

Our Ref: WD/FM



Your Ref:

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17 February 2021

UNISON House

E MAIL AND HARD COPY

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Dear Jeane,

COVID VACCINATION PROGRAMME

At the recent meeting with UNISON we raised the issue of the Covid Vaccination Programme and two areas of concern.

The first area was around the eligibility of non-facing staff members receiving the vaccine. In particular we used the example of staff who work for NSS at the National Distribution Centre who are not deemed as a priority. Although Scottish Government have maintained they are following the JCVI advice on prioritisation, variations have already been agreed ie NHS24. There are also other staff groups eg laundry staff who have not been prioritised, however, if there was a Covid outbreak in laundries then that would have huge problems for NHS Scotland.

The second area was around the model of staff delivery of the vaccination programme which is not a sustainable nor a fair system for the service delivery of this programme. There is a significant inequality of payments in the haste of NHS Boards using these contractors instead of directly employed or bank staff with £231.00 for 3.5 hours work to independent contractors and a Band 5 at the top of pay scale £56.63.

Many retired staff have also returned to practice to undertake vaccinator roles. Most of these people have undertaken the significant training package in their own time. Initially staff were getting shifts, however, in some Health Boards with the introduction of independent contractors at a very highly inflated cost both these staff and directly employed and bank staff are now not getting shifts.

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Not only is this at a huge cost it is also causing major issues with our members and we would request that you instruct Health Boards only to use independent contractors as a last resort rather than offering them work ahead of their own and bank staff.

As always I am more than happy to meet with you to discuss in more detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Willie Duffy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

WILLIE DUFFY

Head of Health UNISON Scotland