

Lewis Macdonald MSP  
Convener  
Health and Sport Committee

By email.

30 November 2020

Dear Lewis

### Health and Care Covid Bonus

I write to inform the committee that it is my intention to provide health and social care staff with a one off pro-rata £500 bonus payment in recognition of their incredible and often heroic efforts in responding to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

All through the pandemic these staff have provided, and continue to provide, vital front line services, ensuring the people of Scotland receive health and social care services at this most difficult and challenging time.

The people of Scotland publicly, and often loudly, showed their appreciation for the work of our incredible NHS and social care staff. The Scottish Government shares that appreciation, and we want to continue to recognise our brilliant health and social care workers. This is why I have decided to give these workers this payment, recognising the amazing work they have done and continue to do for our country.

The following staff will receive the payment:

- All NHS Employees employed since 17 March 2020 including:
  - Staff who have been active in the NHS since 17 March 2020 but who have since left NHS employment including retirees,
  - Staff who accepted and worked on temporary contracts since 17 March to aid pandemic response but who have since left NHS employment (will ensure students who worked under temporary contracts but who have since returned to University are covered),
  - Staff covered by the Two Tier Agreement (these are the small amount of staff – around 1,500 – who still work mainly in NHS Lanarkshire under legacy PFI contracts including ancillary staff), and
  - General Practitioners and their practice teams, including 2C practices.

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- Staff providing NHS services under independent contractor arrangements including:
  - GP surgery staff,
  - NHS Dental surgery staff,
  - NHS pharmacy services staff, and
  - NHS optometry staff.
- Staff working in Adult Social Care including:
  - Care home staff, homecare staff,
  - Palliative care/hospice staff,
  - Adult Personal Assistants, and
  - Social care staff in residential child care settings.

I firmly believe this is the right thing to do and as a result, this payment, which will cost approx. £180 million, will be prioritised from the Scottish Government's funding envelope to support our Covid-19 response. While this in no way can express our full admiration for the way these vital staff have cared, and will continue to care for us all, I hope it shows how much we as a country value our NHS and social care workforce.

This is a small contribution towards our recognising the value of these frontline staff. Freezing NHS staff pay in 2021/22 is not the policy of the Scottish Government, and our pay negotiations with NHS staff side for 2021/22 will continue as we work towards a fair deal for the next financial year.

**JEANE FREEMAN**

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