Q. What is happening in the Early Implementer sites?

A. All twelve of the Agenda for Change Early Implementer sites are making good progress in introducing the new NHS pay system. By the end of March 2004 most of the Early Implementers will have transferred the majority of their staff on to the Agenda for Change pay bands.

Q. What lessons are the Early Implementers generating for national rollout?

A. Some very useful learning is emerging from the EI sites. One of the key messages is that pay modernisation can only work if staff and management representatives in employing organisations **work together in partnership**. This reciprocates the way in which Agenda for Change has been negotiated at a national level.

Another lesson is that all NHS staff should have **up to date job descriptions** ahead of Agenda for Change being rolled out. This will make the process of job evaluation - measuring the skills, knowledge, effort and responsibilities that staff require to be effective in their current post so they can be assimilated on to the new pay bands - easier and less time consuming.

Once all the learning from the Early Implementers is available staff and management representatives at a national level will be evaluating it ahead of national roll-out.

Q. Why am I unable to find a Job Evaluation profile for my post?

A. Over 200 profiles have been agreed by staff and management representatives working in partnership. The process of developing profiles in the lead up to national roll-out is continuing so as to maximise the number of staff covered by national profiles. At the end of the day some local job evaluations will be necessary because jobs of a specialist nature will not necessarily be covered by a nationally agreed generic profile. In the meantime you should keep an eye on the DH Agenda for Change website where all newly agreed job profiles are published.

Q. Is there anything I can do now to prepare for Agenda for Change?

A. All NHS staff should now be discussing their job descriptions with their line managers and ensuring that they are up to date. Come national roll-out both trade union representatives and managers will have an opportunity to get involved in the practical implementation of Agenda for Change locally, taking up development opportunities associated with the Job Evaluation panels, Terms and Conditions subgroups, KSF Development groups etc. and receive appropriate training to take on these roles.
Q. How will you judge whether Agenda for Change has been a success in the EI sites?

A. The Agenda for Change success criteria have been published in annex E of the ‘Proposed Agreement’ which can be found on the DH website. The criteria include the following:

- More patients being treated more quickly
- Higher quality care
- Better pay
- Better career development
- Implementation within available funding

Q. Whilst I am on protection after the first year I do not receive an annual pay award – is this fair?

A. It is important that we focus on the principles of equal pay for work of equal value that underpins Agenda for Change. We also need to recognise the raft of benefits including -:

- a clearer system of career progression with no artificial ceilings
- opportunities to develop into new roles
- appropriate reward for those staff who take on additional duties and responsibilities
- annual appraisal and performance review to support career planning and personal development
- increased annual leave in the new provisions

Q. I work in the Admin and Clerical group and it seems to me that the Job Evaluation Scheme is slanted to clinical posts?

A. This is something that is currently being carefully reviewed by the Job Evaluation Working Party (J EWP) and the Shadow Executive. Clearly the scheme must ensure that all NHS employees - those that have direct patient contact and those who deliver the necessary support functions like finance, IT, estates and facilities services – have their skills fully recognised.

Q. – The unsocial hours payments are acting as a disincentive for some staff to work nights and weekends. What are you going to do about this?

A. In the next 2 – 3 months staff representatives will be sitting down with NHS employer representatives and DH officials to formally review the practical experience of all the Early Implementer sites and to consider whether any aspects of the new pay system need to be modified ahead of national roll-out.
For ambulance staff the unsocial hours payment arrangements are definitely good news. Under the current Whitley pay system ambulance staff do not receive any additional recognition for the out-of-hours component of their work. Agenda for Change will harmonise out-of-hours payments for all NHS staff groups, therefore providing significant gains for most ambulance staff.

**Q. Where can I obtain more information?**

A. Information about the Agenda for Change terms and conditions of employment can be found on the DH website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/policyandguidance/humanresourcesandtraining/modernisingpay/agendaforchange

Information about the learning that is being generated by the Early Implementer sites can be found on the Modernisation Agency website at:

www.modern.nhs.uk/agendaforchange

And also at the Pay Modernisation Unit websites:

Internet website: http://www.wales.nhs.uk/paymodernisation

HOWIS Intranet website: http://howis.wales.nhs.uk/paymodernisation