

Bay Watch

6 October 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.

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Last week at the Assembly

NHS Reorganisation

Edwina Hart announced more detailed plans for the future structure of the NHS. The main points of her statement were:

- A National Advisory Board with a small, independent membership will be chaired by the Minister and will meet in public.
- Chief Executive of NHS Wales to chair delivery group responsible for operational performance of NHS.
- Delivery group and advisory board to be in place by April 2009.
- Seven unified delivery bodies to be formed, alongside the Welsh Ambulance Service, Velindre cancer centre, and a public health organisation, which will merge the National Public Health Service and the Wales Centre for Health.
- Minister to appoint chairs and vice chairs, with vice chair responsible for primary, community and mental health services.
- HCW's responsibilities to be considered, possibly to be allocated to the seven unified bodies.
- CHCs to be strengthened, with a consultation later in the autumn.

Responses to the Minister's statement:

Jonathan Morgan

- By chairing the Advisory Board, the minister is politicising the NHS *"in a way I never thought possible"*.
- No confirmation on where secondary care commissioning will fit.
- Where does engagement with social services fit in?
- The advisory board ignored the majority view of an arm's length organisation.
- April 2009 deadline is extremely tight, shadow authorities should be appointed.
- Government should not be involved in the day-to-day running of the NHS.

Jenny Randerson

- A centrally-controlled, hugely politicised NHS is *"at odds with the public's wishes"*, undermining the whole consultation process.
- The Minister has *"bitten off more than she can chew"*.
- HCW proves the in-house structure doesn't work.
- Concerns that annual accountability meetings with Chairs and Chief Executives would be confrontational.
- Local accountability could suffer.
- Will the advisory board have NHS experience?

- Will the appointing system for Chairs and Chief Executives give opportunities for “fresh blood”?

Val Lloyd

- Need to ensure that primary care does not come a “poor second place” to secondary care.

Minister’s response:

- LHBs’ good work with local communities won’t be lost, LHB legislation will be the basis of how the new organisations will be run.
- There are “issues” to do with the level at which work is commissioned – AMs welcome to give their views.
- Director of social services will be represented on national board.
- Stressed advisory role of national board – the board that the CEO will chair will look at delivery.
- Need to consider more intelligent use of targets so they are not secondary care focused.
- Key to local engagement is the role of CHCs – they will respond to the needs of their area.
- Public meetings will improve transparency and accountability.
- On politicisation of the NHS: “the buck stops with the Minister”.
- Appointment of chair and vice chairs will be as open as possible.

Read the statement and the following discussions in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=99587&ds=10/2008#a4>

First Minister’s Questions

The First Minister responded to questions on

- national immunisation programmes
- Welsh stroke services
- pulmonary rehabilitation in north-east Wales.

For the full transcript, click here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=99587&ds=10/2008#a1>

The Minister issued a written response to a question on cardiac rehab here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=99520&ds=10/2008>

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

In response to a question on local government reorganisation, Brian Gibbons said: “I have no plans to reorganise local government. There is no grand plan, and there is no not-so-grand plan, either.” He later added: “there is a radical programme of reform out there, but the issue is service improvement and not administrative reorganisation.”

Read the full transcript here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=99793&ds=10/2008#1>

Community pharmacy debate

The Conservatives called upon the government to ensure that NHS reorganisation does not prevent the roll-out of community pharmacy services across Wales.

The Health Minister said she was considering how there would be pharmacy representation in the new NHS structure.

Read the transcript of the debate here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=99793&ds=10/2008>

This week at the Assembly

Debate on NHS Restructuring

In Tuesday's plenary session, AMs will debate plans to restructure the NHS.

The government will:

- welcome the progress in the Minister's plans to reform the NHS,
- endorse the One Wales commitment to the abolition of the internal market,
- argue that the restructuring will release resources to front-line services through "the rationalisation of health management",
- argue that the restructuring will create a preventative and primary care led service.

See more detail in Tuesday's agenda here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=99540&ds=10/2008>

First Minister's Questions

The First Minister will be asked to make a statement on presumed consent for organ donation.

See the full list of questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=98335&ds=10/2008>

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

The Minister will be asked to comment on:

- best practice in the treatment of lymphoedema
- waiting times for counselling, psychotherapy and cognitive behavioural therapy
- recent review into neurosciences in south Wales

- restructuring
- cervical cancer vaccination programme
- improving patient care in south Wales
- neonatal care
- deaths related to adverse reactions to prescription drugs
- provision for Welsh cancer patients
- impact of increased energy costs on the NHS
- promoting organ donation in Wales
- presumed consent for organ donation
- impact on Morriston Hospital of the recent review into neurosciences
- autism services in Wales
- tackling diabetes.

See the list of questions in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=98717&ds=10/2008>

Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

The committee will meet on Wednesday to discuss the proposed work programme for its inquiry into Local Government Scrutiny and will hear evidence from WAG officials on this topic.

More evidence is also available on the committee website for its inquiry into Local Service Boards.

See Wednesday's full agenda 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=99464&ds=10/2008>

See evidence for LSB inquiry here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-hwlg-home/bus-committees-third-hwlg-agendas.htm>

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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