**Why are you stopping the industrial action ballot?**

The aim of the RCM’s Fair Pay Overdue campaign in Northern Ireland is to achieve pay parity for midwives and MSWs. Following the restoration of the Executive in Northern Ireland on Saturday 11 January the RCM and other HSC trade unions met with the new Minister for Health and Department for Health. Following these meetings we are now in a position to consult with you on a proposed Framework Agreement to resolve our dispute. The proposed Framework Agreement would restore pay parity with health workers in England with effect from 1st April 2019. It also sets out a funded framework for safe staffing. The RCM is therefore suspending our ballot of members employed in the HSC in Northern Ireland with immediate effect.

**What happens next?**

On Monday 20th January, the RCM will start a new online member consultation of midwives and MSWs employed in the HSC on the proposed Framework Agreement. The link to respond to the consultation will be included in an email sent to all eligible members along with information to help you understand the content of the Framework Agreement.

**What does the proposed Framework Agreement say?**

The proposal is pay parity with England for Agenda for Change staff in Northern Ireland with effect from 1 April 2019. Pay parity with England for Agenda for Change staff will be maintained in 2020/21. This also covers the refresh of Agenda for Change pay structures, in line with England, with pay structure reform completed on 1 April 2021. Detailed information of what this means for you will be available when we open the consultation. Because the proposal covers pay and reform of Agenda for Change it means different increases across pay bands.

**What if I have already voted in the industrial action ballot?**

Suspending the ballot means that we will not be able to take industrial action on the basis of this ballot regardless of the ballot papers which have already been returned. The way for RCM members to have your say now is to vote in the consultation on the proposed Framework Agreement opening Monday 20 January.