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.

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United Kingdom

**NAO report on delayed discharge.**

A new report published by the National Audit Office (NAO) also focuses on delayed discharge, estimating that 2.7 million bed days are lost due to the delayed transfer of older patients no longer needing hospital care.

The NAO estimates that increasing social care services for older patients after hospital discharge could cost around £180 million a year. But this would reduce the potential savings of £820 million that would arise from discharging patients earlier.

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England

**NHS Confederation and LGA warn integration and transformation plans are at risk**

Leaders from across the health and social care sector are calling for an end to the status quo and for place-based innovation and transformation to happen on a scale and pace not seen before.

Stepping up to the place: The key to successful integration, a report released by the NHS Confederation, Local Government Association, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and NHS Clinical Commissioners outlines the first whole system vision for integration based on forming care around the needs of individuals in a society with increasingly chronic and complex health needs.

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**BMA - GP rating sites out there and unfair.**

The British Medical Association (BMA) has criticised the number of websites allowing patients to post reviews of the care they receive from their GP practices. Doctors say that many reviews are unfairly negative and even abusive, with GPs often unable to respond to anonymous reviewers.

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**What proportion of the NHS’s staff come from the European Union?**

Ahead of the EU Referendum, the Nuffield Trust’s Mark Dayan examined the data on immigration and hypothesised on the potential impact of Brexit on the NHS workforce.

Interestingly, EU migrants make up a significant proportion of NHS staff, including over 10% of doctors. Additionally, as the number of nurses trained in the UK has dropped, the number of EU nurses and midwives has increased at a historically rapid rate.
New packs will give real value to patients – Professor Matthew Cripps.

NHS RightCare has published the last four in its set of Commissioning for Value (CFV) packs for CCGs to help them identify the best opportunities for improving value for their populations.

The focus packs – on Cancer and Tumours; Mental Health and Dementia; Maternity and Early Years; and Musculoskeletal, Trauma and Injuries – are personalised for each CCG. The information contained in each pack is designed to support local discussions and inform a more in-depth analysis around common conditions and pathways.

Working Together – how health, social care and fire and rescue services can increase their reach, scale and impact through joint working.

Work by the fire and rescue services to help reduce demand for other services through prevention, including health and social care, is being showcased in a new document ‘Working Together’.

Fire and rescue services are applying the principles of early intervention and prevention, to health-related risk factors to emergencies (such as smoking), to reduce demand for the services of others, whilst also continuing to reduce demand for fire and rescue.

Scotland

Cancer patients satisfied with care – Nicola Sturgeon.

Nicola Sturgeon, Scottish First Minister has released a statement marking the first ever Scottish cancer patient experience survey, which showed that the majority of patients are happy with their NHS care and treatment.

The survey of almost 5000 cancer patients shows 94% of patients rate their care positively. It also shows 87% of patients felt they were always treated with dignity and respect by nurses and doctors.

The results will help inform a range of actions being taken forward under the Scottish Government’s cancer strategy, backed up with £100 million of investment.
Patient waiting times.
The NHS in Scotland has treated more than one million patients within the 12-week treatment time guarantee, since it was introduced in October 2012.
The figures come as official waiting time statistics for January to March 2016 show that 92.7% of inpatients and day-case patients were treated within 12 weeks. Since the guarantee was introduced 1.1 million, equating to 96.6% of patients, have been treated within the timeframe.
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BMA warns general practice in jeopardy without proper funding.
The leader of Scotland’s GPs has warned that general practice may not survive in the country without substantial new funding and staff.
The BMA’s Scottish GPs Committee Chair Alan McDevitt gave his prediction as the latest official survey of the primary care workforce was published by the health statistics agency ISD Scotland.
It found that the number of GP vacancies had risen, with one in five practices reporting a vacancy in August 2015 — twice the number in 2013.
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Improving GP recruitment and retention.
The Scottish Government is funding a number of innovative projects to improve GP recruitment and retention over the next two years.
Over £2 million of funding has been allocated to projects across the country, as part of the Government’s £85 million Primary Care Fund.

Wales
Lives saved in first six months of new organ donation system.
Wales’ landmark system for organ donation has saved dozens of lives during the first six months since implementation.
The system – known as soft opt out or deemed consent – allows people who want to be an organ donor to either register a decision to opt in or do nothing. For those who choose to do nothing, if they are 18 or over, have lived in Wales for more than 12 months and also die in Wales, they will be regarded as having consented to organ donation.
Click here for more information

High levels of patient satisfaction in Welsh NHS commended by Vaughan Gething.
Overall patient satisfaction with the NHS remains extremely high according to the results of a major annual survey published today.

The Fundamentals of Care survey has been used to gather patients’ views on their experience of receiving care. This is the last year the survey will be published in its current form before Scotland moves to a new monitoring regime for the new Health and Care Standards which were published in April 2015.

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Northern Ireland

General practice faces ‘full-blown crisis’.

The BMA has warned general practice in Northern Ireland is on a downward spiral and facing a ‘full-blown crisis’ unless urgent funding commitments are made by the Northern Ireland Government.

They say the new health minister, Michelle O’Neill, needs to implement a stabilisation fund to help struggling practices and guarantee a long-term move towards a general practice funding settlement equivalent to 10% of the health budget.

The warning comes after a survey of all GP practices in Northern Ireland showed that nearly 85% of the 229 that responded were either struggling to cope or failing to cope with current service demands.

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Health Minister welcomes extra funding.

Health Minister Michelle O’Neill today welcomed an extra £72million for health and social care services but said she remains focused on long-term reform.

The Minister was speaking after additional funding had been allocated to the Health and Social Care Service in June, a process which deals with in-year budget reallocations.

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