

**From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive**



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Your Ref:

Our ref: SCORR-0844-2023

Date: 19 July 2023

Dear Peter

Thank you for your letter of 14 July 2023 regarding the publication of the DDRB 51st report and seeking clarification on Northern Ireland's position, given Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's indication that he intends to accept the 6% pay uplift recommended therein.

Pay is a devolved matter and as a consequence there are differences in each country's approach to pay. In Northern Ireland it is dependent upon whether or not the Department has accepted the pay recommendations from the Doctors and Dentists Pay Review Body, and within the limits outlined in the public sector pay policy.

While the uplift for 2022/23 was implemented in the absence of a Minister, this was possible due to Minister Swann having publicly agreed to implement the DDRB recommendations prior to leaving office and it is being affordable within the budget set for the Department, without a Minister, this year the decision falls to me.

Currently the Department of Health budget does not enable a pay rise to be offered. This is the cause of significant regret to me and my colleagues and I hope this situation will change. However, as things stand I am not in a position to accept and pay the uplift proposed by the DDRB for 2023/24.

As is standard practice, the Department will engage with BDA (NI) in due course where any additional information can be shared.

I trust you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely



Peter May