

Answers issued to Members on 28 October 2008

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

Contents

- 2 Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services
- 3 Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): What assessment has the Welsh Assembly Government made of the financial impact of the Grogan Judgement and what is the projected cost for each LHB? (WAQ52648)

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): Will the Minister detail how the Draft Budget has taken account of the Grogan Judgement? (WAQ52649)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): The current growth forecast for continuing NHS healthcare expenditure is estimated by Local Health Boards (LHBs) to be an additional £82 million above 2007-08 expenditure. In addition LHBs are managing the recurrent impact of the £55 million increase they experienced between 2006-07 and 2007-08. Estimates per individual LHB are not yet available.

The Draft Budget allows for the £100 million p.a. made available for continuing healthcare this year to continue in 2009-10 and 2010-2011. Half of this was added into LHB discretionary allocations in 2008-09 to meet growth pressures and this will remain for 2009-10 and 2010-2011. The remainder will be primarily allocated for strategic developments of new models of care to effect change, in line with the advice I receive from the Continuing NHS Healthcare Strategic Group of stakeholders I have formed.

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): Will the Minister outline when she or her officials last discussed the reassessment of any M-Class drug with the Department of Health? (WAQ52650)

Edwina Hart: Neither I or my officials have discussed the reassessment of any Class M drug with the Department of Health. This is a matter for them and the British Generic Manufacturers Association, representing the British generic pharmaceutical manufacturing industry, who recognise that each has a part to play in creating and maintaining a competitive and vibrant generic medicine market in the UK.

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): Will the Minister confirm the cost of the national settlement of the community pharmacy contract and how this cost is being met? (WAQ52651)

Edwina Hart: The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) has agreed to the Department of Health's (DH) uplift of an additional £280 million to the contract for 2008/09. This sum comprises £150 million 'new' monies, together with £130 million in additional Category M savings on drug costs. It will be paid over the period October 2008 to March 2009 to make good the funding for the whole year. For Wales, this equates to increasing the contract funding by around £18.4 million (so increasing our current level of funding from £19.3 million to £37.7 million), but this is totally dependent upon the level of items dispensed and could rise even further.

Mike German (South Wales East): Will the Minister make a statement on the development of a neonatal transfer network in Wales? (WAQ52646)

Edwina Hart: I consulted clinicians earlier this year on the recommendations of the 2005 Health Commission Wales review of neonatal services. The establishment of transport systems for sick babies in north and south Wales has been identified as one of the main priorities for improvement. I have identified £2 million funding from 2009-10 onwards in the draft budget to improve neonatal services and there is funding available to Health Commission Wales this year to begin work to improve neonatal services. A neonatal transport stakeholder group will be set up to ensure safe transport arrangements are in place and to agree longer term arrangements in north and south Wales.

Mike German (South Wales East): What discussions has the Minister had with regards to the lack of neo-natal nurses in Wales? (WAQ52647)

Edwina Hart: I am conscious of the reported shortages of neonatal nurses in Wales. This issue was discussed in my meeting with the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister make a statement on the provision of neonatal intensive care beds at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital, Prince Charles Hospital and Nevill Hall Hospital? (WAQ52645)

Edwina Hart: The provision of neonatal intensive care beds at Royal Glamorgan Hospital is currently temporarily operating at Level 2 high dependency status. This temporary measure is to ensure patient safety due to the difficulty in recruiting middle grade medical staff which is a problem being experienced nationally.

Prince Charles Hospital is designated at Level 2, dependency status. Any babies requiring Level 3 facilities are transferred to Cardiff and Royal Gwent Hospital.

Nevill Hall Hospital is designated at Level 2 and in conjunction with the Royal Gwent Hospital has in place an infrastructure which supports women who give birth in Nevill Hall access to Level 3 beds at the Royal Gwent Hospital if they are required.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What is the Minister doing to promote drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes in Wales? (WAQ52632)

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Brian Gibbons): Our new substance misuse strategy 'Working Together to Reduce Harm', sets out our ten-year plan for tackling substance misuse in Wales, including specific references to our proposals for the promotion of drug and alcohol rehabilitation services.

For this year and the next two years this Strategy will be backed by the extra £12.6 million announced in last year's budget and the additional £3.2 million included in this year's draft budget proposals.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Assembly Government support for CAIS Limited? (WAQ52633)

Brian Gibbons: In 2008-09, CAIS are in receipt of more than £1.6m funding via the North Wales Community Safety Partnerships and Local Health Boards. They are also directly funded £178,000 per year for the provision of the Transitional Support Scheme in North Wales.

In addition, my officials are working with CAIS as the lead body for the consortium of voluntary sector providers in Wales, to assist them in seeking funding from the European Social Fund.