

# Bay Watch

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*Bay Watch* is a weekly political briefing for Welsh NHS Confederation members that is focused on health issues and policies being discussed and debated in the National Assembly for Wales.

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## This Week at the Assembly

### Tuesday

#### Plenary

The First Minister will be asked to comment on the health and social services budget, the future of blood transfusion services, cutting waiting times and health services in Torfaen.

### Wednesday

#### Plenary

AMs will debate the recently published report by the Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee on Post-traumatic Stress Disorder treatment for veterans.

### Thursday

#### Assembly dissolution

From midnight on 31 March 2011 the National Assembly for Wales enters a period of dissolution. There will be no Assembly Business during this time.

The Fourth Assembly will start after polling day on 05 May 2011. The Assembly must meet in Plenary in order to elect a Presiding Officer and Deputy Presiding Officer within seven working days immediately after the day of the poll.

## Last Week at the Assembly

### Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

#### *Health checks for people with learning disabilities*

The number of people with a learning disability having a health check is growing each year.

#### *Dental health*

The Health Minister said there is always work to do in terms of raising levels of dental hygiene in Wales. Ms Hart welcomed the work of the Designed to Smile initiatives.

#### *HPV testing*

The Minister said that screening services are based on the expert advice the Assembly receives from the National Screening Committee. Should the NSC change its recommendations, Ministers would consider any changes it wishes to undertake.

#### *Older People's Commissioner Report*

The Minister will "probably" set up a reference group of external experts to advise on a response to the report.

#### *Gwent Specialist Critical Care Centre*

The Minister is "very happy" that Aneurin Bevan LHB has worked to reduce the estimated costs of the development. As a result, the project has been given the go-ahead.

#### *Mental health*

The Minister gave her guarantee that mental health services would continue to be given priority support in

difficult financial times.

#### *Social services*

The Deputy Minister for Social Services said the independent sector will always play a part in delivering care services, "but we cannot continue to do everything 22 times". The Deputy Minister urged services to be delivered regionally or nationally.

#### *Macmillan cancer report*

The Minister said she was already implementing many of the recommendations of the report. The Minister added that she was working with Macmillan on a care plan.

#### *Demand for Cardiff PET scanner*

In response to concerns about the rising demand for the new PET scanner, the Minister said: "Once something is available, it creates demand and more people will want to take advantage of it. We have to do more work in that area."

#### *Llandudno hospital*

The Betsi Cadwaladr University LHB is currently developing the strategic outline case. The aim is to start work on the site in 2013.

#### *Ambulance response times*

The Minister said that ambulance response times in the south-east must be considered in the context of the pressure that services were under during the winter period.

Read the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=213595&ds=3/2011#q1>

### **Dignified care debate**

In response to the report by the Older People's Commissioner, the Conservatives expressed their concern about the "harrowing" statistics and examples contained in the report. Conservative health spokesperson, Nick Ramsay, said that the changes that need to be made in the light of the report would not be too difficult to make, adding: "It is not rocket science".

In response, the Assembly Government welcomed the report and outlined some of the ways the issues are already being tackled, through the Transforming Care

at the Bedside programme, the Fundamentals of Care initiative and the Free to Lead, Free to Care programme. The Health Minister said she wants to give detailed consideration to the report and its implications before accepting the 12 recommendations in full.

The Liberal Democrats called on the Welsh Assembly Government to increase the use of personalised budgets to allow people to develop a programme of care that is most suitable for their needs. They also argued that policy initiatives put in place are "clearly not delivering".

Read the debate in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=213595&ds=3/2011#dadl1>

### **Questions to the First Minister**

#### *Hospital food hygiene*

Responding to criticism about food hygiene levels in hospitals, the First Minister said that the report from Consumer Focus Wales shows that the food hygiene rating scheme "has done the job that it was meant to do".

#### *Recognising diabetes symptoms*

The First Minister said that the Assembly Government has implemented the national service framework for diabetes and that work is being undertaken across Wales as part of the chronic conditions management policy.

Read the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=213364&ds=3/2011#q1>

### **Social Services Partnership Forum**

The Deputy Minister for Social Services issued a written statement to announce the publication of the draft remit for the National Social Services Partnership Forum and Social Services Strategic Leadership Group.

More information is available here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/publications/accessinfo/drnewhomepage/healthdrs/2011/ssfuture/;jsessionid=Ws1nNS0GQ3vBnfVpBQkfNYzpzZKG9l2sPnJ2nQnTv577nFWyFHx1!1452112521?lang=en>

## Specialist Critical Care Centre

The Health Minister issued a letter to AMs announcing that the proposed Specialist Critical Care Centre at Llanfrechfa will go ahead.

For more information, see the Aneurin Bevan LHB website here:  
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/866/news/18526>

## Pandemic flu preparedness

The Health Minister issued a written statement on pandemic flu preparedness in which she informed AMs of the publication of a cross-government consultation on the UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy.

The statement is available here:  
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/news/18517>

## Press releases issued

Plans for major redevelopment of Moriston hospital move forward  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/4905644/?lang=en>

Tough new rules protect children from sunbed dangers in Wales  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110329sunbeds/?lang=en>

Improving Care - NHS Wales Awards 2011 Shortlist Announced  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110328nhsawards/?lang=en>

More than £1.8m improvements for Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/4904422/?lang=en>

New equipment at Velindre cancer centre to speed up treatment  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/4904246/?lang=en>

Back to school for school nurses  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110328nurses/?lang=en>

Maximum £50 weekly charge for home care services in Wales  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110325socservices/?lang=en>

Care and compassion of nurses "vital" for mental health services  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/4896142/?lang=en>

Deputy Minister invites bids to roll-out the Integrated Family Support Service in Wales  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/4900140/?lang=en>

Wales continues to lead in the field of Autistic Spectrum Disorder  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110323asd/?lang=en>

Progress on palliative care  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110322progress/?lang=en>

Major investment in Bronglais Hospital  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110322bronglais/?lang=en>

Deputy Minister stresses importance of dignity in care  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2011/110321dignity/?lang=en>