



## **NHS Newsweek 23/04/10**

### **Public to have say on organ donation incentives**

Cash incentives and the payment of funeral expenses are two ideas being put forward to encourage people to donate human organs and tissue. The Nuffield Council on Bioethics is asking the public if it is ethical to use financial incentives to increase donations of organs, eggs and sperm. Paying for most types of organs and tissue is illegal in the UK. The public consultation will last 12 weeks and the council's findings will be published in autumn 2011.

*Source of Extract: BBC News*

### **New Cornwall NHS project trials 'could cut costs'**

As the NHS faces tough financial challenges, a matter all political parties are addressing in the run-up to the election, the health service in Cornwall is leading the way with a pilot project that is saving money and improving patient care. About 600 people with long-term conditions are registered on the Telehealth project, aimed at reducing costly emergency hospital admissions. Cornwall has an ageing population, more people with long-term illnesses, and more - often expensive - treatment available. In the greater south west of England, the annual NHS budget is £8bn but health managers expect to have to save between £1.1bn and £1.6bn by 2014. Measures that offer savings without compromising care, such as the Telehealth system, are likely to be welcomed by any incoming government.

*Source of Extract: BBC News*

### **New £1.5m NHS uniforms 'cause rashes'**

A £1.5m programme to introduce colour-coded NHS uniforms in Wales could be scrapped after scores of nurses complained that the items caused painful rashes. The outfits, designed to make different grades of staff easier to identify, are currently being rolled out in the Hywel Dda and Betsi Cadwaladr University health boards.

*Source of Extract: HSJ*

### **NHS Peterborough cuts discussed by candidates**

NHS Peterborough is currently considering cuts to hospitals and other health services to make up a £27m funding shortfall. Acute hospital services and community care are among the areas where the trust is looking to make reductions in spending. Peterborough's growing population has been blamed for putting added pressure on the trust.

*Source of Extract: BBC News*

### **English NHS commissioning under attack**

Professor Calum Paton, writing in the British Medical Journal today, says the existing model, with 'purchaser' primary care trusts separated from 'providers' such as hospitals, is bureaucratic and costly. He says the market-based system is based on 'yesterday's dogma rather than necessity'. Paton's comments follow a report released last month by the Commons health select committee, which described primary care trusts as 'weak' and 'passive' commissioners, and concluded that the system has led to increased costs. A separate study, also published last month by the King's Fund and Nuffield Trust think-tanks, called for the system to be reformed. It suggested a greater role for doctors and said that PCTs might have to merge to become more powerful. Paton, an academic at Keele University, told Public Finance that integrated local health bodies could be established, as in Wales and Scotland, to perform the functions of both the purchaser and the provider.

*Source of Extract: Public Finance*

### **Five clear points to save the NHS**

Hundreds of nurses across the country have welcomed a health plan putting "safety before shortcuts." The five-point manifesto for nursing was launched on the second day of Unison's annual health conference in Brighton.

Nursing manifesto

- No compulsory redundancies
- Planning to ensure there are enough qualified staff to meet future patient demand - based on patient need, not cost-cutting measures
- Education and training opportunities for the current workforce, to advance their own practice
- Built-in training and support to ensure that nurse training is available to the widest range of people and that there is a well-developed career pathway and equality of opportunity for the whole nursing team to reflect all their talents
- The entire NHS workforce to be valued and rewarded appropriately to reflect this

*Source of Extract: Morning Star online*

### **GPs back axing managers to save NHS cash**

Axing NHS managers is GPs' preferred way of addressing the NHS funding shortfall, according to GP newspaper poll. The finding comes a month after DoH workforce statistics showed the number of NHS managers had nearly doubled in the last decade. The DoH says the NHS must cut costs by £20bn over the next five years as growth slows. A total of 88% of GPs who took part in the poll said NHS managers should be cut to achieve this. 70% want more self care to cut demand, and 45% think the NHS drugs bill can be cut. Some GPs back more radical ideas. A handful of the 639 respondents advocated charging for some NHS services. A spokesman for the NHS Confederation, which represents NHS managers, said there was a need to 'streamline' management. But he said it accounted for just 5% of total NHS funding. 'Savings are going to have to be made by looking at less popular options, like renegotiating services and contracts,' he said.

*Source of Extract: Healthcare Republic*

### **Cuts being made to frontline NHS services survey reveals**

More than half of 370 GPs questioned said cutbacks to services were happening in their local area and another third said they were planned. Among services being affected are psychiatry, health visiting and blood testing.. The survey, for Pulse magazine, showed that despite official policies to move patient services out of hospitals and into the community cutbacks are being made to nursing and health visitors who help to keep patients out of wards and in their homes. Community nursing services are also suffering, as is end-of-life care and dietetic and nutrition services. A GP in Hull, who did not wish to be named, said there had been closures at 'many departments at local hospitals, such as maternity, general medicine and cardiology'.

*Source of Extract: The Telegraph/Pulse*

### **Trust to pay firm to help cut costs.**

NHS Peterborough PCT. a cash-strapped city health trust will pay a consultancy firm £295,000 to produce a plan to save it £27m in the next year. The Trust needs to make the savings after overspending by £11.8 million in 2009/ 10. The Trust said it was due to an increase in demand for health services in the city. Despite the PCT previously stating it would look to slash the amount of money spent on management consultants, it has appointed McKinsey & Company to produce a business case to make the necessary savings. The company will receive the payment for a month's work. They will have to present a plan that will turn around the body's ailing financial fortunes while protecting frontline services.

*Source of Extract: Peterborough Today*

### **Hospitals turned away 750 women in labour last year**

At least 747 women in labour were turned away from the local hospital where they expected to give birth last year because the hospital maternity unit had too few staff or beds, NHS figures reveal. Those refused treatment locally had to travel up to 99 miles to have their baby, according to hospital records obtained by the Conservatives. In Greater Manchester, for example, hospitals closed their doors to women in labour 85 times, forcing 329 mothers-to-be to go elsewhere. At Central Manchester university hospitals trust, the maternity units closed 26 times during 2009, the longest shutdown lasted 18 hours, and 154 women had to travel for up to 15 miles to find a unit that could accommodate them. The trust said "capacity/staffing and one power failure" were to blame. A Department of Health spokeswoman said: "The NHS delivers hundreds of thousands of babies safely every year and England is one of the safest places in the world to have a baby."

*Source of Extract: The Guardian*

### **Strike threat over NHS pay and pensions**

Attacks on pay and pensions are likely to result in strike action, warned Unison leader Dave Prentis. Speaking at Unison's annual health conference in Brighton, Mr Prentis said: "Our members will not acquiesce in a pay freeze. If our members vote for action I will lead that action until we win." He praised the government's former announcement about the NHS becoming the preferred provider, but said: "If Gordon Brown really thinks that... is enough to secure our support he'd better think again. Our members won't vote for privatisation." He added: "Unless we get policies that appeal to public service workers they're not going to vote Labour."

*Source of Extract: HSJ*

### **Foundation trust applications run into the ground**

Foundation trust applications have slipped by an average of 11 months and some by as much as three years since last March, HSJ analysis reveals. Both the Labour and Conservative parties have pledged an all-foundation trust future. Forty-six trusts last year said they hoped to have applied for foundation status by now. Only 12 have done so. Just five have been authorised, according to analysis of information from nine out of 10 strategic health authority regions. Forty-six trusts last year said they hoped to have applied for foundation status by now. Only 12 have done so. Just five have been authorised, according to analysis of information from nine out of 10 strategic health authority regions.

*Source of Extract: HSJ*

### **NHS Confederation appoints 'hands on' chair**

NHS East of England Chair Keith Pearson has been appointed as the new Chair of the NHS Confederation. He will replace Bryan Stoten and will start on 1 May. His appointment follows an internal review of the confederation and he is expected to take a more "hands on" approach than the outgoing Chair.

### **Scotland racks up £55m swine flu bill**

The Scottish Government has spent more than £1 million a week battling the swine flu virus over the past 12 months. Ahead of the first anniversary of the outbreak, health secretary Nicola Sturgeon said the pandemic had cost the administration £55m so far. The total cost will be significantly higher as that figure does not include the costs of planning for a flu pandemic or of creating an initial antiviral stockpile. In an interview with *The Scotsman*, Ms Sturgeon also revealed 93,000 doses of antiviral drugs had been handed out in Scotland, with more than 730,000 people vaccinated against the H1N1 virus. While a large stockpile of 3.4m antiviral doses and 500,000 vaccines remain unused, the minister defended the government's planning and said she would make the same decisions again.

*Source of Extract: The Scotsman*

### **Sticky technology**

Toumazou Holdings is a spin-off from Imperial College London. Its claim to fame is the development of a disposable "digital plaster" which contains microchips and electrocardiogram pads. It can be stuck to the patient's chest and wirelessly transmits data on body temperature, heart rate and breathing, to a server. The data can be downloaded to a doctor's handheld device, so that the patient is monitored without the need for tubes or expensive hospital equipment. As the cost and size of the semiconductor falls, other applications will be identified.

*Source of Extract: Financial Times*

### **NHS computing delays**

The Government's ailing programme to roll out an electronic database of patients' records, for use throughout the National Health Service, has hit another rock — this time in the shape of a missed deadline. Key to the ambitious £12.7bn National Programme for IT (NPFIT) is Lorenzo, the software for the scheme now being developed by iSoft, which has its UK headquarters in Banbury. The crucial March 31 deadline for Lorenzo going live at its first hospital, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust, was missed — and it has become clear that the initial goal of providing records that are fully interchangeable between GPs and hospitals will not go ahead in the foreseeable future.

*Source of Extract: Witney Gazette*

### **Sacked hospitals boss to sue NHS for £1m in damages**

Sacked hospitals boss Gary Walker is suing the NHS for £1m of public money in damages. Former chief executive Mr Walker, of United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust will launch his claim for unfair dismissal against the trust on Monday. Mr Walker, 39, was fired in February for swearing at work following a row with chiefs at NHS East Midlands over missed NHS targets at Lincolnshire's hospitals during the 2008/09 financial year. Mr Walker said the NHS trust — which runs hospitals in Lincoln, Boston, Grantham and Louth — did not hit the Government's 18-week GP referral to treatment time target because he refused to put targets ahead of patient safety by letting the hospitals become overcrowded.

*Source of Extract: Lincolnshire Echo*