

Bay Watch

29 September 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

Last week at the Assembly

First Minister's Questions

Alun Cairns (South Wales West, Conservative) asked the First Minister how plans to create four neurosurgery centres in south Wales would impact on the recruitment and retention of junior medical staff. The First Minister replied that the issue would be resolved by junior doctors working on a network basis across the centres.

Liberal Democrat health spokesperson, Jenny Randerson queried funding for genito-urinary services in Cardiff, quoting figures that showed a large number of those accessing the service come from outside the area.

The First Minister said that this does not result in a net increase in Cardiff because people from Cardiff access services elsewhere for fear of seeing someone they know.

Read the full transcript of First Minister's questions here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=98411&ds=9/2008#rhif4>

Written answers

In a written answer to a question on children's hospices, the First Minister said that a total of £2

million has been set aside in 2008-09 for palliative care provided by voluntary hospices, including those for children.

Read the full written answer here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=98425&ds=9/2008>

Restructuring debate

In a debate on the Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee's report on proposals to restructure the NHS, Jonathan Morgan outlined some of the committee's concerns: maintaining a strong community focus in the new structure, the role and responsibility of the national board, scope of ministerial responsibility, service stability during change and the challenging timescale.

Mr Morgan paid tribute to the Welsh NHS Confederation for raising the issue of integration between health and social care and quoted evidence given by the Confederation. He also recognised the work of managers but highlighted the need for managers and clinicians to work more closely together.

In her response, Health Minister Edwina Hart said that the timetable is achievable but that she would be taking further advice. She added that she would

return to the issue of links between health and social care after the reorganisation and also recognised partnership working between Local Authorities and LHBs, which she said had worked very well in some areas.

The Minister said: *“At the end of the day, this reform is about improving services, getting rid of bureaucracy... and ensuring the standard of frontline services.”*

Jenny Randerson emphasised that the majority of evidence to the committee had called for an arm’s length relationship for the national board. Ms Randerson also stressed that the new organisations should not be seen as the next generation of trusts, adding: *“where we have gone wrong over the years in Wales is by tilting the balance of spending towards secondary care.”*

Read the full transcript of the debate here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=99113&ds=9/2008#a5>

Press releases

The following press releases were issued by the Department for Health and Social Services last week:

Assembly Government outlines plans to meet One Wales commitment on family nurses
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2008/080922nurses/?lang=en>

Assembly Government to seek views on presumed consent
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2008/080923consent/?lang=en>

Improved access to a wider range of GP services
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2008/080924gp/?lang=en>

This week at the Assembly

NHS Restructuring

In Tuesday’s plenary session, the Health Minister, Edwina Hart, will make a statement on her plans for NHS Reorganisation.

We are expecting the Minister to deliver the statement at approximately 3.45pm. We will forward the statement in written format to members as soon as possible.

See Tuesday’s agenda in full here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=98349&ds=10/2008>

Also in Tuesday’s plenary, the Health Minister will make a statement on the report of the Welsh Neuroscience External Expert Review Group.

Read the report here:
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/health/news/neuroscience/?lang=en>

First Minister’s Questions

The First Minister will be asked to comment on:

- Welsh stroke services
- pulmonary rehabilitation in north east Wales
- ambulance response times
- cardiac rehabilitation programmes

Read the full list of questions here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=97247&ds=10/2008>

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

In Wednesday's plenary session, the Minister will be asked to comment on:

- Local government reorganisation
- Advice services provided by the voluntary sector

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=97758&ds=10/2008>

Community pharmacy services debate

In a plenary debate on Wednesday, the Welsh Conservatives will call on the Welsh Assembly Government to:

- roll out the enhanced services of the pharmacy contract;
- ensure that NHS reorganisation does not prevent the commissioning of further community pharmacy services; and
- provide a deadline for the introduction of the consolidated regulations.

See Wednesday's agenda in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=98733&ds=10/2008>

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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