

**Date:** 16 July 2003  
**Venue:** Committee Room 3, National Assembly for Wales  
**Title:** Review of Health and Social Care in Wales

### **Purpose**

1. To present the report of the Review of Health and Social Care in Wales.

### **Summary**

2. The Review analyses the current provision of health and social care services in Wales and makes a number of recommendations of what needs to be done for the future. A summary of the report has been widely circulated, and both the [full report](#) and the [summary](#) are available on the internet. The Minister for Health and Social Services gave her initial response in a statement to Plenary on 9 July 2003, and intends to present a detailed response and action plan to the Committee in autumn.

### **Background**

3. The Review of Health and Social Care in Wales was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government as part of its commitment to improve health and social care services. In October 2002, the Finance Minister announced a substantial increase in future resources to be allocated to health in Wales, making it clear that the extra resources had to be allied to improved performance and modernisation of health and social care services.

4. The review team was advised by Derek Wanless who was the author, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of *Securing our Future Health: Taking a Long Term View*. The team drew on the experience of many people and organisations – and on that of an expert reference group – and undertook a widespread consultation exercise.

5. The conclusions of the Review provide a very clear analysis of what needs to be done to move the health, social care and well being agenda forward over the next four years. Its recommendations underline and endorse the policy direction set by the Welsh Assembly Government, but show ways in which those policies can be developed further and faster in future.

6. The report demonstrates what has been achieved so far by services in Wales, what is good and what requires improvement. Its conclusions and recommendations provide a methodology through which the reform agenda in Wales can be translated in an improved financial regime, ways of identifying and rewarding good performance and ensuring that the people of Wales can

play their part in taking greater responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

### **Immediate issues**

7. The report sets out a number of priority areas for action.

8. It begins from an examination of the acute hospital sector, concluding that the system is working at full stretch and under considerable pressure from emergency admissions and a rising tide of referrals from primary care.

9. It concludes, however, that the solution to the problems experienced in hospitals does not lie in investment into additional acute sector capacity but in a three fold approach which involves:-

10. Making a reality of the primary care led and preventative service. This means accelerating alternatives to hospital admission as an essential part of creating the space in which hospitals can perform the tasks for which they are intended.

11. Making a reality of social care services which are strong enough to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions, providing more appropriate rehabilitation and care for people as soon as their hospital care is concluded.

12. Achieving a step-change in the efficiency of hospital services themselves to respond to changes in demography and technology. The range of services provided in acute hospitals will have to change, and a different style will be needed in providing community services.

13. On 9 July I announced a major initiative through which an additional £4 million will be made available to Local Health Boards to secure identified reductions in delayed transfers of care within their communities. Local Health Boards will have to demonstrate both that they are working closely with Local Authorities and other partners and also that the schemes will enable sustainable improvements to be secured. I intend to transfer this money to Local Health Boards by the end of the summer so that the extra capacity can be in place by winter. There will be close performance management to ensure maximum benefit.

### **Implementation.**

14. I have asked the Director NHS Wales with her colleagues to establish a mechanism to review the ways in which the recommendations might be taken forward and implemented, and I shall ask the Partnership Forum and the Health and Wellbeing Council to act as reference groups for the implementation process. I shall return to the Health and Social Services Committee with full details of the Government's response on the implementation plan in the autumn.

## **Financial Implications**

14. There are no financial implications arising directly from the report itself, but the recommendations it makes are wide-ranging in their potential implications.

## **Action for Subject Committee**

15. The full implications of the Review's recommendations and the actions which arise will need careful consideration over time, but the initial reactions of Committee Members would be valuable at this stage.

**Jane Hutt, AM**  
**Minister for Health and Social Services**

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