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KK/ADT  
aMCS  
PRESS  
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THE PRIME MINISTER

5 September 1988

Dear Mr. Kinoshita,

Thank you for your further letter of 22 August about the new clinical grading structure for nurses.

I have little to add to my reply of 12 August other than to emphasise yet again that we have consistently made it clear to health authorities that we expect them to carry out the regrading exercise within both the spirit and the letter of the agreement between the two sides of the Nursing and Midwifery Staffs Negotiating Council. The nursing profession may be assured, therefore, that the new grading definitions will be applied consistently and fairly.

On the particular question of the grading of Ward Sisters, you will know that discussions are continuing in the Negotiating Council. These are due to resume next month. That is clearly the best forum in which this matter should be carried forward.

As far as funding this exercise is concerned, the Government have already made a very generous allocation of £803 million for this year. This sum is fully in line with the recommendations of the Review Body, as we have repeatedly made clear, and sufficient to allow an average increase of over 15 per cent. I see no purpose in addressing hypothetical questions on its adequacy.

*[Handwritten signature]*



I would remind you that the Government have already been far more generous to the nurses than the last Labour administration. Nurses' pay has risen in real terms by 42 per cent since 1979 whereas it fell by 21 per cent over the period 1974-79. The current regrading exercise will not only add substantially to the pay of the great majority of nurses but also recognise and reward clinical skills and management responsibilities.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Stalder

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The Rt. Hon. Neil Kinnock, M.P.