

# Bay Watch

13th October 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

### NHS Reforms

The Minister for Health and Social Services issued two written statements giving an update on NHS reorganisation, and specialised and tertiary services.

A new committee for the joint planning of specialised and tertiary services, the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee, will be set up as soon as is practicable, and will run with limited functions until it becomes fully operational on 1 April 2010.

Read more detail in the statements on the links below:

NHS Reform  
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/newsitem.cfm?contentid=13330>

Specialised and tertiary services  
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/newsitem.cfm?contentid=13329>

### First Minister's Questions

*Ambulance Trust*  
Helen Mary Jones (Llanelli, Plaid Cymru) questioned

whether national management of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust was too far removed from front-line delivery, and asked whether structural change will be necessary. The First Minister said he would not speculate, and later reiterated that these wider issues were "not for discussion today."

#### *Pennington Report*

The First Minister said that work is proceeding well to implement the recommendations from the Pennington Report into the E. coli outbreak in the South Wales Valleys. He confirmed that local authorities are identifying and implementing new procedures in conjunction with advice and guidance from the Food Standards Agency.

Read the transcript in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=145899&ds=10/2009#1>

### Palliative care

The Minister for Health and Social Services gave AMs an update on developments in palliative care in Wales as a result of the 2007 Sugar Report.

Read the Minister's statement here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=145899&ds=10/2009#3>

## Questions to the Finance Minister

### *Swine flu*

The Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery, Andrew Davies, said discussions were ongoing with the UK Government about whether UK contingency funds will be used to pay for the cost of the swine flu vaccination programme.

## Cross-border healthcare debate

Sandy Mewies, Chair of the European and External Affairs Committee, presented the committee's report on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. She confirmed that the directive would have great significance for Wales, but that areas of uncertainty remain. The central conclusion from the report, she said, was the need for the directive to recognise that the Welsh health system is devolved.

Read the debate in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=146227&ds=10/2009#dadladrod>

## This Week at the Assembly

### In plenary

#### *Tuesday*

The First Minister will answer questions on:

- drug rehabilitation services
- budget priorities for the next three years
- the free prescriptions policy
- performance of the ambulance service
- the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)
- the UK Government's Green Paper on the future of care services.

For more details, please see Tuesday's agenda:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=145806&ds=10/2009>

#### *Wednesday*

Violence against women debate

AMs will debate the recently closed consultation held by the Welsh Assembly Government on its strategic action plan to address violence against women. The consultation document contains several references to the role played by health services. Read the consultation document in full here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/consultation/090622yoilenstagainstwomenen.pdf>

## Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

In its Wednesday meeting, the committee will scrutinise the draft budget for Wales, taking evidence from the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, Dr Brian Gibbons, and the Minister for Health and Social Services, Edwina Hart.

More information on the draft budget proposals is available here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/gen-ld7726-e.pdf?langoption=3&ttl=GEN-LD7726%20-%20Draft%20Budget%20Proposals%202010-11>

## Audit Committee

The Audit Committee will discuss the Wales Audit Office review of maternity services in Wales and the Health Minister's response to the review, in which she says that a working group has been set up to explore the issues, and will report back by December 2009.

See the Minister's letter here:

<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=146832&ds=10/2009>

The committee will also discuss advice from the Wales Audit Office on Delayed Transfers of Care. In a letter, the Auditor General for Wales notes the encouraging reduction in the numbers of DTOCs and advises the committee to take no further action.

For more details, see the letter from the Auditor General here:

<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=146831&ds=10/2009>

**Correction:** Last week, we wrote that the Minister for Health and Social Services had asked Stephen Hunt, Deputy Chief Medical Officer to explore the problem of recruiting junior doctors in rural areas. This should have said Dr Stephen Hunter, Medical Director of NHS Wales and Deputy Chief Medical Officer.