

Pay offer for NHS staff 'not inflationary', says Chancellor

The pay offer to [NHS](#) workers is not inflationary, Chancellor [Jeremy Hunt](#) has said.

Mr Hunt said he was "confident" that the offer would not worsen inflation, after health unions on Thursday suspended further strikes by ambulance and other NHS staff and announced they would recommend acceptance of the new pay proposal.

The Chancellor, fresh from delivering his [Budget](#) on Wednesday, also suggested that he would like to see the offer form the basis for agreement with other striking public sector workers.

"What we've done throughout this is tried to be reasonable. We had an independent process that happened last year. But we also recognise there was a lot of cost-of-living pressures, which is why we've given about £3,000 for every family up and down the country, this year and last," he told LBC's Tonight With Andrew Marr.

"But yes, we did look again at whether we could do a non-consolidated payment, a one-off payment, if you like, on last year's awards to recognise those cost-of-living pressures.

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“I think that was the right thing to do in the circumstance. But the one thing that was always our red line throughout all of these negotiations was that we wouldn’t agree to an award that would entrench high inflation, so that we are back here next year.”

Asked if he thought the offer was inflationary, he said: “I don’t, no. I’m confident that the award that we’ve given will still allow inflation to follow its downward trajectory.”

It is expected there will be further discussions between the Department of Health and Social Care and the [Treasury](#) over how the offer will be funded, with union members set to vote on whether to accept the deal.

Mr Hunt said it had been a “difficult dispute” but that the [Government](#) wanted to “reasonably” settle disputes with other unions.

“The Government’s attitude to all these groups of workers is the same, we would like to sit down and settle them reasonably but in a way that doesn’t risk the economic recovery of the country. And I hope today will be the start of that change,” Mr Hunt said.