

NHS SUPERANNUATION SCHEME

JOINING:

Who can be a member of the scheme?

- ◆ Any NHS employee aged between 16 and 70. (This does not include general medical and dental practice staff).

RETIREMENT BENEFITS:

What benefits will I get when I retire?

When you retire you will get a pension and a tax free lump sum.

You annual pension will be $1/80^{\text{th}}$ of your final year's pensionable pay for each year of Scheme membership. Part years of membership will also count towards your pension. This will usually be paid monthly for the rest of your life.

Your lump sum will normally be 3 times the amount of your yearly pension, but married men with membership before 25/03.72 may get a smaller lump sum. This is because membership before that date only counts as one third of the value of later membership when the lump sum is worked out.

What if I only work part time?

Members who work part time have their membership and final year's pay changed to the equivalent full time amounts. The full time equivalent membership and pay are then used to work out their pension.

INDEX LINKING:

What about inflation?

NHS pensions are fully index-linked to protect them against inflation. This means that they are increased each year in line with the cost of living for as long as they are paid. The increases are paid from April. In the first year of your retirement the amount of increase you get will depend on the date you retire.

LIFE ASSURANCE AND FAMILY BENEFITS:

You are automatically covered by the Scheme's life assurance cover from the day you join.

The benefits payable will depend on your circumstances when you die. But there are some things which will not vary.

Widower's Pension

The widower of a woman who retired before 06/04/88 will not get a pension unless she successfully nominated her husband.

The widower of a woman who retired on or after 06/04/88 will get a short term pension for 3 months, or 6 months if there is a dependent child. The short term pension will be at the rate in payment when the member died.

After this the Scheme will pay a widower's pension of half the pension his wife would have got for membership after 06/04/88.

ILL HEALTH:

What if I become too ill to work?

If you become too ill to continue working in your present job you may be able to retire early. An application to retire early because of ill-health should be made to your employer.

RETIREMENT AGE:

When can I retire?

The normal retirement age for most Scheme members is 60 but you can choose to retire before or after that age.

Retirement benefits are paid because you are retiring, not simply taking a break in employment. If you retire and then return to work in the NHS within one month, your pension will normally be suspended and you will have to repay any pension you have received.

What if I return to NHS work after retirement?

If you retire and then return to work in the NHS within one month of your pension will normally be suspended and you will have to repay the pension you have received.

If you return to NHS employment after one month and **before age 60** your pension will be reduced, so that your NHS earnings and pension after retirement are not more than your NHS earnings before you retired. This is called abatement. The reduction will apply up to age 60 or until you stop working if this is earlier.

COST:

How much will all this cost me?

This depends on the type of job you do. Most members pay 6% of their pay. Manual workers pay 5%.

Do I really pay that much?

No. you will get full tax relief on the contributions you pay. You also pay lower rate of National Insurance contribution.

This means the actual cost to most members is nearer 3% of pay.

Your employer contributes an amount equal to 4% of your pensionable pay and the Government pays for the cost of full index linking.

INCREASING BENEFITS:

Can I increase my benefits?

Yes, by making Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs).

TRANSFERRING BENEFITS:

What if I have been a member of another pension scheme?

If you have previously been a member of another pension scheme (including a personal pension plan or annuity contract) other than retirement annuity approved under Section 620 (formerly section 226) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988, you may be able to transfer the value of those benefits to buy extra membership in the NHS Pension Scheme.

If you want to find out more about this ask your Pension Officer for a transfer pack.

LEAVING:

What if I decide to leave the Scheme or the NHS?

If you are considering leaving the Scheme but staying in the NHS, please make sure that you fully understand what you are giving up. Before making your final decision speak to your Pension Officer. If you are still sure you wish to opt out you will need to ask your Pension Officer for leaflet SD502 and booklet SDK. If you are still not sure you should seek independent financial advice.

REJOINING:

Would I be able to rejoin the Scheme?

If you are working for the NHS you can rejoin the Scheme at any time unless you are:

- ◆ On sick leave.
- ◆ Absent from duty for any other reason.
- ◆ Receiving Scheme benefits (unless you retired on ill health grounds and would be rejoining the Scheme before age 50).

SPECIAL CLASSES:

Certain groups of staff who were members of the Scheme before 06.03.95 are known as the special classes. They are:

Nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, occupational health nurses and health visitors.

Female members of the special classes are entitled to retire with benefits from age 55, provided that their 5 years' membership is in one of these jobs.

Men in any of these jobs can retire from age 55 provided that in one of these jobs, but their benefits will only be based on their membership from 17/05/90. Benefits for membership before that date will not be paid until age 60 unless they choose to retire early.

INJURY BENEFITS:

What if I am injured at work?

If you are temporarily off work without pay or on reduced pay because of an injury or disease caused by your NHS employment, you may be entitled to a temporary injury allowance.

MORE INFORMATION:

If you need more information your Pension Officer will be able to help you. Or you can get in touch with:

NHS Pensions Agency
Hesketh House
200/220 Broadway
Fleetwood
Lancashire
FY7 8LG

Telephone: 01253 774 774

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