

# NHS STAFF COUNCIL

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

### Review of NHS on-call arrangements

#### Terms of Reference

“The NHS Staff Council will review and may devise new harmonised arrangements during the period of protection for on-call, based on further monitoring of experience in early implementer sites and evidence from national roll-out.”

(Paragraph 2.32, NHS Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook).

The Executive of the NHS Staff Council has agreed to set up a joint sub-group to review the arrangements for “*on-call and other extended service cover*” in paragraphs 2.31 to 2.50 in the Handbook, *part of Section 2, “Maintaining Round the Clock Services”*. The sub-group will aim to complete the review in time for any adjustments to existing arrangements to be agreed by September 2009 and implemented with effect from 1 April 2010.

#### What on-call arrangements will be considered by the review?

On-call arrangements currently undertaken by staff on Agenda for Change terms and conditions will fall within the scope of the Review and any subsequent revised on-call arrangements which may be produced will be incorporated into the Terms and Conditions Handbook. This includes (but not exclusively) current on-call arrangements for Nurses & Midwives; Pharmacy, Healthcare Science, Radiography & other AHP staff, theatre staff and estates and maintenance staff.

The sub-group will seek to agree a shared definition of the term 'on-call' and conduct a thorough review of current on-call and stand-by arrangements which takes the following factors into account:

- the variety and use of national (Whitley and interim AfC), local and hybrid arrangements for remuneration of on-call, including local arrangements which have been put in place since the introduction of Agenda for Change;
- the full range of settings in which on-call arrangements are in place across all four UK countries and what (if any) special considerations there are in ambulance organisations/former EI sites;
- arrangements for staff who “sleep-in” as part of working arrangements;
- arrangements in healthcare laboratories;

- current arrangements for inclusion of travelling time within on-call agreements;
- effects of the UK Working Time Regulations;

### **Revised arrangements for remuneration of on-call**

Following the completion of the Review of current on-call arrangements as detailed above, the sub-group may develop proposals for a revised system which should be consistent with the following principles:

- Meets the principles of equal pay for work of equal value
- Recognises the wide range of service demands in the delivery and improvement of services to patients
- Seeks to avoid, as far as possible, the need for pay protection and significant new winners and losers
- Takes into account the full range of settings in which on-call could be undertaken
- Provides, so far as possible, appropriate incentives to work on-call
- So far as possible, easy to understand and administer
- Should enable roster patterns to be as predictable as possible
- So far as possible, consistent with the aims of IWL and other work/life balance initiatives
- Takes into account the requirements of the UK Working Time Regulations
- Would gain support among NHS staff and employers

### **Reporting**

The sub-group will report regularly to the Executive of the NHS Staff Council and to the Staff Council itself.

NHS Staff Council On-call Sub-group  
September 2008