
Facts and figures on 'junior doctors'

Doctors in training roles: the basics

75,000

The number of **full-time equivalent doctors in training roles** ('**junior doctors**') in the NHS in England (including GP trainees) as of September 2022, which represents a **33% increase** since September 2015.

47%

In the year to September 2022, **nearly half (47%) of junior doctors** who joined NHS hospital and community services in England were non-UK nationals.

8,728

The number of vacancies across all doctors (not just doctors-in-training) in England as of December 2022. Some of these were filled by temporary staff. However, when including other reasons for shortfalls, such as sickness absence, we previously estimated some 1,400 posts went unfilled on any given day. Problems retaining junior doctors have knock-on implications for the number of consultant vacancies.

A survey from the GMC found that there were an increasing number of medical trainees experiencing burnout, with **one in five** junior doctors at **high risk of burnout** in 2022, compared to one in seven in the previous year. For some specialties, such as emergency medicine, this was as high as one in three in 2022. Doctors experiencing burnout are more likely to consider leaving the profession.¹

1. https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/national-training-survey-summary-report-2022-final_pdf-91826501.pdf

Junior doctors: the facts

£29,384

The **starting basic salary for foundation year doctors** in England. It is higher than the average graduate starting salary, which ranges from £24,000 to £26,999.¹ Basic salaries of 'junior doctors' can go up to £58,398 for specialty registrars at the highest grade.

£55,420

The **average annual NHS earnings** of a 'junior doctor' in England in the year to March 2022, including those working part-time. The full-time equivalent average salary is around **£57,118**.²

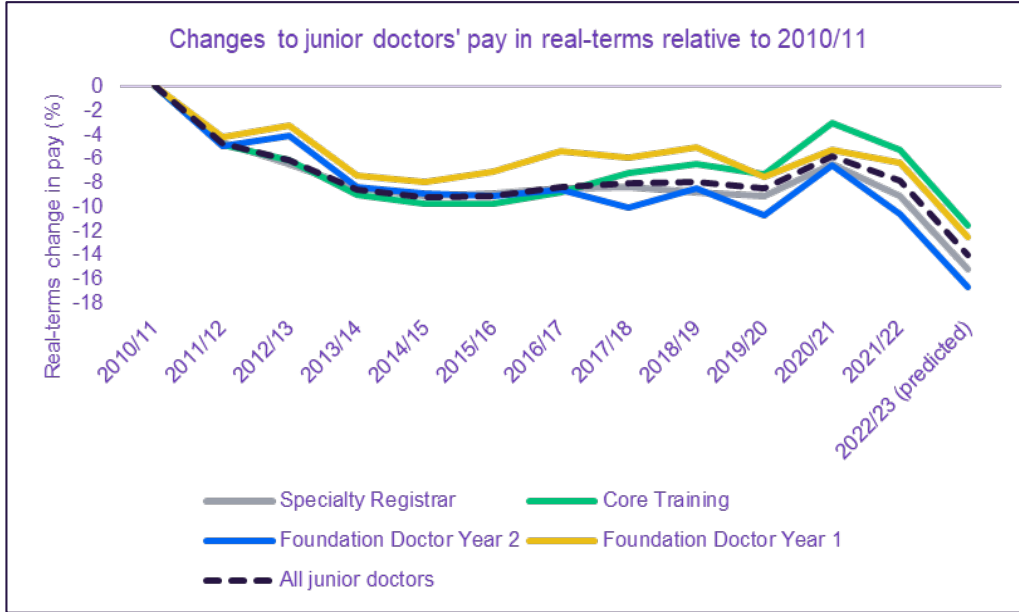
£4,900

The amount this average had fallen behind inflation between 2010/11 and 2021/22. We estimate this may rise to **£9,500 in 2022/23** depending on how inflation changes over the rest of the year.

1. HESA Graduate Outcomes 2019/20: Summary Statistics. Starting salary excludes non-basic pay, including any high cost area supplement (i.e. London weighting).

2. Nuffield Trust analysis of NHS Digital annual earning estimates.

Junior doctor pay: the trend



Note: Real-terms NHS pay by financial year using consumer price index. Weighted averages (using FTEs) were used to calculate changes in pay for all junior doctors.

The average junior doctor salary has not kept pace with inflation for over a decade now.

Even before the current financial year, typical salaries for all junior doctors had fallen by 7.9% in real terms compared to 2010/11 levels – this fell by 10.7% for 2nd year foundation doctors specifically, compared to a 5.3% fall for those in core training.

Depending on how inflation changes over the remainder of the year, we predict that junior doctors' real-terms pay this financial year will fall to around 14% below levels in 2010/11.

Junior doctor pay: across the four nations

Starting salaries for full-time junior doctors, by grade and UK country

Country	Starting basic salary (2022/23)		
	Foundation Year 1	Foundation Year 2	Core Training/Specialty Registrar
England	£29,384	£34,012	£40,257-£58,398
Scotland ¹	£27,653	£34,299	£36,472-£57,349
Wales ¹	£26,713	£33,135	£35,408-£55,673
Northern Ireland ¹	£26,713	£33,133	£35,405-£55,670

1. Basic pay increases at the end of each year of training, even if doctors take longer than usual to move onto the next grade. In FY1 this can be up to £2,244 more and can be up to £4,490 more for FY2.

Pay scales differ between the four nations of the UK. In 2016, England introduced a new junior doctor contract, whereas Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland continued with the 2002 contract.

While junior doctors in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland receive incremental annual pay rises, those in England receive larger – but less frequent – salary increases.

Junior doctors pay: the current dispute

Junior doctors in England have been tied into a multi-year pay deal since 2019, seeing an **increase of 2% each year to their basic pay**. The four-year deal, was agreed in 2019 in very different service and economic conditions before the pandemic and recent spiraling inflation.

The exceptions were junior doctors on the highest specialty training pay point, who were eligible for an **extra £1,200** on top of the 2% uplift from October 2020. Other parts of the contract changes included uplifts to weekend allowances and a £1,000 allowance for those working less than full-time.

When accounting for pay progression between grades across different years – for example, progressing from first to second year of foundation training – the increase to pay is **18%** (including the 2% uplift).

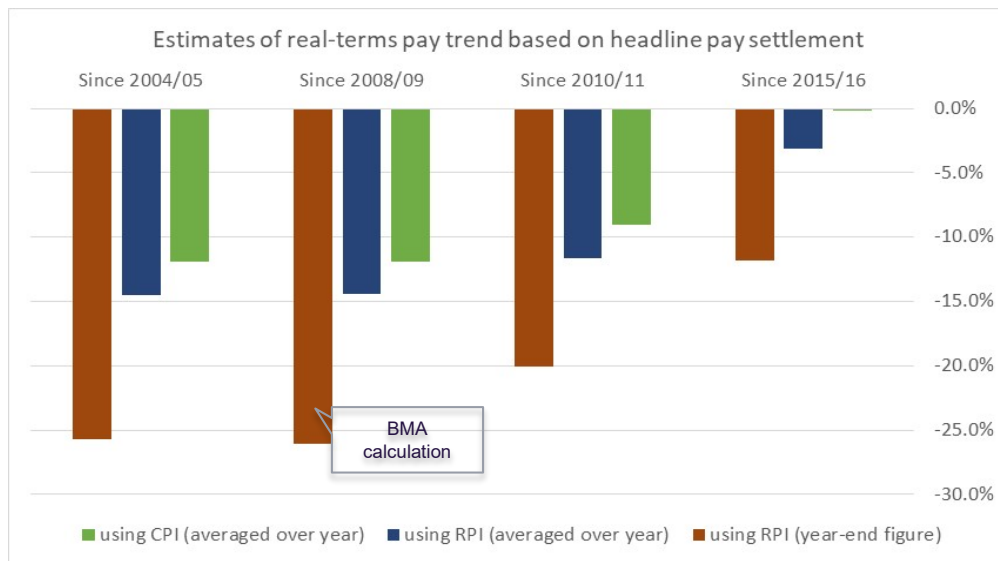
The Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB) estimated that a single year of the current junior doctor multi-year pay deal was worth equivalent to **£120 million**.

On 10 March 2023, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Steve Barclay, invited the BMA to participate in formal pay discussions. The BMA declined as they did not accept the precondition of calling off strike action planned for 13–15 March.

Junior doctors pay: the current dispute (2)

Last September, the BMA published a paper outlining their view that real-terms pay had **fallen by 26%** between 2008/09 and 2021/22.¹

It is important to note that this calculation uses: headline pay settlement figures rather than changes in actual earnings; the RPI (rather than CPI) measure of inflation; and inflation figures at year-end rather than averaged across the year.



As shown in the chart below, calculations are very sensitive to these assumptions and choice of baseline year.

Our alternative calculations (which uses actual earnings data) for the real-terms pay trend are given on slide 4.

The BMA are asking for ‘full pay restoration’ equivalent to a **35% increase**.

1. <https://www.bma.org.uk/media/6134/bma-ia-pay-restoration-methodology-13-september-2022.pdf>

Strikes: what do we know?

77% of eligible junior doctors cast a vote in the BMA ballot, of which **98% voted in favour of strike action** – equivalent to 36,955 members. This result was very similar to previous industrial action voted for by junior doctors in England in 2016¹.

Junior doctor strikes will be held across England for **72 hours** between 13th – 15th March 2023, starting and finishing at 07:00AM.

Industrial action will see junior doctors walking out of routine and emergency care. They will only be allowed to walk out of life-and-limb emergency care if other staff are able to cover for them.

Strikes: other examples

Junior doctors in England went on strike four times in 2016 over proposed changes to their contract - specifically changing overtime pay rates for unsociable hours. On top of this, guaranteed annual pay increases were removed in place of a system that offered larger, but less frequent pay rises (depending on the training stage juniors doctors had progressed to).

The first few rounds of industrial action started by removing labour for routine care, leading to the cancellation of 101,109 more planned operations than expected. On the last round of strike action, emergency cover was also withdrawn.

Across all the strike days, there were 31,651 fewer admissions, 23,895 fewer A&E attendances and 173,462 fewer outpatient appointments than expected. However, there was minimal impact on the number of patient deaths.¹

In 2019, BMA members accepted a new contract which agreed to an average pay rise of 2% each year for four years, but with limits on how much weekend working junior doctors can do and new limits on the number of consecutive long shifts they can undertake.

1. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/8/1/e019319>

Junior doctor pay: the process

Typically, the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB) presents recommendations to the English, Scottish and Welsh parliaments and the Northern Irish Assembly, based on evidence submitted to them each year. Junior doctors in England have been excluded in the normal pay process since 2019 due to the multi-level pay deal in place.

Improving the process¹

Timeliness	<p>There needs to be a stronger requirement to publish the DDRB recommendations and response earlier. Junior doctors have planned to take strike action on the 2022/23 pay deal, 18 days before the 2023/24 pay deal is supposed to take effect.</p> <p>The multi-year pay deal for junior doctors was agreed in 2019 before the Covid-19 pandemic and when inflation was predicted to be running at around 2% per annum.</p>
Evidence base	<p>The BMA should commit to using appropriate measures of inflation and baseline years when calculating real-terms pay trends. The RPI measure of inflation does not meet the required standards for designation as a National Statistic.</p>
Pay distribution	<p>Since average career earnings are higher in medicine, the DDRB should revisit the relative levels of basic salary for new doctors to experience consultants, including the value of clinical excellence awards.</p>

1. For more practical recommendations on how to improve the pay review process, see here: <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/news-item/basis-of-negotiation-recommendations-to-improve-the-nhs-pay-review-process>



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