

# Bay Watch

14 July 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

### Questions to the First Minister

Leader of the Welsh Conservatives, Nick Bourne asked the First Minister for his view on a public sector pay freeze. The First Minister said the idea “does not appeal” to him, and that discussions in cabinet “do not follow that line”.

Lynne Neagle (Torfaen, Labour) queried whether the Gwent Clinical Futures programme was put on hold for financial reasons. The First Minister denied that cost was the reason for the decision.

The leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, Kirsty Williams, challenged the Minister on the Ambulance Service’s efficiency savings. The First Minister said that the service is not exempt from the savings that all other health bodies have to make. He added that there had been significant improvements in the Trust’s performance.

Huw Lewis (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, Labour) questioned GP surgeries’ use of 0844 and 0845 numbers. The First Minister said he would “deprecate” anything that results in profit-making from a telephone line.

Read the session in full here:

[http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=136533&ds=7/2009#q1)

[chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=136533&ds=7/2009#q1](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=136533&ds=7/2009#q1)

### E-coli Inquiry

The First Minister gave a statement giving a more detailed response to Professor Hugh Pennington’s report of the public inquiry into the E-coli outbreak of 2005.

Read the statement in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=136533&ds=7/2009#datganymateb>

### Questions to the Minister for Finance and Service Delivery

The Minister reiterated his commitment to ruling out the use of PFI in the health service. He said that the NHS has benefitted significantly from the strategic capital investment fund.

Darren Millar (Clwyd West, Conservatives) asked the Minister what contingency plans were in place for the rising cost of pandemic flu preparedness. The Minister said that governments “inevitably” keep resources for unforeseen events.

Read the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=136983&ds=7/2009#q1>

### Healthy Eating in Schools Measure

The measure, proposed by Jenny Randerson, was approved by Assembly Members and will go forward for royal approval in October. For more information on the measure, please click here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-legislation/bus-leg-measures/bus-legislation-measures.htm>

Read Assembly Members' debate on the measure in plenary here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=136983&ds=7/2009#dadl3>

### Services for disabled children and young people

The Conservatives raised concerns about delays providing paediatric wheelchairs across Wales and called on the government to invest more in these services.

The Minister for Health and Social Services fully accepted that service provision is "uneven" and that waiting times are too long. The Minister said that a report into service provision was "on track", and that waiting times have begun to come down. She added: "I recognise that it is now up to me to deliver a better service."

Read the debate in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=136983&ds=7/2009#dadlceids>

### Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

The Committee has published the report of its inquiry into the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS).

Read the report here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/cr-ld7632-e.pdf>

The committee has also issued a call for evidence for their inquiry into the use and regulation of sunbeds.

More information on the inquiry is available here:

[http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-hwlg-home/business-hwlg-inquiries/hwlg\\_3\\_-sunbed/hwlg\\_3\\_-sunbed-call.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-hwlg-home/business-hwlg-inquiries/hwlg_3_-sunbed/hwlg_3_-sunbed-call.htm)

### European and External Affairs Committee

The Committee has published an interim report of its inquiry into the draft directive on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. Among the key recommendations were:

The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that the devolved nature of health services in the UK is fully taken into account in the final directive.

- The directive should not introduce unnecessary financial burden on the NHS.
- Not enough information is available on the potential impact of the directive.
- The Committee agrees with the view of the Welsh NHS Confederation that a system of prior authorisation should be put in place.

Read the report in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/cr-ld7631>

Evidence submitted by the Welsh NHS Confederation is available on our website here:

<http://www.welshconfed.org/PoliticalPublications.htm>

## Press releases issued

New emergency care centre at Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2009/09/0710emergencycentre/?lang=en>

Health Minister opens new children's mental health unit  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2009/09/0710mentalhealth/?lang=en>

New plans to improve eating disorder services in Wales  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2009/09/0710eatingdisorder/?lang=en>

Wales to save £1m a year with new community care equipment deal  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/news/topic/health/2009/09/0706communitycare/?lang=en>

## This Week at the Assembly

### In plenary this week

#### *Tuesday*

The First Minister will be asked to comment on stroke services in south Wales, his funding priorities for the NHS, and his health priorities for west Wales.

The Minister for Health and Social Services will issue a written statement on the consultation on Health Commission Wales.

See more detail in Tuesday's agenda:  
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=136508&ds=7/2009>

#### *Wednesday*

In a debate proposed by the Liberal Democrats, AMs

will discuss the financial and operational difficulties of the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

See more detail in Wednesday's agenda:  
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=136804&ds=7/2009>

### Audit Committee

In their Thursday meeting, the Committee will discuss:

- The management of chronic conditions in Wales, with an update from the Accounting Officer,
- Home Oxygen Therapy services,
- The draft of the report into Welsh ambulance services.

See more detail in Thursday's agenda:  
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-ac-home/bus-committees-third-ac-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=137118&ds=7/2009>

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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)