



Boots pay consultation outcome

22 October 2021

Dear Member,

I am writing to let you know the outcome of the recent consultation on the offer made by Boots during this year's pay negotiations. Details of the offer can be found [here](#).

83% of members that responded voted to support the option of referring the matter to ACAS, the non-departmental public body of the Government that provides conciliation services for industrial disputes, and the PDA Union will now start this process.

We are aware that other employees have received only a 2% increase, without the lump sum included in the current offer made to pharmacists, or the additional payments for those in the initial stages of their career. However, the vote by members represents an overwhelming rejection of the offer made by the company and reflects the points made by your PDA Union negotiators throughout the discussions, that we are not prepared to see another year where the pay increase for Boots pharmacists is below inflation and your purchasing power reduces in real terms.

The remaining issue has been the way the 3.25% available for pharmacists' pay has been structured. The PDA Union remains firmly of the view that **all pharmacists** deserve a fair increase higher than price inflation which is currently 3.1%.

Nevertheless, we have to plan in case the company do not listen to your views and, despite the best efforts of ACAS, continue to insist on a settlement that has been overwhelmingly rejected.

Industrial action is never considered lightly but members are asking us about this option. Before pharmacists secured recognition for the PDA Union at Boots it would not have been possible, but now it is a possibility.

What is industrial action?

It is important that members appreciate that any form of industrial action would only happen if a majority of members at Boots voted to support it. This is not only PDA Union policy, but the law, which sets out exactly how a ballot must take place and the required turnout before industrial action can be authorised.

It is also important to appreciate that although the terms "*industrial action*" and "*strike*" are often used interchangeably, a strike is only one form of industrial action. Industrial action can also mean working to rule, precisely to the wording of a contract of employment, or refusing to do certain tasks while remaining at work.

Other healthcare professionals have taken industrial action in recent years over pay, notably radiographers and midwives in the NHS, and all AHP (Allied Health Professions) unions took a short 4-hour strike over pensions. Both were successful in achieving the improvements needed to reach agreement.

What's next at Boots?

We are somewhat off from considering industrial action and have issued a press release highlighting our very real commitment to resolving these talks in a way that is acceptable to PDA Union members at Boots. The press release can be found [here](#).

Our efforts are focused on persuading the company to listen to our members and restructure their offer in a way that means agreement can be reached as quickly as possible. Should this fail, despite the involvement of ACAS, then we will consult members again.

The Union will only consider industrial action once we have exhausted negotiations and not before we have asked you whether you want us to conduct a formal industrial action ballot. We will do everything we can to avoid that and call on the company to do the same.

If you wish to make any comment or suggestion about these negotiations please contact me at paul.moloney@pda-union.org

Kind regards

Paul Moloney
PDA Union National Officer and Lead Negotiator