

Ref: 26/2003

7 May 2003

Regional Chief Executive
Eastern Regional Health Authority

Chief Executive Officer
Each Health Board

Secretary/Manager
Each Public Voluntary
and Joint Hospital Board
outside the ERHA region

Chief Officer
Each Mental Handicap and Specialist Agency
outside the ERHA region

**DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH AND
CHILDREN**
AN ROINN
SLÁINTE AGUS LEANAÍ

Quality and Fairness
A Health System for You

Payment of the First Phase of Benchmarking Increases

A Chara,

I am directed by the Minister for Health and Children to refer to the new Social Partnership Agreement *Sustaining Progress* which was ratified on 26 March 2003. As you are aware, under the public service pay terms of the agreement (Section 19), the first 25% of the Public Service Benchmarking Body's pay recommendations are due for payment with effect from 1 December, 2001.

In this context, please find enclosed a copy of the revised consolidated pay scales for the health service incorporating these increases. The sanction of the Minister is now conveyed for the application of these new pay scales with effect from 1 December, 2001 to all eligible grades.

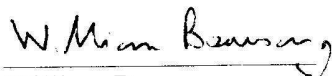
Funding has been allocated in the Revised Estimates Volume to resource the payment by health agencies of the first phase of the pay recommendations of the Public Service Benchmarking Body in the health services. The process of allocating funding, from available resources, is currently underway.

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A copy of the recent Statement by the National Implementation Body, concerning the public service pay aspects of *Sustaining Progress* is also attached for your attention. As you will note the Statement refers to the need for industrial relations harmony and stresses that full compliance with the industrial stability and peace provisions from the date of ratification of the agreement on 26 March and progress on the modernisation and change agenda are essential for payment of the second phase of the benchmarking increases from 1 January, 2004.

It would be appreciated if you could pass on this Statement to relevant agencies or bodies under your aegis, as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'W. M. Beausang', written over a horizontal line.

William Beausang

Principal

Personnel Management and Development

Statement of the National Implementation Body

With the ratification of Sustaining Progress, the Social Partnership Agreement 2003-05 by the parties, the National Implementation Body, in its Public Service format, has held its first meeting to initiate the operation of the industrial relations arrangements provided for in the Agreement – *Section 19, Public Service Pay*.

Having regard to its role under paragraph 19.11, the NIB has reviewed the steps now being taken to establish immediately the other mechanisms provided for in the Agreement, especially the Public Service Monitoring Group, and the Performance Verification Groups – for the Civil Service, Health, Education and Local Government sectors. In addition, the various working parties and reviews provided for within each sector should commence immediately.

The Agreement commits employers, trade unions and employees to promoting industrial harmony. Full compliance with the industrial stability and peace provisions from the date of ratification (26th March, 2003), and substantial progress on the modernisation and change agenda in each sector will be essential for the first payments to be made under the general pay terms and benchmarking awards, due to be paid on 1st January, 2004. The procedures to be followed where local level engagement fails to resolve an issue are set out in 19.8 (where agreement is not reached in local discussion), 19.9 (as to what constitutes a breach of the Agreement) and 19.10 (as to what constitutes normal ongoing change).

The NIB Sub – Group will meet on a regular basis to fulfil its mandate to review progress on all aspects of the Agreement in the Public Service and to address any issues arising from implementation.

10th April, 2003

Ends