**The RCM Comments on the South West Pay Cartel’s Terms and Conditions Consortium’s Documents**

The South West Pay Cartel’s Terms and Conditions Consortium today (1st March) published its assessment and recommendations about pay, terms and conditions in the NHS.

The RCM is pleased that this document recognises that on 26th February the NHS Staff Council agreed to amend Agenda for Change in England, ensuring the sustainability of national pay, terms and conditions. They helpfully recognise that national solutions are the most appropriate for the NHS.

However, while the document touches on some other areas of spending in which savings could be made it falls short on making recommendations regarding Chief Executives and Senior Managers remuneration packages. Moreover, it only focuses on savings that can be made through reducing pay, terms and conditions rather than looking at the service as a whole. Following a major campaign by the RCM and other NHS Trade Unions, regional pay has been rejected as a way forward.

RCM Director for Policy, Employment Relations and Communications Jon Skewes said: “In our consultation on the proposed changes to Agenda for Change, midwives voted in overwhelming numbers to accept the changes on the basis that acceptance would help to secure UK-wide bargaining in the NHS. It would also fend off the threat to local pay and conditions. We understand that the employers who have joined the South West Cartel accept those changes, too, and will work with local staff side representatives to implement the nationally agreed changes. In the aftermath of the Francis report, they should now spend more time ensuring they have enough motivated midwives and other NHS staff as the basis for ensuring better, more compassionate care. ”

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