



## ***How to have an organising conversation about pay?***

### ***For CSP reps <sup>1</sup>***

#### ***What's the difference between an organising conversation and a chat?***

An organising conversation has ***a purpose***

Trying to ***move a member***

Always have an ***ask***

#### ***Structuring an organising conversation on pay***

##### **1. Introductions**

Who you are? ***CSP Steward***

Who they are? ***CSP Member***

Why are we here? ***To discuss the public sector pay campaign***

##### **2. Listen**

Get ***their story***

Who is this member? Where do they work? What band are they? What are their personal circumstances? Do you get a sense of their values?

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<sup>1</sup> This structured conversation is adapted from Jane McAlevey, *Organising for Power*, Digital Training, 2020.  
Read more: Jane McAlevey, *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power*, Oxford, 2018.

Get the **details** of the pay campaign **they care** about

- Is it the fact they have worked on the frontline of the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Is it the fact that their friend got a public sector pay rise recently?
- Is it because they are a Band 5 and don't have enough money?

Move **towards agitation**

The point of an organising conversation is to **move people from a position of apathy, hopelessness and burnout towards hope, courage and action**

We need to **raise member expectations**

We need to **redirect feelings of anger or hopelessness** (away from the status quo and towards decision makers or those in a position to make changes)

**The UK Government 1% offer and the Scottish Government 4% offer illustrates political choice not economic necessity.**

Tips:

Be empathetic – we all start from different places, we're all on a journey

70% listening, 30% talking

Ask open-ended questions

Don't make assumptions

Don't be more visibly agitated than the member is

Keep it friendly and relational

### **3. Education/ Vision / Plan**

In this section of the conversation try to educate the member and let them know what things could look like if things were politically different.

How can our trade union make a difference?

How can a small trade union like the CSP build power?

How does building power in a workplace relate to big political decisions further up the food chain?

- Be a rep – in every clinic, in every community where there are physios
- Build a strong team – talk to one another, hold regular meetings
- Update data of our members [position, band, place of work, address, contact details] in case we need to hold a ballot
- Write to our elected reps [MPs, MSPs, AMs, MLAs] about pay
- Hold region/country wide meetings on pay
- When we are a solid majority, we can begin to make demands

Offer examples of **how collective power works**

**In 2019, Scottish teachers won a 13.51% pay rise *without industrial action*.**

They had a concerted campaign, member activism, structure tests throughout, and an indicative ballot with 74% turnout, 98% rejection of initial offer

**In 2021, HMRC staff won a 13% pay rise.** This was a joint union campaign by the FDA and PCS.

**In 2021, United Voices of the World (UVW) won a 24% pay increase for cleaners** in a South London school. This **small trade union** made a huge difference.

**In 2019, Glasgow women council workers won a £500 million equal pay settlement after joint trade union action** by UNISON, Unite and GMB. Cleaners, caterers, homecare and nursery workers took part in the largest equal pay strike in UK history.

**Economic arguments for a pay rise:**

2020 has been a challenging time for the UK economy, but the economy is in a strong position to return to strong economic growth in 2021 as we drive out of the pandemic, and economic activity rebounds.

News on vaccines has led economists to upgrade the UK's GDP forecast and economic outlook, and has seen the FTSE have the best month for 30 years rising by 12.4% in November 2020 as confidence grows in those businesses that have been most impacted by the pandemic.

The wealth of the world's billionaires has risen by almost 30% during the Covid-19 pandemic to £7.8 trillion. This demonstrates that money is travelling from the poor to the rich during the crisis.

**Public support for a pay rise:**

The public have consistently supported giving NHS workers a pay rise, a ComRes Poll conducted in January 2021 found 83% of the public supported a pay rise for NHS staff, (with just 5% disagreeing), 53% were keen to bring the pay rise forward rather than wait until June and 68% supported increasing public spending to fund a pay rise with only 10% disagreeing. (PRB Evidence)

### **Physio brain drain to the private sector:**

Since 2010 average weekly pay in the private sector pay has grown 22%, compared to just 17% in the public sector.

81% of those respondents to the latest CSP Member Survey said that they had considered leaving NHS employment over the past year stated that an early and pay rise would have positively affected their decision-making. (PRB Evidence)

### **Recruitment and retention:**

A substantial pay rise for the NHS workforce is a necessary investment for the future, critical to both the recruitment and retention of staff. With intention to leave growing and a major recruitment drive now underway, it is important to make the NHS an attractive long-term proposition for the future, to tackle the persistent understaffing and build resilience into the system. (PRB Evidence)

## **4. Call the Question/ Frame the Choice**

**Assess** what they think about the plan (above) and what they are willing to do

***Are they ready to take action? What does this member seem to be ready to do?*** To update their data, write to their MP, attend a pay meeting?

***Ask the question*** and ***wait for their answer***

Tip: leave a pause after your ask, and don't talk until you have it

## **5. Inoculation**

***Prepare members for media/employer backlash***

“NHS workers are just greedy. They have a job at least, thousands have lost their jobs over the pandemic. Why should *they* get a pay rise?”

→ the employer, the media and the government will play on this

So prepare them for this kind of **backlash**, but give them **comebacks**:

The NHS employs 1.5 million people, a pay rise is for the collective not for individuals.

Increasing pay for NHS workers will boost spending in every community in every part of the country.

Public sector pay constraint (austerity), such as 2010, as a means to reduce public sector debt, prevented rather than accelerated economic growth.

By boosting the income of households, the Government will get increased tax revenues, and reduced reliance benefits.

Use your own examples of hard won victories that led to more victories:

Trade unions win the weekend? The suffragettes win the vote?

## 6. Next steps / action

- **Ask them to do something** specific and manageable
- **Give them information** and build their **confidence**
- Make sure your ask reflects your plan (in step 3)
- Make a plan with them and **have a follow up plan**

**Tip:** always have a follow up plan, meeting, text, call email to check in that the member has done the action

### Suggested first actions?

- Tweet support using #WithNHSStaff and #CSP4FairPay
- Talk to a colleague about pay

## Handling Objections

- **Affirm and acknowledge** their feelings *without* legitimising

- **Answer their questions** concisely and honestly
- **Redirect** – ask a question that redirects to the issues **they care about**

E.g

Member statement: “Nothing will ever change.”

**Acknowledge/affirm:** “I understand how you feel especially given the stagnation of NHS pay in the past ten years.”

**Answer:** “While things don’t change overnight, the reality is that if we choose to do nothing, nothing *will* ever change. When we come together as a union, and as 14 health unions, we have a chance to make a difference, because we have more power as a group than we do alone.”

**Redirect:** “If you and the other CSP in your department had a say in the pay campaign, what would you do?”