

Bay Watch

16 February 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.

If you have any queries about this publication, please contact jonathan.davies@welshconfed.org

Last fortnight at the Assembly

Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

The committee has produced a scoping paper ahead of its forthcoming inquiry into community mental health services. The inquiry aims to investigate “weaknesses” in current service provision and problems experienced by 16-18 year olds in accessing mental health services. The Welsh NHS Confederation is amongst the suggested list of witnesses to give evidence.

Read the scoping paper 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=115732&ds=2/2009>

First Minister’s Questions

Sexual Assault Referral Clinics

There is a Sexual Assault Referral Clinic operating in every police force area in Wales and work is currently ongoing to get full health service engagement with these centres.

Cost of NHS restructuring

The First Minister would ask Edwina Hart for costings, but added that “we may have to wait until we have

boiled the figures down and can make them reasonably publishable.”

Read the session in full here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=115357&ds=2/2009#rhif1>

Drug and alcohol rehabilitation places

An additional £1 million in recurring revenue funding for Tier 4 services has been used to purchase an additional 54 residential rehabilitation beds and 23 in-patient detox places.

Neurosurgery

The First Minister reiterated the government’s intention to sustain services over two centres by providing them on a network basis. He added: “*The consultant surgeons have to learn that, rather than trying to knock six bells out of each other because they think that they are competing for the honour of being the single site, we want them to co-operate with each other in providing a network service.*”

Read the session in full here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=116442&ds=2/2009#rhif1>

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Ogmore constituency

Work is being undertaken to look at whether a dialysis facility should be in Baglan or Bridgend. The Minister will make a formal statement once recommendations have been made to her by officials.

Revlimid

Edwina Hart will look into the situation ahead of NICE publishing its guidance in the near future.

NHS Restructuring

The Minister said that restructuring is a “long-term game” and would prefer to see natural waste rather than redundancies as the system develops.

NICE drugs

Questioned on the ruling from NICE that Nexavar, Avastin and Torisel would not be funded on the NHS, Edwina Hart said “my decision stands in respect of all the drugs.”

Children and young people

The Minister will consider extending the MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition...Do it!) pilot to 3-7 year olds, and is looking into the One Wales commitment to provide a family nurse in every secondary school.

Dental services

Currently, 19 out of 22 local health boards report no access difficulties and have dental practices in their areas accepting new NHS patients. In Pembrokeshire, six dental practices in the region are taking new patients.

Health spending

The Minister reiterated her commitment to cross-Government working, and working with other organisations to achieve economies of scale. She added that a great deal of discussion has been taking place at official level about creating capital projects to combine health and education.

Ambulance Trust

The Minister said: “I do not think that there is a budgetary issue with the ambulance trust. It is very easy to look at the figures and criticise, but at the end of the day, we are working with the trust to try to make improvements.”

Mental health

The Minister has set up a working group to look at developing a dementia strategy, which would incorporate the work of the voluntary sector.

Emergency mental health treatment in Powys

Powys has developed a three-year mental health plan to improve out-of-hours emergency mental health care.

Read the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=115717&ds=2/2009#1>

Dates for your diary

Party political conferences for each of the Welsh political parties will take place on the following dates:

- **Welsh Conservatives**, Swalec Stadium, Cardiff, March 27-29th
- **Plaid Cymru**, UWIC, Cardiff, April 3-4th
- **Welsh Liberal Democrats**, Angel Hotel, Cardiff, April 17-19th
- **Welsh Labour Party**, Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, April 24th-26th

The National Assembly for Wales is in recess from the 16th to the 20th of February.

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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