

# Bay Watch

26 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

### First Minister's Questions

Questioned on planned improvements to neonatal services in Gwent, the First Minister said that Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust was in discussion with commissioners about a solution the *"recent neonatal crisis."*

On the subject of Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust's plans to replace hospital beds with services in the community, Rhodri Morgan supported the principle of investing in community services and added that the NHS *"cannot close old facilities until the alternative ones are in place."*

Read the discussion in full here:  
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=89111&ds=6/2008#rhif1>

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

First Minister Rhodri Morgan took questions in place of Andrew Davies. In answer to a question on the *"post-code lottery"* of public services in Wales, the First Minister said he was *"in favour of a good postcode lottery... but we cannot abide areas of public service delivery that lag behind: a bad postcode lottery."*

The First Minister said that it was too early to comment on budgets for health and social services in light of plans to reduce the number of NHS bodies. He added: *"I do not want to indicate that there would be large savings. It is certainly not a savings-driven exercise."*

Read the session in full here:  
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=89432&ds=6/2008#a2>

### Healthcare Associated Infections debate

In a plenary debate, the Conservatives called for more constructive measures to improve the standard of hospital cleanliness as a key performance indicator. Liberal Democrat health spokesperson, Jenny Randerson, highlighted the problem of high bed occupancy rates, and said that reducing bed occupancy is *"core to driving down healthcare associated infections."*

Health Minister, Edwina Hart, accepted that there were problems *"that need to be addressed"* but also stressed that Wales has a lower rate of HCAs than England or Scotland.

Read the debate in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=89432&ds=6/2008#a8>

## Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

Edwina Hart gave evidence to the Committee for its inquiry into presumed consent for organ donation, stating that as Minister for Health, she was *“strongly in favour of it.”*

See the transcript of the session here:

<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=89863&ds=6/2008#2>

## Parliamentary Update

Rhodri Morgan and Ann Lloyd have given evidence to the Welsh Affairs Select Committee as part of its inquiry into cross-border public services. The transcript is now available online on the link below: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmwelaf/uc401-vii/uc40102.htm>

## This week at the Assembly

### First Minister’s Questions

The First Minister will respond to a question from Jenny Randerson on the Assembly Government’s priorities for the health of Welsh people.

Read the full list of questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=87960&ds=6/2008>

## Ambulance Service Review

Health Minister Edwina Hart will make a statement in Tuesday’s plenary session on the Ambulance Service Assurance Review.

Read the follow-up report from the Auditor General here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-guide-docs-pub/bus-business-documents/bus-business-documents-doc-laid.htm?act=dis&id=90133&ds=6/2008>

The report of the review chaired by Stuart Fletcher can be read here:

<http://www.welshambulance.info/assets/documents/2e5ff4b1-7285-4702-ba35-1e21c847d1bb633499897225781250.pdf>

## Plenary Debates

AMs will debate two health related issues in plenary on Wednesday:

- The availability of the drug Lucentis for people with wet age-related macular degeneration. The Conservatives will call for more funding to create equitable access for this drug across Wales.
- The issue of “co-payments” in the NHS and whether patients should be allowed to “top-up” their care with privately-paid for treatment. The Welsh NHS Confederation provided all AMs with a briefing on this issue, which can be read here:

<http://www.debatepapers.org.uk/pdf/Futures-Debate-4.pdf>

See more details in Wednesday’s agenda here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=89352&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)