

# Bay Watch

14 April 2008



## 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

### Health Minister's Questions

#### *Parkinson's Disease*

The Health Minister explained that Parkinson's Disease services will form part of the review into adult neurosciences in Wales, which is due in the summer

#### *Royal Gwent maternity services*

The Health Minister was questioned about low staff morale in the Royal Gwent's maternity services. Ms Hart said that the Chief Nursing Officer would be reporting back to her on the matter.

#### *Support for carers*

Deputy Health Minister, Gwenda Thomas, explained that there would be a grant of £1.5 million for all-Wales voluntary sector organisations that support carers. She added that she was preparing a Legislative Competence Order (LCO) on the rights of carers.

#### *Gwent specialist centre*

Edwina Hart explained that work is in hand on approving the final location of Gwent's specialist and critical care centre. She confirmed that public transport and travelling times would be a key issue.

#### *Prince Charles Hospital*

The Minister said she was expecting to receive a business case for a £46 million ward refurbishment scheme. Ms Hart welcomed the refurbishment of the hospital's A&E department and the recently opened MRI scanner.

#### *CAMHS*

The Minister said that she would be investing in an additional £4.8 million over the next three years into CAMHS. The Minister also stated that she would be happy to look at developing a strategy for young people with eating disorders.

#### *Out of hours*

The Minister was asked if there were plans to extend access to GP surgeries to "fit around the lives and needs of 21st Century communities". Ms Hart replied that she was holding discussions with the BMA.

#### *Rural health plan*

Edwina Hart announced that there would be consultation on the plan in the summer, with a final report published in December. She reassured members that there would not be an "eastward drift" of services in the north and also said that the future of Wityhush is secure.

#### *Foreign nationals*

Edwina Hart rejected a question from Darren Millar on the number of foreign nationals registered with GPs, saying it is "a duty of a civilized society to treat sick people."

### ***Future of the NHS***

Edwina Hart said she was “open to suggestions” on how an all-Wales board would operate. She added: “If someone comes up with ideas that I consider to be better than my own... I am more than prepared to look at them.”

### ***Neurosurgery***

The Minister offered reassurance that the aim of the neurosciences review is to recommend high quality services as close to home as possible. She said that the review panel would ensure that “these things will be dealt with properly.”

### ***Hospital car parking***

Ms Hart acknowledged that there have been some “teething problems” but that Trusts had to sort out the practicalities. She added: “[Free parking] is here to stay and I think that is a good thing.”

Read the transcript of Health Minister’s questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=81338&ds=4/2008#a1>

### ***Staff safety***

The Health Minister issued a written statement on a report into violence against NHS staff. She outlined some of the recommendations the report put forward to protect staff safety. Read the statement here:

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/newsitem.cfm?contentid=9541>

## **First Minister’s Questions**

### ***Violence and aggression***

In response to a question on violence and aggression, the First Minister referred to the Health Minister’s written statement, above. The report contains 50 recommendations, which he said would be implemented urgently.

### ***Structures***

Defending the proposed changes to the NHS

structure, the First Minister said that: “coterminosity was one of many arguments for setting up the LHB system... We are now carrying it a stage forward by merging LHBs, eliminating the internal market.” Mike German, leader of the Lib Dems, argued that: “We are obsessed with the structure of the LHBs, rather than with the service we want them to deliver.”

### ***Llandudno Hospital***

Rhodri Morgan confirmed that plans for improvements, extensions and new services left “no question about its future as a significant hospital for the central region of north Wales.”

### ***Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr***

The First Minister reported that enabling works have already begun on site, with a target date for completion of 2011. He said the new hospital would set new standards in the style of care.

Read the transcript of First Minister’s questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=81145&ds=4/2008#rhif1>

## **One Wales**

The First Minister delivered a statement on the One Wales Delivery Plan. The plan outlines how the coalition government will deliver on its 228 specific delivery commitments. Health issues in the document include: implementing a new approach to hospital reconfiguration, introducing a cervical cancer vaccine scheme and eliminating the use of private sector hospitals.

Read the delivery plan here:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/strategy/strategies/onewales/delivery/deliveryplan/deliverye.pdf?lang=en>

The First Minister took questions on the plan. Read the transcript here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=81145&ds=4/2008#rhif6>

## This week at the Assembly

### Health committee

The Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee meet on Wednesday to hold a ministerial scrutiny session on the Minister for Health and Social Services. View a background briefing paper for the session here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-hwlg-home/bus-committees-third-hwlg-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=81246&ds=4/2008>

The committee will also receive an update on progress made on its report on cancer services. Read the update here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-hwlg-home/bus-committees-third-hwlg-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=81266&ds=4/2008>

Read the transcript of the session where Richard Lewis of the BMA gave evidence to the committee's inquiry into presumed consent for organ donation:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-hwlg-home/bus-committees-third-hwlg-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=78530&ds=4/2008>

### Structures debate

The Conservatives will argue in a plenary debate that WAG was wrong to create 22 LHBs. The Lib Dems will argue the case for coterminous boundaries with Local Authorities and will call for strong links with local government to be maintained. They will also raise concerns that centralisation will concentrate power into the hands of the Minister.

More details in Wednesday's agenda here: <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=81235&ds=4/2008>

### First Minister's Questions

The First Minister will face two health related questions on the abolition of prescription charges and the government's plans for community led care in the NHS.

Read the full list of questions here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-oral.htm?act=dis&id=80354&ds=4/2008>

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

The Minister will answer questions on the following:

- Plans for improving public services
- WAG's budget priorities
- Improving procurement opportunities for public services

### Mental health services LCO committee

The committee has issued a call for evidence from all interested parties on its proposals to give the Welsh Assembly Government more powers for mental health services. View more details here:

[http://www.assemblywales.org/website\\_-\\_letter\\_from\\_chair\\_to\\_consultees\\_\\_e\\_-4.pdf](http://www.assemblywales.org/website_-_letter_from_chair_to_consultees__e_-4.pdf)

Read responses already received here:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-legislation/bus-leg-legislative-competence-orders/bus-legislation-lco-2008-6/bus-legislation-lco6-2008-writtenevidence.htm>

### Audit Committee

The committee will meet on Thursday to consider WAG's response to its review of the GMS contract. The Auditor General has written a letter of advice which can be read here:

[http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-ac-home/bus-committees-third-ac-agendas/ac\\_3\\_\\_03-08\\_\\_p3\\_\\_advice\\_from\\_the\\_auditor\\_general\\_for\\_wales.pdf?langoption=3&ttl=AC%283%29-03-08%20%3A%20Paper%203%20%3A%20Advice%20from%20the%20Auditor%20General%20for%20Wales%20%2818-6%20kb%29](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-ac-home/bus-committees-third-ac-agendas/ac_3__03-08__p3__advice_from_the_auditor_general_for_wales.pdf?langoption=3&ttl=AC%283%29-03-08%20%3A%20Paper%203%20%3A%20Advice%20from%20the%20Auditor%20General%20for%20Wales%20%2818-6%20kb%29)

See the committee's agenda for more details:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third-ac-home/bus-committees-third-ac-agendas.htm?act=dis&id=80192&ds=4/2008>

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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](http://www.welshconfed.org)