

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 21/04/2010

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

Contents

- 1 Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services
- 2 Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Recruitment
Q3 Brian Gibbons: Will the Minister provide an update on general practice recruitment in socially disadvantaged areas? OAQ(3)1475(HSS) <i>Transferred for written answer</i>
The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): We do not hold statistics on GP recruitment in socially disadvantaged areas. I am not aware of any difficulties in recruiting GPs in Wales.

Questions 4, 5, 6 were answered in Plenary

Hospital Buildings
Q7 Irene James: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to improve hospital buildings in south-east Wales? OAQ(3)1487(HSS) <i>Transferred for written answer</i>
Edwina Hart: I recognise the importance of fit-for-purpose buildings in delivering healthcare. While it is primarily the health boards' responsibility to maintain their estate appropriately, my capital programme is also available to address more complex and costly issues where practicable. The development of new hospitals is allowing older properties to close.

Questions 8, 9, 10, 11 were answered in Plenary

Continuing Care
Q12 Eleanor Burnham: Will the Minister make a statement on the funding of continuing care? OAQ(3)1507(HSS)
Edwina Hart: The main funding for continuing healthcare lies within the discretionary allocations made to health boards. In addition there is a centrally held budget within the health and social services main expenditure group, which is aimed at funding strategic schemes that drive service change and implement new models of care.
Neuroscience Services
Q13 Kirsty Williams : Will the Minister make a statement on the reform of neuroscience services in Wales? OAQ(3)1505(HSS)

Edwina Hart: The implementation of the outcome of the review of adult neurosciences will lead to improved services for patients. Local health boards are in the process of taking forward the regional implementation plans developed for north Wales and for mid and south Wales.
Community Health Councils
Q14 Trish Law: What assessment has the Minister made of the recent transition from the former community health councils to the new CHCs? OAQ(3)1499(HSS)
Edwina Hart: My assessment is that the transition has taken place successfully against very tight timescales.
Defibrillators
Q15 Chris Franks: Will the Minister make a statement on the provision of defibrillators in South Wales Central? OAQ(3)1485(HSS)
Edwina Hart: An all-Wales strategic development plan, which includes plans to improve access to implantable cardiac defibrillators, has been developed. The additional £2.550 million that I have provided for arrhythmia services since 2009-10 to support this plan has been allocated to LHBs from 2010-11, and I expect them to continue to implement the plan.

Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport

Peripheral Distributor Road
Q2 Brian Gibbons: Will the Minister provide an update on the peripheral distributor road in Port Talbot? OAQ(3)1423(ECT) <i>Transferred for written answer</i>
The Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport (Ieuan Wyn Jones): No discussions on this have taken place with the UK Government. The revaluation is carried out separately in England and Wales independently by the Valuation Office Agency.

Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 were answered in Plenary.

Disused Rail Tunnels
Q9 Leanne Wood: What discussions has the Minister had about reopening disused rail tunnels? OAQ(3)1441(ECT)
The Deputy First Minister: The national transport plan makes it clear that we will look for opportunities to bring disused railway lines back into the transport network, which may include the provision of new walking and cycling routes.
Economy of North-west Wales
Q10 Brynle Williams: What are the Minister's priorities for supporting the economy of north-west Wales? OAQ(3)1439(ECT) <i>Transferred for answer by the Deputy Minister for Science, Innovation and Skills</i>

The Deputy Minister for Science, Innovation and Skills (Lesley Griffiths):Our priority across Wales is to create a strong and enterprising economy with full employment and quality jobs. Since 1 April 2009, 88 single investment fund offers worth over £3.5 million were made to companies in north-west Wales, with an associated capital spend of £8.5 million to create or safeguard 581 jobs.

Public Transport

Q11 Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister outline his immediate priorities for improving public transport in Wales? OAQ(3)1448(ECT)

The Deputy First Minister: My priorities for improving public transport are set out in the national transport plan, which I published on 29 March.

Broadband

Q12 Darren Millar: Will the Minister make a statement on broadband access in North Wales? OAQ(3)1459(ECT)

The Deputy First Minister: I am aware of a number of broadband not spots in north Wales, which we are working to resolve. European funding has been identified to address this issue and I expect to make an early statement on a scheme to assist in providing broadband in these difficult to reach areas.

Welsh Exports

Q13 David Melding : What measures are in place to increase the level of Welsh exports? OAQ(3)1437(ECT)

The Deputy First Minister: Support is provided via Flexible Support for Business to help companies in Wales to internationalise. Designed to develop the capacity and capability of Welsh companies to trade internationally and to help create new exporters, the support includes a five-year, £13.9 million ERDF funded programme for west Wales and the Valleys.

Rail Travel

Q14 Sandy Mewies Will the Minister make a statement on support for rail travel in north Wales? OAQ(3)1458(ECT)

The Deputy First Minister: My priorities for supporting rail travel in north Wales are set out in the national transport plan. These include commitments to improve the reliability, quality and speed of north-south rail links.

Town Centres

Q15 Paul Davies: Will the Minister make a statement on what the Welsh Assembly Government is doing to support local economies in relation to town centres? OAQ(3)1465(ECT)

The Deputy First Minister: The Welsh Assembly Government is creating a framework for job creation across Wales. This includes providing a range of support delivered through, for example, Flexible Support for Business, the single investment fund and south-west Workways. Improvements for small business rate relief, ensuring additional relief of up to £20 million was also announced by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government in

December.