation and uplift salaries to make credible progress towards pay restoration for the subsequent three years.  . We can also re-ballot in future to extend our strike mandate if we felt it was necessary.
12	<b>If negotiations on future uplifts were to break down, would we need to pay back any pay uplift?</b>	No. If this offer is accepted then salaries will be increased as per the agreement, with no possibility of that uplift being withdrawn or claimed back.
13	<b>I am a final year medical student and will be a FY1 by August, can I vote?</b>	Yes. The offer, and the consultative vote, covers all current junior doctors in Scotland. You do however have to be a member of the BMA to receive a ballot paper, and you will need to have confirmed your change in status, including your employer and place of work.
14	<b>I am about to CCT and will no longer be a junior doctor by the end of the ballot period - can I vote?</b>	Only those registered as BMA as junior doctor members working in Scotland will be eligible to vote.
15	<b>Can university employed doctors or locum agency locums vote on this offer?</b>	Only those who hold an NHS contract (including honorary contracts) can vote.  We are currently pursuing assurances from Scottish Government that they will continue to ensure pay parity for those employed directly by universities on clinical academic contracts.
16	<b>I only work in England, can I vote?</b>	No, this offer only applies to junior doctors employed within the NHS in Scotland. Separate talks and strike action is ongoing in England at present
17	<b>What are opening and closing dates of the consultative vote?</b>  <b>Will the consultative vote be postal or online?</b>	The vote will open on 0900 Wednesday 2 August and will close on Wednesday 16 August at 12 noon  The consultative vote will be conducted online. You will receive a specific voting link via email to cast your vote.

<b>18</b>	<b>What is the last date to be a member to be included in the consultative vote?</b>	You must be a BMA member on or before 8 August 2023 to be able to participate in the consultative vote.
<b>19</b>	<b>When will BMA share the results of the vote with members?</b>	We will announce next steps as quickly as possible after the result of the vote is known. The vote closes at noon on 16 August and it is likely to be early on 17 August before we will have results fully verified and ready to announce.
<b>20</b>	<b>Will there be any changes to the starting pay points or pay progression for dental trainees (DCT and StRs)?</b>	The pay offer sets out the uplift, as well as at the other proposed agreements. There is no change to the starting pay points or pay progression for DCT and StRs and a full pay circular will be published as standard if the offer is accepted.

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