



Isle of Man
Government

Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Department of Health and Social Care

Rheynn Slaynt as Kiarail y Theay

**From the office of the Minister
Hon. A Cannan, MHK**

Dr Prakash Thiagarajan
Chair of the BMA
Local Negotiating Committee (LNC)

Sent via email:
Prakash.Thiagarajan@nobles.dhss.gov.im

Department of Health and Social Care
First Floor, Belgravia House
Douglas
Isle of Man
IM1 1AE
(01624) 685167
georgina.jones@gov.im

19 November 2024

Dear Dr. Thiagarajan

Re: Negotiations with Manx Care over doctors' pay for 2023/24 and beyond.

Thank you for your letter and e-mail of 1 November 2024 regarding the negotiations with Manx Care over doctors' pay for 2023/24 and beyond.

In parallel with my meeting with you and acknowledgement of your letter I now understand that there is a proposal to ballot BMA members for strike action in pursuit of your pay claims.

I have now met with the CEO of Manx Care to establish more about the current negotiations and I understand that the offers of 6% for 2023/24 and 4% for 2024/25 have been in line with the offers made to other staff groups including nurses and other health and care professionals. These offers were in addition to 3% for 2021/22 and 6% for 2022/23. Taken together, and if they were accepted, these increases represent a 19% increase in pay from 2021/22 to 2024/25.

I understand that you have now sought a further increase of 6.8% for 2023/ 24 and have not yet accepted the 4% offer for this financial year.

Given the well-publicised financial position of Manx Care in relation to its budget, a further substantial increase to headline pay is not financially sustainable without securing offsetting savings from elsewhere to meet this. I am not against hospital consultants receiving an appropriate reward for their skills and endeavours, but it has recently come to public attention that there is a very considerable disparity in the levels of remuneration across the medical professional group.

It will not surprise you to learn that the scale of the earnings outlined in recent publicly published Tynwald questions showing 20 hospital consultants earning more than £300k per annum, has caused some consternation amongst Tynwald members and indeed amongst some of your colleagues employed at Manx Care who perceive unfairness in the system. It is my understanding, that the disparity in earnings is driven by funding that is "locked" into extra-contractual payments, especially in relation to the highest paid doctors (consultants) and their additional programmed activities (PAs) and other allowances above base level.

I understand that Teresa Cope wrote to Robin Harrison at the BMA earlier this year proposing a way forward to reinvest some of the funding that has been used on additional PAs to improve the base pay offer for all doctors and other staff.

As part of that proposition, it was agreed that the BMA would encourage its membership to engage in meaningful job planning. As you know every doctor is contractually obliged to participate annually in job planning and is also required to work within the framework of the agreed job plan. As I understand it there has been patchy adherence to this so I would encourage you once more to emphasise to your members the importance of engaging with this if we are to make any progress on pay.

It may be of value to consider what lessons can be learned from other jurisdictions, including Jersey where we know an affordable pay deal was secured alongside the reconfiguration of clinical services that deliver more value for money.

Manx Care have assured me that they remain committed to constructive resolution. I would urge both sides to engage positively in that respect and perhaps, with a positive intent in mind, I would encourage you to consider carefully the value of strike action in the meantime.

Thank you for your support in finding a fair and sustainable solution.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alfred Cannan', written in a cursive style.

Hon. Alfred Cannan, MHK
Minister for Health and Social Care

Cc: Robin Harrison, Industrial Relations Officer - BMA, Teresa Cope, Andy Ralphs, Julie Bradley