

# POLICY UPDATE

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CANCER SUPPORT

## October 2015

Welcome to 'Policy Update', a monthly bulletin on the latest policy developments of relevance to those with an interest in cancer.

If you are reading this document on screen, the web addresses are hyperlinks which will take you directly to the relevant web pages or documents. If you would like any further information or have any questions or comments about 'Policy Update', please contact Aimee Leverett, on 020 7091 2486 or email [aleverett@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:aleverett@macmillan.org.uk).

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# United Kingdom

## **Success story: novel imaging system guides surgeons to cancers - Case Study**

A Hertfordshire medical device company is launching a novel cancer-detecting imaging system on the European market after 3 years' intensive research and development.

The breakthrough for LightPoint Medical's first product, LightPath™, comes after it was launched at the European Cancer Congress in Vienna.

The innovation uses a science called Cerenkov luminescence. It relies on an imaging agent – a modified sugar – which emits a light signal when a cancer cell 'feeds' on it.

LightPath will help surgeons ensure they have removed all cancerous tissue while the patient is still on the operating table – without removing healthy tissue unnecessarily. It is the first molecular imaging device to be used in this way.

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# England

## **Jeremy Hunt - party conference**

Jeremy Hunt's conference speech focussed on improving primary care services and the culture of the NHS.

Importantly, Hunt criticised the target culture of the NHS. He stated individual targets worked well, such as cancer waiting times, but criticised them collectively for undermining professionalism. Rather than setting targets, Hunt believes peer-review, transparency and openness about performance is the way forward.

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## **NHS England appoints senior clinicians and frontline leaders to drive next phase of Five Year Forward View implementation**

NHS England Chief Executive Simon Stevens has today announced the appointment of three frontline NHS leaders to strengthen NHS England's work on primary care, drive improved cancer services, and lead the commissioning of specialised hospital services.

Announcing these appointments in a speech at the Kings Fund, Simon Stevens said: "These exceptionally high calibre new appointments will strengthen NHS England's national leadership and its connection with frontline delivery, helping turbo-charge implementation of the Five Year Forward View."

Dr Arvind Madan becomes NHS England's Director of Primary Care providing clinical leadership for the transformation of primary care provision.

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Cally Palmer has been appointed to NHS England as NHS National Cancer Director.

Dr Jonathan Fielden is appointed NHS England's new Director of Specialised Commissioning.

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### **Don Berwick appointed to support vanguard sites**

Dr Donald Berwick, the renowned international authority on health care quality and improvement management, has been appointed by The King's Fund with NHS England and national partners to help support vanguard sites in developing the new models of care set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View.

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### **Primary Care Home initiative launched**

The NHS Confederation is committed to supporting ever greater partnership working between community and primary care. Primary Care Home builds on the best attributes of both primary and community services to improve care for patients in their communities.

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### **Achieving shared ambitions for end of life care – Dr Ros Taylor**

The National Director at Hospice UK explains how hospices are ready to play their role in delivering the very best end of life care:

We may be leading the world in terms of services, systems and availability of pain killers at the end of life according to the Economist Intelligence Unit, but a crucial challenge remains: how do we deliver consistently compassionate and effective support for dying people and their families in all settings?

Excellent end of life care should be widely available, and a recent survey of bereaved relatives by the National Audit Office suggested that most people's experience of that care is positive. However, as we have seen with the shocking cases highlighted by the recent Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman report, the system can still fail to meet patients' needs, and in some cases to the point of downright neglect.

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### **Lord Carter: reducing variation in care could save NHS £5 billion**

In a news story from the Department of Health Lord Carter stated Hospitals can save around £5 billion by reducing variation in care and improving the way they care for patients.

The call is part of Lord Carter's review into how savings can be made by the NHS, which aims to help local NHS chief executives make their hospitals safer and more efficient at the same time.

For the first time, the activity carried out by all NHS hospitals has been reviewed together and broken down by clinical specialty. The results show huge variations in clinical costs, infection rates, readmission rates, litigation payments and device and procedure selection. The review has highlighted the huge opportunity for hospitals to tackle these variations.

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## Scotland

### Cancer waiting times

The 95 per cent standard of patients receiving cancer treatment within 31 days of a decision to treat continues to be met.

The figures, published by ISD Scotland, show that 96.3 per cent of patients had their first treatment within the 31 day standard from April to June 2015. The average wait was six days, and 90 per cent of patients waited 27 days or less.

For the 62 day referral to treatment standard, which applies to patients referred with a suspicion of cancer, 92.1 per cent were treated within 62 days. This is a slight improvement on 91.9 per cent last quarter. The average wait was 37 days, and the number of boards meeting the standard has increased from four to eight in the last quarter.

This summer the Scottish Government announced £4.05 million of additional funding to help health boards improve cancer waiting times. The funding is targeted at helping boards to meet the 62 day standard, by building diagnostic and treatment capacity. It is in on top of the £8.5 million invested over the past three years to improve cancer services, which runs alongside the £30 million Detect Cancer Early campaign.

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### Cancer patients get say on care

Cancer patients are getting the chance to give their views on the care they are receiving through the first national cancer patient experience survey.

The survey, which is jointly funded by Macmillan Cancer Support, has now been sent out to all patients who have had a confirmed cancer diagnosis between July 2013 and March 2014 and who have also stayed in hospital between January 2014 and September 2014.

The survey will ask patients questions such as how they felt about the way they were told about their diagnosis, whether they understood the information provided about their treatment, and whether they had confidence and trust in the staff treating them. The results will help to shape the future direction of cancer care in Scotland.

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## **Free parking saves patients over £25m**

Scrapping car parking charges at most of Scotland's hospitals has saved patients and NHS staff more than £25 million over the past seven years.

As of 31 December 2008 parking was made free for patients, visitors and staff at hospitals where charges had previously applied.

Health Secretary Shona Robison said: "The founding principle of our NHS is to have services that are free for everyone – services that are not out to make profit.

"That's why I'm delighted that getting rid of car parking charges has saved patients and staff over £25 million.

"Charging to park at hospitals was an unnecessary financial burden on families and those needing treatment at a difficult time."

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## **Northern Ireland**

### **GP-led Care Working Group to be established**

Health Minister Simon Hamilton today announced the creation of a cross-cutting working group to look at the issues facing GP-led primary care services in Northern Ireland.

Recognising the challenges facing patients in securing timely GP appointments, the group will look at both short term and long term measures to ensure citizens in Northern Ireland can continue to access world class primary healthcare advice, treatment and facilities.

The group will include representation from General Practice, nursing, Allied Health Professionals, and Health and Social Care Trusts. The work will be led by officials from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

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## **Wales**

### **Ban on smoking in cars carrying children begins**

A ban on smoking in cars carrying children under 18 came into force in Wales on October 1. The new law, which also came into force in England, means it is illegal to smoke in private vehicles when someone under the age of 18 is present.

It is an offence for a person of any age to smoke in a private vehicle when someone under the age of 18 is present and for a driver, including a provisional driver, not to stop someone smoking in these circumstances. The fixed penalty notice fine for both

offences is £50. Somebody who commits both offences could get two fines. The rules do not apply to e-cigarettes.

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## **Welsh NHS delivery plans for major conditions extended to 2020**

The Welsh Government's five-year plans to improve the care for people with major conditions, including cancer and heart disease, will be extended for a further four years to ensure services continue to improve, Deputy Health Minister Vaughan Gething has announced.

The Welsh Government's health strategy, Together for Health, published in 2011, set a five-year vision for the Welsh NHS and its partners and included the creation of delivery plans for major conditions.

Each major condition has its own delivery plan, which has been developed by clinicians, patients and advocates for excellent care. They outline the actions which will be taken to improve patient outcomes, patient experience and services.

These plans provide a focus for activity in relation to major conditions. Successes from the work can be seen in:

- More people are surviving cancer than ever before
- Heart disease survival rates are improving and fewer people are dying prematurely from coronary heart disease thanks to improved detection and the ban on smoking in public places

The number of people dying from stroke has fallen by 1,000 a year.

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## **Welsh NHS Confederation asks for long-term vision for NHS Wales in new 2016 election briefing**

A long-term vision for how the health service in Wales will look in the future and how it goes about meeting the challenges ahead must be developed by all political parties, according to the Welsh NHS Confederation.

Publishing a detailed briefing ahead of the 2016 National Assembly for Wales election, the organisation, which represents the seven Health Boards and three NHS Trusts in NHS Wales, asks for a clear ten-year vision alongside a commitment to deliver the resources for the NHS to meet the challenges it faces in the coming years.

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