Agenda for Change – What’s it all about?

Agenda for Change is a new pay and grading system for the NHS. It will harmonise terms and conditions of employment and provide a clearer path for your career development. Agenda for Change has been negotiated in partnership between employee and employer representatives and supports NHS modernisation. Roll-out of the programme – based on retrospective application from 1 October – began on 1 December 2004.

The initiative is divided into three main parts:

- Job Matching and / or Evaluation
- Terms & Conditions
- Knowledge and Skills Framework

We have lift off

Few people could not have noticed the fact that Agenda for Change was launched on 1 December.

Joint-Chair of the NHSGG Agenda for Change Steering Group, Jonathan Best, said, “This is only the beginning. Although the new terms and conditions come into force, and are to be backdated to 1 October, with 33,000 staff, it will take time for everyone to be assimilated into the new package.

“All I can do is ask staff to be patient and let the job matching and assimilation processes take their course.

“Each and every one of us can help move things along by making sure our job description is up to date and by keeping up to date by using our AfC newsletters and webpages.”

Minister’s message

The Minister for Health and Community Care, Andy Kerr, also marked the launch of AfC with a statement.

He said, “By giving staff opportunities to enhance their skills and work more flexibly, patients will experience better and faster care delivered in a way which meets their needs.

“The design, testing and development of the new system is thanks to a sustained period of successful partnership working between the four UK Health Departments, NHS employers and trade unions.

“Agenda for Change will also act as an agent for change and modernisation in the NHS. Over the coming years it will be a platform for forging new roles around more innovative ways of working, enhanced teamwork, higher staff morale and more effective recruitment and retention.”

A Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all NHSGG Staff from the AfC Team.
Your job description – it takes two

In order to ensure the job matching process can be conducted effectively and smoothly, it is essential that Job Descriptions are accurate and up to date. The Agenda for Change Job Evaluation Scheme takes into account a number of criteria which have not been used in the past and which must be recorded in the Job Description to allow the joint matching panels to successively match posts.

Job Descriptions must be agreed in Partnership i.e. both the Jobholder and their Line Manager must agree the content and every jobholder must be consulted in the development of their Job Description.

A set of Core NHS Job Description Templates which have been developed by the Scottish Pilot Sites is available to enable line managers, staff-side representatives and Jobholders to use as a “starter for 10” where Job Descriptions do not exist. These will require additional information to reflect the nature of your post. Your line manager and / or staff side rep should be able to help you with this.

In NHS Greater Glasgow partnership working arrangements will ensure that no employee will be forced into signing any Job Description if they are not in agreement with the content and if they have not had an opportunity to develop/update their Job Description. Job Descriptions will only be accepted for Job Matching with a signed Job Description submission form signed by the Line Manager. Following this procedure will ensure that all Job description content is agreed by the employees covered by it and the Line Manager.

Any employee experiencing difficulties in agreeing Job Descriptions should contact their local Trade Union/Professional Organisation Representative who will provide assistance. It is intended that there will be mediators within the Divisions who have been trained in writing job descriptions and if necessary will provide assistance where there is a failure to agree the content of the Job Description between the Job Holder and their line manager.

Step-by-step Guide

Step 1 - Assess the Current Job Description
If the Job Description is current, accurately reflects the Job Role and covers the additional factors required for Agenda for Change, (see the template guidance notes and the blank job description template) then the Job Description should be signed off by the Job Holder and Manager. No further action is required.

Step 2 - Identify if the Job is a Core NHS Job
If the job description needs to be updated or revised you may want to identify whether the job is one of the Core NHS jobs developed by the Scottish Pilot sites and listed in the index of Core NHS Job Templates.

Step 3 - Update the Job Description in Conjunction with Job Holder/s
If the job is one of the Core NHS jobs, amend the description to meet local needs using the appropriate template from the index of Core NHS Job Templates.

Step 4 - Sign Off Job Description/s
Once the revised Job Descriptions have been completed and agreed they should be signed off by the job holder and line manager in preparation for the Job Matching process.

All of the above guidance can be obtained from the Agenda For Change Project Team (contact details below) or alternatively they can be accessed from the pay modernisation website

www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/paymodernisation/AfC/jobeval/jobtemplates/job_templates.htm
Job matching timetable revealed

NHSGG's AfC team has put together a programme schedule which will see all staff go through job matching and evaluation by the high summer of 2005.

Each job type (not the person doing the job) will be assessed using 16 job evaluation factors.

Many jobs – about 80% of all types - can then be quickly matched against nationally agreed job profiles.

For those 20% of jobs where there is no clear match to any profile, then the job will be subjected to local job evaluation based on a panel's assessment of a Job Analysis Questionnaire completed by the postholder.

Both routes around completion of job matching should lead to the job in question being confirmed at a level within the new AfC pay bands using nationally-agreed procedures.

Once that stage is reached, the employee is then moved across to the new pay band and terms and conditions under a process called 'assimilation'.

Therefore, assimilation always follows job matching. Pay, terms and conditions will be back – dated to 1 October 2004.

NHSGG staff can expect to take the first step towards assimilation as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job ‘Family’</th>
<th>Date Range for Job Matching (all 2005)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing, Midwifery, HV, Dental Nursing,ODs</td>
<td>Jan          Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A&amp;C</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHP's</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLTs, Clin. Pys, Pharmacists, Psycho &amp; Art Therapists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTB, Clinical Scientists, Technicians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estates, Chaplins, Health Promotion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplies, Procurement</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Nursing ‘family’ will be the first up for job matching from 10 January 2005.

However, proving once again that AfC is a moveable feast, there are reports that there are second thoughts at national level about the timing of job matching/evaluation for ancillary staff. We'll let you know as soon as we hear anything.
What is job evaluation?

Job evaluation is co-ordinated by NHSGG and its partners in staff-side organisations, which represent NHSGG employees.

Jobs (not the people doing the jobs) are assessed using 16 Job Evaluation Factors, as described in the Job Evaluation Handbook.

In the first instance, NHSGG jobs will be 'matched' against National Job Profiles. These are based on 'standard', commonly occurring NHS jobs and have been agreed in partnership with the staff side organisations which negotiated AfC.

A partnership panel of trained job matchers will decide on the new pay band types of jobs will sit using the information obtained from the agreed job description and by matching this to an appropriate National Profile.

This is why it is so important for you to make sure that your job description is up to date and a TRUE and ACCURATE reflection of the work you carry out.

Job descriptions will be collated by the Job Evaluation Co-leads in each Operating Division and at the NHS Board who in turn will forward the submissions to the job evaluation sub-group and to job matching panels.

A requirement of the Job Evaluation Scheme is that two people representing staff and management in the area of work being reviewed must be available to contact when the matching panel are meeting. Their role will be to provide additional information about the post under consideration, generally in response to specific questions from panel members.

Local evaluation

The job matching panel will attempt to match jobs against national profiles. It is estimated that around 80% of NHSGG posts will be matched. If a match is found, the staff covered by that post will be moved across to the new Agenda for Change pay bands. This process is called assimilation.

If no match is found, a 'Job Analysis Questionnaire' (JAQ) will have to be completed. The staff member will complete a draft of the JAQ, and should agree the content with their line manager. After this, two trained job analysts, representing management and the staff-side, will interview the staff member to discuss the content of the JAQ and make any amendments necessary. The amended JAQ is then signed off by the line manager and staff member and submitted for local evaluation.

If you do not have access to a PC and a printer to complete the JAQ, contact your line manager, who is obliged to provide you with access to one and the time needed to fill out the questionnaire.

The job evaluation panel – two management and two staff-side representatives trained in job evaluation – will use the information in the JAQ to evaluate the post using the 16 job evaluation factors. This in turn will lead to a points score, which determines which pay band the post should be moved on to.

Job evaluation training update

The first job matching panel meeting on 10 January is only weeks away.

221 nominations have been received for taking part in job evaluation – 103 staffside and 118 management/employer representatives. The AfC Project Steering group would like to say a big ‘thank you’ to all those people who have volunteered to help NHSGG implement Agenda for Change.

Trainers have been busy over the last couple of months training panel members on job matching and going through a detailed awareness session explaining the job evaluation scheme. Over 130 delegates attended the awareness sessions and around 60 job matchers have been changed.

Training continues right up to Christmas and then there is a break before the panel meetings in January. Training will begin again on 18 January and job analysis training will start during February.

If you are interested in taking part in job evaluation, you can obtain a nomination form on the NHSGG website at www.nhsgg.org.uk/agendaforchange

Assimilation to new terms and conditions

Once a job has been successfully evaluated, the AfC team will assess it against the new terms and conditions to determine what pay, terms and conditions the postholder should receive. Each member of staff will have this confirmed to them in writing.

As soon as you are assimilated on to AfC you will be engaged with the new Knowledge and Skills Framework in order to progress your career.
Terms and conditions update

An implementation guidance letter has been sent to all NHSGG staff. (speak to your line manager or local HR team if you haven’t received it yet). This contains information on the application of new overtime rates, payment of unsocial hours during periods of sick leave and availability of the new on-call provision for staff who will benefit from that.

The Scottish Pay Reference & Implementation Group (SPRIG), which is leading AfC nationally, is to continue to clarify on detailed issues relating to implementation of the new terms and conditions. SPRIG will also develop draft policies to ensure consist application of AfC across the whole of NHSScotland. As soon as they are ratified by the Human Resources Forum, these policies will form part of the new Terms and Conditions of Service handbook for Scotland.

Full details of the new terms and conditions of service, in addition to other useful guidance on AfC can be found on the Pay Modernisation website – www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/paymodernisation/afc.htm

Application of new overtime rates

All staff in pay bands one to seven will be eligible for overtime payments. Newer rates are applicable retrospectively to 1 October 2004. A single rate is payable for all at time and a half, but any overtime undertaken on a public holiday will be paid at double time.

Staff who have already worked overtime in October and November 2004 will not be expected to pay back any overpayments that have been made in this period.

At UK level, the Executive of the NHS Staff Council have agreed that current, nationally agreed pre-AfC conditions and rates can continue to be paid until such time as individual staff are able to assimilate onto the new AfC pay bands. At that point, any overpayment will be offset against arrears of pay, back to 1 December 2004. This will ensure that staff do not receive a cut in income as they await the award of enhanced basic pay.

Waiting list initiatives

A number of NHS Boards have been paying enhanced rates for these initiatives for some time, outwith Whitley and now AfC terms and conditions. It has been agreed that staff will currently continue to be paid as per local agreements for waiting list initiatives. NHS Boards have been advised that they will have to align overtime for the initiatives with AfC rates between now and no later than 30 June 2005.

Protection of pay

Staff who are in post as of 1 October 2004 and any new staff appointed prior to assimilation to the new pay bands will be entitled to pay protection if their new pay band under AfC results in a reduced salary. In line with the AfC agreement, this will be for a period of one year with a pay uplift and on a ‘mark time’ basis (i.e. with no annual increment or cost of living increase) until the new AfC salary overtakes the protected salary.

Organisational change protection

With reorganisation of NHS Greater Glasgow impending in the New Year, many staff have been raising this issue. Enquiries regarding the interaction of protection provision for AfC and protection which staff might already receive in line with NHSScotland organisational change policy have been referred to SPRIG’s terms and conditions guidance group.

Further guidance is expected and we will let you know about it as soon as we can.

Protection of hours at work

There are agreed periods of protection for staff who currently work above or below the new full-time hours of work for all staff (i.e. 37 ½). This protection will apply to staff who transfer from one port to another within their own organisation and within other NHS Scotland organisations. Full details are to be found in your implementation guidance letter.
New annual leave and public holiday arrangements

Annual leave entitlement is based on ‘aggregated NHS service’ i.e. any time you have worked within the NHS will count – regardless of whether or not you have had a break in service. If you’ve had a service break, you should contact your local HR team for advice.

There will be eight public holidays for full-time staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Annual Leave and public holiday allocation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On appointment</td>
<td>27 days plus 8 public holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After five years service</td>
<td>29 days plus 8 public holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After ten years service</td>
<td>33 days plus 8 public holidays</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the above entitlements are based on a working day of $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours and will be applied on a pro-rata basis for part-time staff.

An annual leave ‘ready reckoner’ is being sent to HR departments for distribution to managers and staff side representatives to assist with the calculation of each staff member’s leave entitlement for the half-year from 1 October 2004 to 31 March 2005.

It is recognised that it may not be possible for all employees to take their additional leave before 31 March 2005 – therefore it may be agreed locally to carry forward 50% of any additional leave into the next leave year, 2005 – 2006, in addition to the current entitlement to carry forward one week of annual leave.

Any staff who find that they have a reduced entitlement to annual leave and public holidays will receive protection for five years. This protection is based on annual leave plus public holidays and any difference protected.

Have you seen the 12 and 26 May, 9 and 23 June and 9 August and 5 November editions of All Change? – If not, contact your line manager or visit www.nhs.gg.org.uk/agendaforchange.

Further Information
In advance of local Divisional contacts being arranged call or email the following people:

- General: Rona Agnew 0141 951 5084 rona.agnew@gjinl.scot.nhs.uk
- Job Matching/Evaluation: Paul Watt 0141 951 5842 paul.watt@gjinl.scot.nhs.uk
- Knowledge & Skills: Juli McQueen 0141 211 3771 juli.mcqueen@gartnavel.glacomen.scot.nhs.uk
- Terms & Conditions: Janice Whitelaw 0141 951 5843 janice.whitelaw@gjinl.scot.nhs.uk
- Staff-side Co-ordinator: Susan Russell 0141 951 5083 susan.russell@gjinl.scot.nhs.uk

Please note that the Agenda for Change proposals are subject to review and the details provided above are accurate at the time of going to print.