

Bay Watch

27 April 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 Minister for Health and Social Services

Modern drug treatments

The Minister said: *"When NICE issues guidance and so on, it is up to the local health boards to ensure that the necessary drugs are provided."*

CHCs

The Minister will be looking at how the new arrangements "bed in" and will listen to concerns that are raised.

Dental services

The Minister explained some of the historical difficulties recruiting in rural areas of north Wales. The Minister has asked the LHB to look at local dental providers who wish to have new and extended practices. AMs also discussed the option of having more salaried dentists within the service.

Junior doctors' recruitment

Discussions have been ongoing with the deanery about the difficulties recruiting doctors in west and north west Wales. The Minister added: *"What we need to do more is to consider how we encourage them to stay."*

Llandudno Hospital

The Minister confirmed that the continued use of

Llandudno Hospital is not in doubt and is essential to the future development of health services in north Wales.

Multiple sclerosis

The Minister expressed her concern about the equity issues around treatment of multiple sclerosis in Wales.

1000 Lives Campaign

The Minister congratulated all NHS staff on making 1000 Lives such a successful campaign.

Walk-in centres

The Minister said work was still ongoing on the One Wales commitment, but she hoped to make an announcement on it shortly.

NHS finances

Ms Hart assured AMs that no money in NHS budgets is *"being misspent"*. She added: *"I have every confidence in the financial management of the local health boards and their ability to deliver services."*

Stroke services

The Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee published its report on stroke services, available to download here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/cr-ld8032-e.pdf>

Citizen-centred public services

AMs discussed the importance of putting citizens at the heart of public service decision-making. Conservative health spokesperson, Andrew RT Davies, said that many Welsh people feel “disconnected” from the services they receive, while Darren Millar said that the public simply wants high-quality services, and doesn’t care about who undertakes the delivery. Mr Millar quoted a survey in which fewer than two out of every 10 people in Wales felt that they could play a part in the decision making process in their communities.

Liberal Democrat health spokesperson, Peter Black, raised concerns about the NHS reorganisation and claimed that there is a “surplus of administrators” that the government is reluctant to deal with. He added that NHS services could be improved with the strategic use of resources.

The Health Minister responded to criticisms about the recruitment process for the new CHCs, saying that it was undertaken in line with the public appointments procedure.

Read the debate in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=177465&ds=4/2010#4>

Questions to the First Minister

Attention deficit disorder

The First Minister responded to criticisms by leader of the Liberal Democrats, Kirsty Williams, who said talking therapies were not being made available to children with attention deficit disorder. The First Minister said that the situation would need to be studied to see if it could be improved.

Muscular Dystrophy Care advisors

Local health boards have collectively agreed that two care advisors, one for north Wales and one for south Wales, will be appointed. These appointments will take place over the next few months.

Alcohol advertising

The First Minister said the government has consistently called for a ban on alcohol advertising as there is already on tobacco advertising. He added: “That is the position that we have taken for some time.”

Free prescriptions

The First Minister welcomed the benefits of the free prescriptions policy for those on lower wages but above benefit levels.

Stroke services

The First Minister acknowledged that stroke rehabilitation services will grow in importance in the future. He will look at the Health, Wellbeing and Local Government committee’s report on stroke services carefully and the government will submit a response.

Mental health services in Cardiff

The First Minister said the proposed model is not proceeding in Cardiff as it is “being re-examined to see whether it is appropriate in terms of modern mental health care”. The Health Minister is considering the position at Whitchurch and will report back to AMs in due course.

Read the session in full here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=177217&ds=4/2010#1>

The Proposed Mental Health (Wales) Measure

The committee heard evidence from Gofal Cymru, Hafal and Mind Cymru. Written evidence from each organisation is available here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-perm-leg/bus-committees-third-lc3-agendas.htm>

This week at the Assembly

Tuesday - Plenary

The First Minister will be asked to comment on cuts to public services in Wales and helping older people in Cardiff and Penarth.

The Minister for Health and Social Services will make a statement on alcoholic pricing policy.

Wednesday - Plenary

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government will be asked to comment on support for sexual assault referral centres in Wales.

Thursday

Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee

The committee will continue its inquiry into local safeguarding children boards, hearing evidence from boards in Caerphilly and Wrexham. The committee will also hear evidence from the Wales Probation Trust and a representative of Welsh police forces.

Proposed Carers Strategy (Wales) Measure

The committee will hear evidence from the Deputy Minister for Social Services, Gwenda Thomas.

Finance committee

The committee will consider the financial implications of the Proposed Carers Strategy (Wales) Measure.

Proposed Mental Health (Wales) Measure committee

The committee will hear evidence from Jonathan Morgan AM.

See the full business notice for the week here:
<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-business-notice.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