

Bay Watch

4 March 2008



About Bay Watch

Bay Watch is a new 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

This Week at the Assembly

Car parking charges

Health Minister, Edwina Hart, announced on Monday that all hospital car parking charges in Wales will be abolished.

Read the press release here:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/presreleasearchive/2049682/?lang=en>

The Welsh NHS Confederation gave a number of interviews in response to the announcement. Read our written statement here:

<http://www.nhsconfed.org/across-uk/across-uk-3475.cfm>

Tuesday: First Minister's Questions

Lorraine Barrett (Labour, Cardiff South and Penarth) will ask about the role of community nurses in Wales. Jenny Randerson (Lib Dems, Cardiff Central) will ask about the effects of the dental contract.

The Minister will also face questions on the delivery of public services in Wales and the pressures facing rural communities.

Read the full list of questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=75445&ds=3/2008>

Also on Tuesday: The Proposed NHS Redress (Wales)

Measure Committee will meet. Click this link for a full agenda:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-assembly-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=77079&ds=3/2008>

Wednesday: Cross-border debate

A debate proposed by the Liberal Democrats will focus on cross-border public services. They will call on the government to take better account of cross-border provision when developing public service strategies. Labour will argue that the government already takes cross-border issues into account, while the Conservatives will say that the principle of patient choice in the NHS should be advanced.

See the details in Wednesday's agenda here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=76966&ds=3/2008>

Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

The committee will meet on Wednesday and will be discussing its inquiry into presumed consent for organ donation. Dr Richard Lewis, Welsh Secretary of the BMA, will give evidence.

See the full agenda here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-assembly-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=76832&ds=3/2008>

Last Week at the Assembly

First Minister's Questions

LHB funding

The First Minister reported that enabling works on the new Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr have begun and that when completed, it will be Wales's first twenty-first century hospital.

Mike German (Lib Dems, South Wales East) raised the issue of LHB funding shortfalls as a result of the Grogan judgement. The First Minister responded by saying: *"We believe that we have made the appropriate changes to the budget provision to allow local government and the health service to cope with the consequences of the Grogan judgment, though those consequences are only now emerging and are not yet absolutely clear."*

Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

In response to a question from Peter Black (Lib Dems, South Wales West) on drug and alcohol rehabilitation services, Rhodri Morgan highlighted that 10,000 additional places have been created since 2003-04. He acknowledged that provision of intensive inpatient services was *"patchy"* and needs to be managed much more effectively.

Access

Angela Burns (Conservative, Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire) raised concern about young people's access to health services. The debate provoked discussion on the Delivery Emergency Care Strategy, which Rhodri Morgan said would remove artificial barriers to patient care. Liberal Democrat Health Spokesperson, Jenny Randerson (Cardiff Central) highlighted the case for Cardiff as a pilot place for urgent care centres.

Helen Mary Jones (Llanelli, Plaid Cymru) claimed that there is an *"ongoing lack of transparency in decision making by Health Commission Wales."* The First Minister responded by saying that *"there must be a more open and transparent system by which everyone can agree on the priorities, so HCW can avoid the*

accusation that, somehow, it favours one patient over another."

Read the transcript of First Minister's questions in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=76769&ds=2/2008#rhif4>

North Wales Services

The Health Minister delivered a statement on services in North Wales and took several questions from AMs, which can be read in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=77088&ds=2/2008#a3>

Written questions to the Health Minister

Answers to written questions to the Health Minister have been published on the National Assembly website this week. Please see the link below for responses to questions on:

- access to specialist hospital treatment
- the Choose and Book system.
- how many English people are treated in Welsh hospitals.
- access to NHS dentists

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-written.htm?act=dis&id=76119&ds=3/2008#rhif3>

Written statement of opinion

Joyce Watson (Mid and West Wales, Labour) has raised a Statement of Opinion on how women and girls are affected by HIV and AIDS. The statement acknowledges that many current HIV and AIDS programmes do not adequately address the specific needs and rights of women and girls.

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-guide-docs-pub/bus-business-documents/bus-business-documents-state-opinion.htm?act=dis&id=75547&ds=2/2008>

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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