

# Bay Watch

12 January 2009



## 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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## News round-up from Christmas recess

### Delivering Emergency Care Services (DECS)

The Minister for Health and Social Services issued a written statement on progress made to implement the DECS strategy. In the statement, the Minister outlines changes that have already been made to modernise unscheduled care across Wales, but she also states that best practice is not being consistently implemented across Wales, and calls for "immediate improvements" in areas where more progress is needed.

Read the statement in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-guide-docs-pub/bus-business-documents/bus-business-documents-written-min-state.htm?act=dis&id=110863&ds=12/2008>

### Review of the Welsh Ambulance Service

In a written statement, the Minister gave an update on the review of the Welsh Ambulance Service. The statement describes the Minister's concerns at the variation in ambulance response times across Wales and the lengthy handover times at hospital A&E departments. However, the Minister also noted improvements made by the Trust to address workforce issues and staff morale.

Read the statement in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-guide-docs-pub/bus-business-documents/bus-business-documents-written-min-state.htm?act=dis&id=110804&ds=12/2008>

### Inquiry into Local Service Boards

The Health, Wellbeing and Local Government committee published the report of its inquiry into Local Service Boards. The following points were among the main findings:

- LSBs are still a work in progress
- Need clarification of their role
- Mutual trust and confidence developing between partners
- Seniority of personnel is a key strength and needs to be maintained
- NHS restructuring poses a risk to continuity
- Capacity to participate is an issue for some organisations

Read the report in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/cr-ld7339-e.pdf>

### New health spokesperson for Welsh Liberal Democrats

Peter Black, AM for South Wales West, has become the new health spokesperson for the Welsh Liberal

Democrats. The party's new leader, Kirsty Williams, has given previous health spokesperson, Jenny Randerson, the role of spokesperson for enterprise, transport and education.

See more information on Peter Black here:  
[http://www.assemblywales.org/memhome/mem-profile/mem-south\\_wales\\_west-4.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/memhome/mem-profile/mem-south_wales_west-4.htm)

And read the news story from BBC Online here:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/wales\\_politics/7778029.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/wales_politics/7778029.stm)

### Written questions

Conservative health spokesperson, Jonathan Morgan, issued a series of questions to Health Minister, Edwina Hart on the progress being made to implement improved chronic conditions management in Wales. Read the Minister's response here:  
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-written.htm?act=dis&id=110104&ds=12/2008#rhif6>

The Minister has also responded to written questions on the following topics:

#### *Location of a new hospital in Cardigan*

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-written.htm?act=dis&id=109631&ds=12/2008#2>

*Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI) Unit* at Llandough Hospital, and bed occupancy rates for hospitals across Wales in the last six months  
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-written.htm?act=dis&id=109635&ds=12/2008#2>

### Press releases issued

The following press releases were issued by the Health and Social Services Department of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Further public debates on presumed consent  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2009/2848085/?lang=en>

People urged to take extra care in cold weather  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2009/2844646/?lang=en>

Early plans for the roll out of individual health record approved  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2009/2846571/?lang=en>

Health watchdog given more teeth to regulate private dentistry  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2008/2828162/?lang=en>

Health Minister orders clinical audit on accessing kidney cancer drug  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2008/2822214/?lang=en>

Action taken to ease pressure on hospitals  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2008/2819002/?lang=en>

## This week at the Assembly

### First Minister's Questions

The First Minister will be asked to comment on supporting people with asthma living in Wales and ambulance services in Islwyn.

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=110232&ds=1/2009>

## Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

The Committee has begun an inquiry into the progress made by local authorities in implementing equal pay. In Thursday's meeting, they will hear evidence from the Minister for Local Government, Dr Brian Gibbons, UNISON and the WLGA.

See more information 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=110311&ds=1/2009](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=110311&ds=1/2009)

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