

Bay Watch

1 February 2010



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 week at the Assembly

Questions to the First Minister

The First Minister, Carwyn Jones AM responded to the following health related questions:

Service Delivery

The First Minister praised the improvement in NHS services since 1999. He also stated that, thanks to investment and the hard work of national health service staff, more than nine in 10 patients are now treated within 26 weeks.

Public sector collaboration

The First Minister stated that the Government encouraged collaboration across the board, in all parts of the public sector. He went on to say that the Government would note what is said by auditors to further ensure that collaboration is pursued more quickly in the public sector in the future.

View the record of proceedings here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=163734&ds=1/2010>

Questions to the Minister for Health & Social Services

The Minister for Health & Social Services - Edwina Hart AM (Lab - Gower) responded to questions on the following subjects:

Smoking

The Minister said she was investing in programmes to discourage young people from starting smoking. She also proposed to reduce young people's access to tobacco products by bringing in regulations under the Health Act 2009, which will regulate the display of tobacco products at the point of sale and prohibit tobacco vending machines.

Eating disorders

The Minister stated that progress had been made by the NHS in Wales on this particular agenda and that it is now written into the specification of the new eating disorders services that the NHS must link to children and adult mental health services. She went on to say, *"We have advised the LHBs to look at their policies in this area, and to look at the resources that they allocate from their large budgets. I am due to meet the chairs of the LHBs in the next couple of weeks, and I will be raising the issue of resource allocation with them."*

Rural Health plan

The Minister said that, *"The provision of rural healthcare is a key priority for the Government. The rural health plan identifies the need to rethink the way that services are provided in rural areas, covering primary and community services that are outside the traditional models that we have had in Wales. Mental health in rural areas is a key issue, and the plan identifies 3 fundamental themes to address the health needs of people in rural areas."*

Rehabilitation services

The Minister talked about the new types of arrangements that will allow the LHBs to look at specialist services commissioning together, with a small group looking at the very specialised services. With regards to having to travel outside Wales for rehabilitation services she went on to say that there was a need to take into account the mass in terms of professional expertise. She went on to say that she was happy in the future to look at bringing services closer to home if they are able to be delivered safely and effectively.

Neath Port Talbot Hospital

Questions were asked regarding the future of Neath Port Talbot Hospital. The Minister stated that, *"I have every confidence in ABM local health board, because it has a good track record for taking through service modernisation with the consent of individuals and having taken account of the considerations raised."* She went on to say, *"Local health boards are looking all the time at the services that they deliver in certain areas. However, it is alarmist to speak about downgrading at this stage, when we are in the middle of a consultation process and a discussion."*

CAMHS

The Minister re-stated that improving child and adolescent mental health services in Wales remains a high priority for the Welsh Assembly Government and that a group of expert stakeholders is to be established to bring together a national programme on CAMHS that will help ensure that services are timely, effective and co-ordinated.

View the record of proceedings here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=163999&ds=1/2010>

Written Questions

The following health related questions were submitted for written answer last week:

Darren Millar (Clwyd West): What estimate has the Welsh Assembly Government made of the numbers

of patients resident in Wales who a) have used in each of the last 5 years and b) currently use acute hospital services in England. (WAQ55473)

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): How many Da Vinci machines are used in the NHS in Wales in the latest form of keyhole surgery. (WAQ55475)

Alun Cairns (South Wales West): What plans does the Minister have to support the use of Da Vinci machines in the NHS in Wales. (WAQ55476)

Nick Bourne (Mid & West Wales): Will the Minister provide details of the total number of NHS patients treated in the private sector in each of the last five years. (WAQ55450)

Nick Bourne (Mid & West Wales): Will the Minister provide details of the total amount paid by NHS Wales to organisations and businesses in the private sector in each of the last five years. (WAQ55451)

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): What winter weather plans do Local Health Boards have for dealing with heavy snow and ice on car parks and public walkways on the NHS estate. (WAQ55457)

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): How much is currently being spent on equipment to clear and grit car parks and public walkways on the NHS estate. (WAQ55458)

View the full list of questions here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-written.htm>

This week at the Assembly

First Minister's Questions

The First Minister, Carwyn Jones AM will be asked to respond to the following health related questions:

Peter Black (South Wales West): Will the First Minister make a statement on the effective use of resources by the NHS. OAQ(3)2605(FM)

William Graham (South Wales East): Will the First Minister make a statement on the Ambulance Service in South Wales East.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): Will the First Minister make a statement on Welsh Assembly Government priorities for the development of health care in Powys. OAQ(3)2597(FM)

View the full list of questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=162167&ds=2/2010>

Debate on the Physical Activity Action Plan

In plenary on Tuesday there will be a debate on the Physical Activity Action Plan. Creating an Active Wales is one of the central policies in the WAG ambition for a healthier future for all. The strategy recognises that physical activity and sport are beneficial to health and that a partnership across the Welsh Assembly Government, Local Authorities, the NHS, the Third Sector and our communities is essential for the future.

Supporting documents can be found here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/depc/publications/cultureandsport/sport/climbinghigher/strategy/climbinghighere.pdf?lang=en>

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/improvement/food/physicalactivity/active/?lang=en>

View the full plenary agenda here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm>

Committees

Children and Young People Committee

On Tuesday morning Mary Burrows the Chief Executive of Betsi Cadwaladr ULHB will give evidence to the Children and Young People Committee on Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

The papers for the meeting can be found here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-other-committees/bus-committees-third-cyp-home/bus-committees-third-cyp-agendas.htm>

THE **WELSH NHS CONFEDERATION**
CONFFEDERASIWN **GIG CYMRU**



Unit 3
Waterton Park
Bridgend
CF31 3PH

Tel 01656 643800
E-mail info@welshconfed.org

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