

# Bay Watch

5 May 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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## Last week at the Assembly

### The Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

#### *Primary care*

The Minister expressed concern at the “*nature of out-of-hours*” services, including the standards of service and equality of access. She reiterated her commitment to delivering primary care services through the public sector.

#### *Lottery funding*

The Minister acknowledged the issues around funding revenue support for projects kick-started by the lottery. She will look at what are core NHS services, and what services need the support of the voluntary sector.

#### *Primary healthcare in Merthyr Tydfil*

The Outline Business Case on a new town hospital will be completed by the autumn.

#### *Continual Professional Development for nurses*

Recommendations for nursing practice are included in the consultation on the new nursing strategy for Wales. Jonathan Morgan (Conservative, Cardiff North) claimed that 40% of nurses have not had mandatory training in infection control. Edwina Hart will discuss the issue with the Chief Nursing Officer.

#### *Lymphoedema services*

The Minister encouraged lymphoedema nurses in Wales to showcase the innovative work they are doing. The consultation on lymphoedema services is ongoing.

#### *Multiple Sclerosis*

The Minister agreed there was a need to raise awareness and understanding of the condition among GPs and health professionals.

#### *Ambulances*

The Minister said it was “*too simplistic*” to link ambulance response times with a lack of hospital beds. She said there were improvements in response times, but they still “*leave a lot to be desired*”.

#### *GP appointments*

The speed with which patients can get appointments is a key area for the new LHBs to consider. The Minister added that people have lives to lead and it can be difficult to get to GP surgeries, adding that “*some people have to move with the times*”.

#### *Paying for Care in Wales*

160 responses were received to the Paying for Care consultation. The next stage is to prepare a Green Paper with detailed options for reform.

Read the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=126861&ds=4/2009#1>

## Swine flu statement

The Health Minister gave an update on a rapidly changing situation. She gave reassurances that plans are in place to deal with pandemic flu and have been tested. She said she would take forward queries on how NHS Direct would cope with an increase in calls, and reassured AMs that the government has the necessary antivirals, antibiotics and face masks for healthcare workers.

Read the statement in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=126861&ds=4/2009#4>

## Questions to the First Minister

### *Specialist neuromuscular services*

Val Lloyd (Labour, Swansea East) sought reassurances that families are able to access muscular dystrophy advisers. The First Minister said the issue would be looked at during the independent review of neurosciences.

### *Organ donations*

Jonathan Morgan (Conservative, Cardiff North) said there was a need to invest in infrastructure, rather than changing the law to an opt-out system. The First Minister argued for a *“change in culture, as well as a change in law”*.

Read the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=126594&ds=4/2009#1>

## This week at the Assembly

### First Minister’s Questions

The First Minister will be asked to comment on capital expenditure on the NHS in South Wales Central and action to improve the standard of NHS services.

Read the full list of questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=125393&ds=5/2009>

### Cross border debate

The Conservatives have proposed a debate on cross-border public services, in which they will express concern at accessing services across the Welsh-English border. Labour will argue that Welsh Ministers have taken action to ensure proper co-ordination of cross-border services.

See more detail in Wednesday’s agenda:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=126772&ds=5/2009>

And read the recommendations of the Welsh Affairs Committee here:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmselect/cmwelaf/57/57.pdf>

### Stroke care

In Wednesday’s plenary session, the Conservatives will claim that Welsh patients receive a lower standard of stroke care than those in the rest of the UK. They will call upon the Welsh Assembly Government to establish a national speech therapy action plan.

See more detail in Wednesday’s agenda here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=126772&ds=5/2009>

### Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

The committee will continue its inquiry into community mental health services, hearing evidence from:

- College of Occupational Therapists
- Royal College of Nursing
- Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
- British Association of Social Workers
- Association of Chief Police Officers Wales
- Youth Offending Team Managers Cymru

See more detail 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=126642&ds=5/2009](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=126642&ds=5/2009)

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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)