

Template letter for staff side chairs to send to NHS employers (Get Ahead on Flex)

From:

Joint Staff Side

[Name of NHS employer]

To:

[Name of manager]

[Job title/ CEO]

[Name of NHS employer]

6 March 2026

Let's Get Ahead on Flex – will [employer name] sign the pledge?

We're writing on behalf of our members across [NHS employer name], to ask for your help to fulfil the promise of flexible working for everyone.

We all know that access to flex is vital for people's wellbeing, for building an inclusive and supportive culture, and to recruit and retain desperately needed staff - which all adds up to better care for patients.

But despite the promises, we hear from our members that there are gaps between policy and practice across the NHS, and disparities between the areas with the best flexible working culture and those where it's harder to access.

These inconsistencies undermine morale, and stop us getting the best out of what flexible working has to offer. With a standard on flexible working likely to be included in new staff standards set out in the NHS 10-Year Plan, now is the perfect time to come together and take proactive steps to 'get ahead' on this agenda, and make sure that every [NHS employer name] colleague can expect a consistent, positive approach to flex, no matter which department they work in.

[**Will you commit to change and sign up to our Get Ahead on Flex pledge?**](#) Today, on Employee Appreciation Day, the NHS unions are asking employers to take concrete action to push forward progress on flex in three ways:

1. **Lead the conversation** – commit to include flexible working options in every job advert, every interview and every appraisal.
2. **Set a target** – publish data about how many requests are made, how many are escalated or rejected (and why) - and a clear action plan with targets that is given regular, dedicated time on the agenda at Board meetings.
3. **Train for flex** – make sure every manager is trained to support flexible working, including how and when to discuss flex, how to manage flexible working requests and how to create a flexible working culture.

We believe this is a valuable opportunity to demonstrate leadership, share best practice, and show staff that [NHS employer name] is committed to delivering on the NHS People Promise of flexibility, no matter where they work.

Please make your public commitment to push forward progress on flex by signing the pledge at talkaboutflex.org/getahead. We are sharing this call with our members, as well as our offer to work collaboratively with you as the joint staff side committee to develop an action plan to take flex to the next level at [NHS employer name].

We look forward to hearing from you and to working together to fulfil the promise of flexible working for everyone.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

On behalf of the Joint Staff Side Committee

cc. Joint NHS Unions (hello@nhsunions.org)