

# Bay Watch

18 June 2008



## About Bay Watch

*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.

If you have any queries about this publication, please contact [jonathan.davies@welshconfed.org](mailto:jonathan.davies@welshconfed.org)

## Last week at the Assembly

### Restructuring report

The Health Wellbeing and Local Government Committee has published the report of its inquiry into the proposals to restructure the NHS. The Welsh NHS Confederation gave evidence to the inquiry, which has been included in the final report and can be read here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-guide-docs-pub/bus-business-documents/bus-business-documents-doc-laid.htm?act=dis&id=87845&ds=6/2008>

### First Minister's Questions

The First Minister said that the guarantee that patients can see a member of a primary healthcare team within four days is being kept. He added that Edwina Hart is negotiating with doctors' representatives to create more flexibility in when patients can see their GP.

Questioned on the progress of various ongoing health reviews, the Minister said that the majority of reviews initiated by Edwina Hart have now been completed.

Read the transcript in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=88041&ds=6/2008#rhif1>

For answers to questions on health provisions in South Wales Central and priorities for dentistry, see the responses issued to questions not reached in plenary here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=88036&ds=6/2008>

### Review of HCW

In a statement, the Health Minister outlined the findings of Professor Mansel Aylward's report on Health Commission Wales. She said that there were a "*number of inherent difficulties that hindered it [HCW] from discharging its duties.*" The report calls for a system of planning specialist services that is "*truly at arm's length*" from the government with greater patient and public involvement in "*a clear and open decision-making process.*"

Read the statement and the following discussion here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=88041&ds=6/2008#rhif4>

## Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

### Mental Health services for 16-17 year olds

The Health Minister has set specific targets for 2008-09 to improve access to services.

### Epilepsy services

Edwina Hart acknowledged that there had been *"inequality of access"* for epilepsy services and said that the neurosciences review, due in the summer, would look at this issue.

### Modern drug treatments

The Minister said the availability of new drugs was *"a fast moving agenda"* and would consider the issue over the summer recess before making an announcement in the autumn.

### Health reorganisation

Asked whether the three predecessor organisations of the Hywel Dda Trust would have their debts written off, the Health Minister said she was currently considering their financial position and would report on it *"in due course."*

### Ambulance services in South East Wales

The Minister remains *"unhappy with the ambulance service's performance in some localities"* and expects to see *"significant and sustained improvements."*

### Hospital car parking charges

In response to concerns raised about non-hospital users parking in Singleton Hospital, the Health Minister said it was up to trusts to put a system in place to stop this happening, adding that *"it is about time that they got on with it."*

### Llandudno Hospital

A project team will meet in June to discuss the recommendations of the Burns report, with a proposed timescale for work to be submitted in December 2008.

### Mental health treatment

The Minister plans to develop occupational

health services to help people with mental health conditions in the workplace.

### Intensive Care Unit beds in North Wales

The Minister reported that the situation is currently being reviewed and acknowledged that there is a need *"to improve the way in which critical care services are currently planned, organised and delivered across Wales."*

### Protecting staff from violence

A task and finish group on violence is currently working through proposals to provide more protection for NHS staff.

Read the transcript of the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=88224&ds=6/2008#rhif1>

## This week at the Assembly

### First Minister's Questions

The First Minister will be asked to make a statement on planned improvements to health care in Gwent and the provision of public services in South Wales Central.

Read the full list of questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=86861&ds=6/2008>

### Mental Health Services LCO Committee

The Committee will meet on Tuesday to discuss its draft report, which can be read here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-legislation-lco-2008-8/bus-committees-third-ac-agendas-4.htm?act=dis&id=88430&ds=6/2008>

A covering letter accompanying the report is available here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-legislation-lco-2008-8/bus-committees-third-ac-agendas-4.htm?act=dis&id=88370&ds=6/2008>

### **Questions to the Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery**

The Minister will be asked to comment on:

- “Post-code lottery” of public services
- Priorities for public service delivery
- Budget allocation for Health and Social Services in light of proposals to restructure the NHS

Read the list of questions in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=87109&ds=6/2008>

### **Hospital infections debate**

In Wednesday’s plenary session, the Conservatives will call upon the government to prioritise the problem of healthcare associated infections. They will argue that the cleaning workforce in hospitals should be brought under the direct management of ward sisters. The Liberal Democrats will raise the issue of high bed occupancy rates contributing to the problem.

See more details in Wednesday’s agenda:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=88164&ds=6/2008>

### **Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee**

The Committee will hear evidence this week from Edwina Hart as part of its ongoing inquiry into presumed consent for organ donation.

See more details in Thursday’s agenda:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-hwlg-home/bus-committees-third-hwlg-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=88242&ds=6/2008>

THE **WELSH NHS CONFEDERATION**  
CONFFEDERASIWN **GIG CYMRU**



Unit 3  
Waterton Park  
Bridgend  
CF31 3PH

Tel 0845 33 00 499  
E-mail [info@welshconfed.org](mailto:info@welshconfed.org)

## About the Welsh NHS Confederation

The Welsh NHS Confederation represents the organisations making up the NHS in Wales: trusts and local health boards. We act as an independent voice in the drive for better health and better healthcare through our policy and influencing work, and by supporting members with events, information and training. To find out more about us go to -

[www.welshconfed.org](http://www.welshconfed.org)