

## **Greater Manchester Mental Health - Health Care Support Worker Re-Banding**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Why are Band 2 Health Care Support Workers being re-banded?**

Band 2 HCSWs are being re-banded following a campaign by UNISON HCSWs after routinely working above and beyond their pay-band for a number of years. It reflects the additional responsibilities and skills required working in a mental health setting.

#### **Why is back pay being offered up to April 2018?**

Following the UNISON campaign and negotiations with the employer, the Trust is offering back-pay up to April 2018. For any staff who joined the Trust after April 2018, your back pay will be worked out from your start date. Back pay offered at GMMH is the same as agreed with Trusts across Greater Manchester.

#### **I'm a Band 2 ward based inpatient HCSW who has been undertaking Band 3 duties – will I have to apply for back pay, or will it be automatic?**

It will be automatic based on your length of service in this role, up to a maximum (earliest) date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.

#### **I've been undertaking band 3 duties for the past 10 years, but only paid band 2. How much back pay will I get?**

You would receive back pay to the earliest possible point under the framework agreement which is 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. However, you would receive higher rates of enhancements for the period between April 2018 and when the change is processed on ESR, during which time enhancements would be paid at the higher band 2 enhancement percentages. Those staff who are not moved to the top pay point of Band 3 upon transfer to Band 3 (due to the point of Band 2 they were on previously), may potentially see a reduction in their new overall earnings dependent upon the enhancement pattern worked. This is due to the Band 3 enhancement rate being lower than the Band 2 enhancement rate. To avoid the earnings of staff reducing in this scenario, the Trust will apply pay protection, based on the average earnings of the previous 13 weeks (prior to the move to Band 3 being enacted on the ESR system). The pay protection will remain in place until staff move annually through the increment points to reach the top pay point of Band 3 (which for staff in this group this will be a maximum of 2 years. Some staff may reach the top of Band 3 prior to the 2-year period, at which point protection would cease).

#### **What about my pension payments?**

Because there are differences in the Band 2 and Band 3 pension contributions, any additional contributions will be taken out of your back pay.

#### **Where will I be appointed on the Band 3 pay scale?**

As well as receiving back-pay, eligible staff will be retrospectively re-graded up to 1 April 2018 to reflect the time that staff should have been on Band 3.

If you have been employed at the Trust since 1 April 2018 or before, you will be placed at the top of Band 3. If you started working at GMMH after 2018, your appointment on the Band 3 pay scale will depend on your service.

#### **Why do I need to vote in the consultation?**

UNISON HCSW members have led the campaign for fair reward and recognition. The proposed framework agreement will have an impact on your Banding and pay, so it's only appropriate

that UNISON members have the final say on the terms of the agreement.

**What if HCSWs reject the framework agreement and vote no?**

If UNISON members reject the framework agreement we will not sign up to it as a trade union, and would need to explore other ways of resolving the issue of HCSW pay. This may mean every HCSW would need to explore an individual job evaluation claim, collating evidence and going through a potentially lengthy internal process. Your union is confident that the framework agreement is in line with the national Job Evaluation scheme and is a reasonable step in resolving this issue.

We believe this offer is the best achievable through negotiation.

**Will everyone working at band 2 in an inpatient ward based HCSW role be given a band 3 job moving forward?**

Yes, following agreement with your line manager, unless you advise that you do not wish to accept the band 3 job description in which case the options open to you will need to be discussed individually.

**I'm a band 2 HCSW doing band 3 duties for 3 years. How much back pay will I get?**

Your retrospective regrading date will be based on when you started in the role, to a maximum of 1 April 2018.

**What if I think my back pay calculation is wrong?**

You should contact the Trust in the first instance and contact your UNISON branch if you need further support.

**What is the timeline for receiving back pay?**

If UNISON members vote to accept the framework agreement, we will confirm acceptance to the employer. The Trust will then write directly to all eligible staff advising you of next steps. The Trust's intention is to roll-out back-pay in groups of staff with the aim of completing the process by the end of November 2023.

**Will I have to move from my department to move into a band 3 post?**

This framework agreement should mean you will not need to move to a different department. However, if you choose not to accept the band 3 job description (which reflects existing practices and duties in wards and departments), the individual options available to you will be discussed and considered. Should there be the need for any realignment of staff across wards based on the numbers of staff choosing to remain on Band 2 the Trust's Organisational Change Policy will be followed, including full consultation with UNISON and other staff side unions.

**I work as a Medical Secretary / Theatre Assistant etc and believe I am working above my band. Will my role be looked at as part of this process?**

This process only relates to healthcare support workers who are inpatient ward based. However, if you are not a healthcare assistant and are undertaking duties beyond your job description, and believe this may mean you are working at a higher band that you are being paid for, you may be in a position to challenge this through a regrading process in line with the NHS Job Evaluation Scheme. Speak to your UNISON branch who can provide further advice and support.

**I work for NHSP, will I be paid at Band 3 or Band 2 for future shifts and will I get back pay like my colleagues who work for the NHS?**

As outlined in the Framework Agreement, staff who have a Band 2 HCSW bank post for GMMH

via NHSP, who choose to move to Band 3 in their substantive post, will have a Band 3 HCSW assignment code added to their bank profile. NHSP will pay backpay for Band 2 work undertaken in a MH Inpatient setting since February 2019, or since joining the bank, if after this date. As GMMH operated the bank in the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 – 24 February 2019, back pay on this element would come from the Trust.