

Care and Support Workers Pay Equity Claim Stakeholder Update #6

The focus is now on getting ready for bargaining and preparing for implementation once a settlement has been reached. There have been delays in getting the employers bargaining strategy endorsed and the Cabinet paper to secure funding - both of these important matters have meant that we have had to adjust the expected date for a proposed settlement to the end of September.

Progress update

Milestones 3 and 4

- The Oversight Group has endorsed both these Milestone reports.
- This completes the investigative phase of the claim and has confirmed undervaluation of support workers.

Milestone 5

- The Milestone 5 report - the employer bargaining strategy – has been submitted to the Oversight Group. This details the key issues employers wish to take into bargaining.
- Following discussion with the Oversight Group, responses have been provided on a number of matters.
- We are awaiting endorsement of the Milestone 5 report - the employer bargaining strategy.

Funding a settlement

- There are two stages to securing the funding to give effect to any settlement reached between the employers and unions, both requiring Cabinet agreement:
 - A tagged contingency estimating the likely cost of a settlement: this enables the employers to commence formal bargaining
 - After a settlement is reached, a further paper to draw the funding down into the various departmental Votes so that they can pass the required funding onto the employers
- The first of these papers is likely to be considered by Cabinet in the coming weeks. This has required a huge effort on the part of the employers in the claim to provide the data needed.

The Bargaining Process

- Pre-bargaining discussions have been progressing with a sharpened focus on the key matters required to be resolved in a settlement.
- Formal bargaining sessions have been scheduled for four days in early September –this is conditional on the contingency funding being agreed.

Implementation

- The joint working group (employers and key funders) has agreed two strands of work on implementation issues:
 - The mechanisms and any system changes the funders will need to have in place for funding and contracting the settlement with employers.
 - The systems and processes, and information, each employer will need to have in place to manage the implementation of a settlement with their support workers.
- Preparatory work is underway and will ramp up once the details of a settlement are known.

Extension of any settlement

The peak bodies and unions have written a joint letter to Ministers urging them to set a clear timetable and pathway for extension of a settlement which is concurrent for all employers and support workers.