

POLICY UPDATE

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CANCER SUPPORT

August 2013

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 Anna Baranski, Policy Analyst, on 020 7840 4984 or email abaranski@macmillan.org.uk

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UK-wide

Spending Review

Chancellor George Osborne MP outlined Government spending for the first year of the next Parliament in the Comprehensive Spending Review this week. He announced that the health budget would continue to be ring fenced, with a budget of £110bn. He also announced a new joint £3bn commissioning plan for both health and social care.

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New proposals to improve care for vulnerable older people

The health secretary announced he is seeking views on a set of proposals to radically improve care for vulnerable older people.

The proposals set out improvements in primary care and urgent and emergency care. They look at establishing ways for NHS and social care services to work together more effectively for the benefit of patients, both in and out of hospital.

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England

Keogh Review

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt MP presented the findings of the Keogh Review to Parliament this week. Outlining failures in care at 14 hospital trusts, Mr Hunt said that a team of specialists would be sent into 11 trusts to help their management improve standards. He also sought to place much of the blame for the failures with the last Labour Government. In reply, Andy Burnham MP stated that as the high mortality rates occurred from 2010 to 2012, the current Government must shoulder much of the responsibility.

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Chief Inspector of Hospitals announces inspection plans

Following the Keogh review of mortality rates, the CQC's new Chief Inspector of Hospitals, Professor Sir Mike Richards, has announced eighteen NHS trusts, representing the variation of care in hospitals across England, will face a new inspection regime from August.

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Overhaul of End of Life Care system

The Government is to replace the Liverpool Care Pathway (LCP) and will ask senior clinicians to sign off all end of life care plans, as part of its response to the findings of an Independent Review.

Although the review found that in the right hands and when operated by well-trained, well-resourced and sensitive clinical teams the LCP does help patients have a dignified and pain-free death, its findings included too many cases of poor practice, poor quality care of the individual, with families and carers not being properly engaged in the patient's care. In its initial response to the review, the Government set out a series of actions for the health and care system.

Changes to direct payments for healthcare

The government consulted on proposed changes to the direct payment for healthcare regulations in order to extend personal health budgets, including direct payments for healthcare, beyond the pilot programme.

The government response summarises the feedback that was received and explains the changes that are being made to the direct payments of healthcare as a result.

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Update to charging arrangements for adult social care services

The Department of Health has published updates to the Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care and other non-residential social services guidance. This includes guidance on charging social care users and carers. Local authorities must have regard to the Fairer Charging Guidance when designing policy in order to try to make charging policies more consistent, reasonable and fair for social care users.

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Northern Ireland

Health minister announces £2.7 million funding for the NI hospice

£2.7million will assist the NI Hospice in providing a replacement adult hospice for the provision of palliative and end of life care on the Somerton Road in Belfast.

The new hospice facility will provide 18 beds in single en-suite rooms with supporting facilities for staff, families and volunteers; a new Day Hospice facility capable of sustaining the current level of support and clinical interventions in an enhanced environment; a dedicated Education and Resource Centre and on-site parking.

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Scotland

Improvements needed to allow people to access new medicines

The Health and Sport committee has called for the Scottish government to address issues around individual patient treatment requests, value based pricing, area drug and therapeutic committees and clinical trials.

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Wales

First Minister sets out third year legislative priorities

The First Minister set out the Welsh Government's legislative priorities for the next year. He confirmed there will be eight Bills in total, including:

- The National Health Service Finance (Wales) Bill will be introduced to ensure Local Health Boards have flexibility to focus on the challenges of service delivery by introducing a three year, rather than an annual financial regime. This means LHBs will be able to make prudent long term decisions in the interests of both patients and NHS Wales as a whole. Fast track procedures are proposed for this legislation because it is urgent and enjoys wide spread support from Opposition parties.
- A draft Public Service Workforce (Wales) Bill will be published in the autumn with a view to introducing the Bill before the 2014 summer recess.
- The Sustainable Development Bill has been renamed the Future Generations (Wales) Bill to better reflect its intention of tackling generational challenges by ensuring Welsh public services make key decisions with the long term well-being of Wales in mind. It will progress through the next year.

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National Assembly for Wales Health and Social Care Committee Stage 1 report on Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill

The Committee released its report on the general principles of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Bill and put forward 61 recommendations for the Welsh Government to consider before the next stage of the Bill, expected in the Autumn. The report is generally supportive of the Bill but raise concerns about whether it will achieve its objectives.

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Health Minister responds to Francis report with commitment to safe and compassionate care

New measures to ensure the safety and quality of care delivered by the NHS in Wales have been proposed. Delivering Safe Care, Compassionate Care' is the Welsh Government's response to the report by the Francis Inquiry.

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Delivering local health care: accelerating the pace of change

The framework highlights the significant role for primary and community care, within the wider health and social care system, to improve services for people living in local communities.

The Delivering Local Health Care provides a framework for action for Health Boards, Local Government and Third Sector partners to work together, to provide high quality, safe and sustainable services to meet the needs of people across Wales. The framework sits alongside the 'Integrated health and social services plan' which is due out for consultation in July 2013.

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All Wales Fundamentals of Care Audit

The 'Fundamentals of Care' (2003) is a Welsh Government programme aiming to improve the quality of aspects of health and social care for adults. It contains 12 standards relating to essential elements of care. The audit details the 2012 audit undertaken by 8 NHS organisations during October – December 2012. The audit includes a patient satisfaction survey and an operational element completed by the Ward Sister/Charge Nurse.

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Care Council funding agreed

The Welsh government has confirmed funding of over £10 million for the care council for Wales over 2013/14 to regulate the social care workforce and ensuring workers receive appropriate training and qualifications.

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New website for Cancer Patients in North Wales

An innovative website for people in North Wales who have been affected by cancer or who have an interest in cancer care. This new online resource is set to provide a comprehensive directory of local cancer services and sources of information and support that are available for cancer patients and their families in North Wales

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'Screening for life' campaign launched

A brand new health campaign will be held across Wales during July to raise awareness of the national screening programmes offered by the NHS.

The 'screening for life' campaign is aimed at raising awareness and encouraging eligible men and women across Wales to take up free testing for NHS breast, cervical and bowel cancer screening.

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Developments from NICE

NICE given responsibility to look at the benefits medicines bring to wider society

NICE will be responsible for assessing new medicines as part of value-based pricing, linking the price of a drug to its value, which will be introduced in January 2014. They will work with patient groups, the NHS and the drugs industry to decide exactly how to value new drugs. This will be based on the best available evidence and will be as transparent as possible.

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More treatment options for women at risk of breast cancer

In updated guidance from NICE, women with a family history of breast cancer are now eligible for drug treatments as a measure to help prevent the disease.

NICE recommends that either tamoxifen or raloxifene should be offered for 5 years to postmenopausal women with a uterus and at high risk of breast cancer, unless they have a past history or may be at increased risk of thromboembolic disease or endometrial cancer.

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