Brunswicks’ Healthcare Review

refreshingly modern, reassuringly traditional
This week's article—Wirral Residential Care Fees
An article by Keith M Lewin discussing Wirral Council's desire to set fees for residential homes in the area.

To read now, click here

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Parliamentary Business
04.03.2013 – Select Ctte – Health Subject: Report of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry, Witness(es): Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE, Chief Executive, English National Health Service and Professor Sir Bruce Keogh KBE, NHS Medical Director, and Liz Redfern CBE, Director of Nursing, NHS South of England

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Editorial
Emily Henshaw:

“There have been many articles calling for the resignation of Sir David Nicholson over the Mid Staffs scandals but it poses the question, would sacking the ‘man with no shame’ be another knee-jerk reaction fuelled by the press?”

Having read the newspapers I believe that yes, he should hang his head in shame, be put through the mill of public scrutiny for his part in Mid Staffs, but I don't believe he should resign. Surely it would be better to keep him in the limelight and make sure he repairs the mess that was made under his not-so-watchful eye. If he resigns, I'm sure we will hear of a replacement but I doubt we will hear much more. For me a resignation may well end up with a pyrrhic victory for the people. They claim a scalp but perhaps not much more. I gather he knows where too many political bodies are buried – which means many politicians will want to keep him exactly where he is.”

Andrew Dawson

“If Sir David Nicholson isn’t accountable for what has happened then who is? Whilst it would be tempting to find a politician from the last Labour Government who should carry the can – that ‘scapegoat minister’ is already out of office – and in any event wasn’t responsible for the monumental failure to provide proper compassionate care in Mid Staffs (or indeed elsewhere). I know our system seeks to make politicians accountable and tends to hide and protect our civil servants but I think this convention has to end – and more particularly end here.

I see him very like Pontius Pilate – whose own monumental inaction and failure to secure justice has also echoed down the years. Nicholson’s denials during the scandal and the efforts to silence whistleblowers suggests the prime motivation of the NHS bureaucracy was to protect itself – at the expense of and heedless of its core role to provide proper and compassionate care. He as leader, should of course be held accountable for this outrageous state of affairs.”

On a lighter note...

Keith wishes to thank everyone for all the good wishes he and Judith have received. He is making good progress following his operation last week and is certainly well enough to continue issuing orders as we all know here!
If you currently get this Brunswicks' Healthcare Review from someone else and would prefer to get your own copy, sent directly at no cost - please email us with a request. Our contact details are on the last page of this issue. Thank you.
Abuse/Dignity
Nothing to report

Business News
Nothing to report

Care Homes

1. 'Forgotten scandal' of mediocre care homes
26 February 2013 – Telegraph
A study by the Alzheimer’s Society and the King’s Fund has found that elderly people with dementia are enduring a “forgotten scandal” of mediocre care in homes – with all their basic needs met but little effort to enrich their lives.

The report found that almost two thirds of relatives of people in care homes do not believe their loved-ones are enjoying a decent standard of living in the final years. It also estimated that as many as eight out of 10 people in care homes suffer from dementia or severe memory problems – far more than initially thought.


2. Care homes suffering from image problem, as media focuses on negative dementia statistics
27 February 2013 – Care Home news
The Alzheimer’s Society’s ‘Low expectations’ report has made a lot of care sector professionals think about how the public see care homes, at the same time as questioning the industry’s ability to support a quality life for an increasing number of adults diagnosed with dementia.

Data gathered by the report estimated that “in excess of 80% of residents living in care homes have dementia or significant memory problems”, meaning that the condition in its many forms – including Alzheimer’s, vascular dementia and Lewy body disease – is now without a doubt the primary concern of the sector.


3. Alzheimer’s Society report ‘Low Expectations’
26 February 2013 – SCIE
SCIE’s Chief Executive, Andrea Sutcliffe has responded to The Alzheimer’s Society’s report ‘Low Expectations’:

“The Alzheimer’s Society’s important report today confirms that the significant and rising number of people living with dementia is something we all need to care about. This could be you, your family member or friend. We should not be satisfied with low expectations. Instead we should follow the example set by the excellent services that do exist and try to make sure that these high standards of care and support are available for all - in the community, at home and in residential care.

There is a lot to do but the good news is that support, good practice examples and guidance are available to help. SCIE has a wealth of resources that can benefit the public and social care staff.

- Are you worried about someone living with dementia and want to understand future options and issues to consider? Then take a look at SCIE’s website www.findmegoodcare.co.uk which can help you take the first steps to find a good quality local service.
- Do you want to know what excellent services look like? Spend a few minutes exploring SCIE’s Social Care TV website where films like Avoiding Unnecessary Hospital Admissions, Nutritional Care and many others show how person-centred care can really improve the quality of life for people in residential care.
- Or are you working in social care and support and want to understand dementia or important issues like safeguarding better? Our Dementia Gateway and Adult Safeguarding Resource are simple, interactive ways to support staff so that they can be confident in providing excellent care.”


4. Wraxall care home report: Too few staff to meet needs
01 March 2013 – BBC News
An inspection by CQC has found that a care home for people with dementia near Bristol does not have enough staff to consistently meet people's needs.

Two members of staff were arrested last month on suspicion of assaulting and neglecting an elderly resident there.

Owner Shaw Healthcare said it took the report “extremely seriously”.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-21617143

5. Care homes and NHS need to work together
March 2013 – CMM
Researchers at the University of Hertfordshire led a
new study which says that care homes and the NHS must work more closely.

Most long term care is provided by independent care homes. The service users have the most complex needs and are the oldest and frailest of the population yet their access to NHS services is inconsistent and determined by local custom, rather than the particular needs of the user.

It is said that NHS services focus on diagnosis, treatment and support at specific times, whereas care homes prioritise on-going support and relationships that nurture a continuous review of the older person’s care.

NHS services need to see care homes as “partners in care and not just the solution to the problem of where to place older people who can no longer live at home”.

Case Reports

Law Reports

Nothing to report

Disciplinary cases

6. Rebecca Leighton: Nurse suspended for stealing drugs
27 February 2013 – BBC News
Rebecca Leighton, the nurse cleared of poisoning patients at a hospital has now been suspended for three months after admitting taking drugs from the site.

The decision was made by the Nursing and Midwifery Council after a three-day disciplinary hearing.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-21604892

9. Kettering Hospital midwife accused of changing records
25 February 2013 – BBC News
Eleanor Braithwaite, a midwife faces a disciplinary hearing after she was accused of altering the drug records of a patient.

She faces six allegations before the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

The NMC hearing is to take place at the Old Bailey in London.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-21579644

10. Doctor criticised after baby dies while in care of privatised GP service
28 February 2013 – Guardian
A coroner has ruled that the performance of a doctor treating a seven-week-old baby boy who died while in the care of the privatised out-of-hours GP service in north London was “wholly inadequate”.

Dr Muttu Shantikumar assessed the newborn baby, Axel Peanberg King, in a telephone call that lasted just one minute a few hours before he collapsed in his mother’s arms, and later made “wholly inadequate entries on the records that were clearly at odds with the evidence”, according to Dr Shirley Radcliffe, the St Pancras coroner.

Axel, previously fit and well, died having contracted a routine cold which developed into a lung infection that went untreated, despite repeated calls and visits by his parents over the course of five days to the service and their own GP.

http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/feb/28/doctor-baby-dies-privatised-gp
11. NHS trust 'deeply regrets' feeding error  
28 February 2013 – Telegraph  
Luton and Dunstable death: Care procedures improved  
28 February 2013 – BBC News  
A hospital trust has spoken of its regret with a "communication error" which resulted in a patient being fed when he should have remained "nil by mouth".

Lawyers acting for the family of John Burr, 68, said he also had a "Do Not Resuscitate" order in his hospital file, which his family had no knowledge.

Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Foundation Trust apologised unreservedly to his family.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-21613565

12. Report into surgeon Rob Jones reveals a 'catalogue of failures'  
28 February 2013 – BBC News  
A report has found that a surgeon was allowed to continue practising despite concerns over his ability.

Royal Cornwall Hospital (RCH) surgeon Rob Jones had been the subject of eight reviews and repeated complaints during his 12 year clinical practice and a review of obstetrics and gynaecology patients treated by Mr Jones found 52 suffered complications, and a further 57 were recalled for assessment.

The Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust which runs the unit has apologised.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-21606385?print=true

13. Dorset health trust apologises for failing mentally-ill patients  
01 March 2013 – BBC News  
Health officials have apologised for failing mentally ill patients at an acute ward in Dorset after a damning report was issued by CQC.

Inspectors found patients on a ward at the Forston Clinic in Charminster did not receive appropriate and safe care, patients were not protected against the risk of abuse or unlawful, excessive use of control and restraint.

Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust has made changes.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-21635586

14. Patient died after staff ignored 'nil by mouth'  
01 March 2013 – Daily Mail  
John Burr, 68 died at Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in Bedfordshire after staff ignored 'nil by mouth' instructions and then blindly followed a 'do not resuscitate' order when he choked on some food. He was left fighting for breath for three hours before he died.

15. IoS investigation: Health care agency under fire on safety  
03 March 2013 – Independent  
A GP who worked for Harmoni, England's largest independent provider of out-of-hours care, says that patients are at risk, after its doctors were criticised last week in an inquest over the death of a baby boy.

Harmoni was founded by a group of five London-based GPs in 1996. The founding quintet became millionaires last November when Harmoni was bought by Care UK in a £48m deal.


16. Indian-origin doctors claim 'inequality' in GP exams in UK  
03 March 2013 – Times of India  
A group of Indian-origin physicians has launched a legal action against the General Medical Council for doctors in the UK, alleging that the exam, which confirms a doctor has satisfactorily completed specialty training and is competent to enter independent practice, is flawed and discriminates against international trainees.

The British Association of Physicians of Indian-Origin (BAPIO) claims there a "significant difference in pass rates" between UK and international graduates, including those of Indian origin.

Their lawyers have started a legal bid against the regulator and standards body, the Royal College of General Practitioners.

Children  
17. Kaiya Blake death serious case review cites failings  
28 February 2013 – BBC News  
A report has listed failings by authorities after a mentally ill woman killed her four-year-old daughter.

Kaiya Blake's body was discovered at her home in Manchester in September 2011 after being suffocated and her mother, Chantelle Blake, was detained in a mental health unit after pleading guilty to manslaughter in November.
A serious case review concluded agencies should have focused more on Kaiya’s needs rather than her mother’s needs.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-21618123

18. A new vision for children and young people
28 February 2013 – DH
Dr Dan Poulter, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health has signed a pledge which commits the Government to improving the health outcomes of children and young people to amongst the best in the world.

Many organisations have followed suit and committed to helping the next generation make healthier choices and - if they do get ill - providing them with better quality care designed around how they want their services to operate.


19. Department for Education: Children in care - Updated
February 2013 – DfE
This includes children in care and adoption performance tables, and information about the Government’s strategy for protecting and providing for children in care.

http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare

20. Ofsted inspects Northamptonshire child protection
01 March 2013 – BBC News
Ofsted is currently inspecting child protection services at Northamptonshire County Council after the regulator found a “number” of concerns.

The issues were highlighted in February’s joint inspection by bodies including the police, the CQC and the county council.

Northamptonshire County Council said it expected the findings to be published on 20.03.2013.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-21629987

Conferences & Courses
To follow next week

Consultations

21. HCPC launches consultations on standards of proficiency for chiropodists / podiatrists and prosthetists and orthotists
Consultation opens: 17 December 2012
Consultation closes: 29 March 2013
The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) has launched two consultations to invite stakeholders for their views on proposed changes to the profession-specific standards of proficiency for chiropodists / podiatrists and for prosthetists and orthotists.

The standards of proficiency are the threshold standards for safe and effective practice in the UK and also play a part in public protection. They are divided into generic standards (which apply to all of the 16 professions we regulate) and standards specific to each of the professions regulated. They are used when an individual professional applies for or renews their registration, or when concerns are raised about their competence. They are also used to approve education and training programmes.

The review of the profession-specific standards is an opportunity to make sure the standards of proficiency are relevant to each profession. No relevant or useful standards will be lost, but the language used may change to ensure the standards are appropriate and applicable to individual professions. Where it is appropriate to do so, we also aim to maintain as much consistency as possible in the standards between different professions.

These consultations will be of interest to members of these professions, as well as relevant education providers, employers, professional bodies, and those who use the services of these professions.

http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/

22. HCPC seeks views on criteria for approving Approved Mental Health Professional programmes in England
Consultation opens: 21 January 2013
Consultation closes: 19 April 2013
The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is now looking for views from stakeholders as part of a new consultation on draft criteria for approving Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) education programmes in England.

The criteria under consultation will be used to approve AMHP programmes, to check that education providers manage their programmes appropriately and to make sure that professionals who complete the AMHP training meet the necessary competencies. The draft criteria focus on the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to practise as an AMHP.

Under the Mental Health Act 1983, registered social workers, mental health and learning disabilities nurses, occupational therapists and practitioner psychologists will be able to train to become AMHPs. They exercise functions under the Act relating to decisions about individuals with mental health problems,
including the decision to apply for compulsory admission to hospital.

Once the consultation closes, the HCPC will analyse the responses and then publish a document detailing the comments received and explaining the decisions made as a result. These will be published on the HCPC website.

The HCPC hopes to publish the approved criteria in autumn 2013, with visits to AMHP programmes taking place in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years.


23. Topics for new NICE quality standards and guidance to improve the quality of social care - A consultation
Consultation opens: 01 February 2013
Consultation closes: 26 April 2013

24. Launch of consultation on legislation on indemnity insurance
22 February 2013 – DH
Consultation opens: 22 February 2013
Consultation closes: 17 May 2013
A consultation has been launched on legislation that would mean all regulated healthcare professionals have to hold indemnity or insurance to practise.

The consultation is on draft regulations on the requirement for all regulated healthcare professionals to hold an insurance or indemnity arrangement as a condition of their registration with the relevant regulatory body.

The vast majority of healthcare professionals are already covered by their employer’s arrangements. In the first instance, it will be for each individual healthcare professional to assure themselves that they are covered by an insurance or indemnity arrangement appropriate to their scope of practice.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/indemnity-i/

25. NICE: Current consultations
To browse through consultations go to http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?=consultations.current

Care Quality Commission, CSSIW, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland & Healthcare Improvement Scotland

25. CQC joins forces with patients’ charity to help stamp out poor elderly care
25 February 2013 – Care Home
The CQC and the Patients Association have joined forces to ensure concerns raised by people about poor care, can be acted on quickly.

Every one of its inspectors carries an ID card with their photograph and job title on the front. You should always ask to see this and check the details. The inspectors also carry official letters of authorisation.


26. Beware bogus inspectors
26 February 2013 – SCSWIS
A warning from SCSWIS to make sure that its inspectors are who they say they are by carrying out some simple identity checks.


27. Review of home care services
27 February 2013 – CQC Newsletter
Read the results of CQC’s review into the quality of care being provided to people in their own homes.

Home care is a range of care and support programmes that aim to help people live in their own homes and maintain their independence. The number of people being cared for in their own homes is increasing and the trend is mirrored by the increased percentage of home care services that have registered with us. 16% more home care services registered with CQC in 2011/12 compared to the previous year, and this increased again by 6% in the first six months of 2012/13.

28. Registration of Managers of Domiciliary Care Agencies
28 February 2013 – CSSIW
Managers of domiciliary care agencies now need to register with the Care Council for Wales from 28.02.2013.

Domiciliary care managers will become the latest group of practitioners in Wales to have to join the Register of Social Care Workers.

The new regulations were introduced by the Welsh Government as the next stage in the professional recognition of the social care workforce.


Dementia

29. Dementia 'affects 80% of care home residents'
26 February 2013 – BBC News
The Alzheimer’s Society charity has estimated that over 320,000 of the 400,000 people living in care homes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland now have dementia or severe memory problems.

Of 2,000 adults surveyed, 70% said they would be scared about going to a home and another two-thirds felt the sector was not doing enough to tackle abuse.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-21579394

Care homes suffering from image problem, as media focuses on negative dementia statistics
27 February 2013 – Care Home news
For full report see Care Homes—item 2

Alzheimer’s Society report 'Low Expectations'
26 February 2013 – SCIE
For full report see Care Homes—item 3

30. Dementia Uncovered
27 February 2013 – NCF
This article has links to a series of films giving a voice to people living with dementia.

Dementia Uncovered is a series of 6 short films and animations, based on poetry written with people with dementia which offer a unique insight into the minds of people with dementia and have arisen from Sensory Trust’s work with care homes across Cornwall, demonstrating how outdoor activities can help to improve some of the symptoms of dementia.

http://www.nationalcareforum.org.uk/forums/forum_posts.asp?TID=5509&PN=1

31. Successful applicants announced for stage 1 of the Department’s dementia environment funding
01 March 2013 – DH
The DH has announced the successful applicants for stage 1 of the £50 million funding of capital projects to improve care environments for people with dementia.

The document gives details of the organisations and projects that have been approved to move forward and develop the stage 2 ‘committed to proceed’ applications.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/03/dementiaenvironments-2/

32. New dementia training DVD launched for homecare workers
March 2013 – CMM
Alzheimer’s Society has launched a training resource to help homecare workers provide excellent person-centred support for people with dementia who are living at home. The DVD features people with dementia with their family members and those who care for them and demonstrates how person-centred care can really make a difference.

Ireland, Scotland & Wales

Ireland

33. Health department pays private healthcare firms £130m
25 February 2013 – BBC News
Northern Ireland’s department of health has paid private healthcare companies around £130m in the past three years.

One Belfast-based company has received over £44m of that total.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk/northern-ireland-21550443

34. Life-saving drug not administered by two NI health trusts
26 February 2013 – BBC News
Two of NI’s health trusts have not distributed a potentially life-saving drug, in spite of it being available to them since July 2012.

Naloxone temporarily reverses the effects of heroin overdose, allowing more time for emergency treatment.

The Public Health Agency bought 500 packs of the drug, at a cost of £8,345, and made it available in July 2012, but neither the Belfast Trust nor the South-Eastern Trust have distributed it to addicts at risk of overdose as yet.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk/northern-ireland-21579621
35. Health department pays private healthcare firms £130m
26 February 2013 – BBC News
It has been revealed that the Northern Ireland department of health has paid private healthcare companies around £130m in the past three years.

One Belfast-based company received over £44m of that total.

Using private companies allows patients to be seen sooner and means that health trusts meet Government targets.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-21550443

36. Antrim Area Hospital A&E failing to meet targets
27 February 2013 – BBC News
Figures obtained by the BBC shows that the A&E department at Antrim Area Hospital is still not meeting its targets.

They show regular breaches of waiting time targets. Last week, 100 patients waited 12 hours or more before being admitted.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-21597442

Scotland
37. New questions over Sturgeon’s role in waiting-list scandal
25 February 2013 – Times
The SNP Government has been accused of a “cover-up culture” in the NHS while it faces fresh questions over Nicola Sturgeon’s role in the growing scandal over hospital waiting lists.

It was claimed that health inspectors diluted a damning report into Ninewells Hospital in Dundee, which prompted Labour to accuse the NHS of hiding the truth.


38. NHS patient data 'showed warning signs'
27 February 2013 – BBC News
A report has said that health boards and the Scottish Government should have heeded warning signs of problems with patient waiting lists.

Caroline Gardner said that an increase in the practice of patients being marked "unavailable" for treatment, "should have rung warning bells".

The Scottish government said action had been taken to tackle the problems.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-21604644

Wales
Nothing to report

Learning Disabilities
39. Newspaper launched for people with learning disabilities
March 2013 – CMM
Easy News is the first newspaper created to give people with learning disabilities the news in a format which is designed with them in mind.

Legislation Update

40. The National Health Service (Primary Dental Services) (Miscellaneous Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2013
26 February 2013 – OPSI

41. The National Health Service (Primary Medical Services) (Miscellaneous Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2013
26 February 2013 – OPSI

42. The National Health Service (Performers Lists) (England) Regulations 2013
26 February 2013 – OPSI
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/335/contents/made

Mental Capacity
Nothing to report

Mental Health
Nothing to report

Miscellaneous
43. Regulations for controlled drugs in the community: response to consultation
25 February 213 – DH
Response to the consultation summarising the comments and views received by the DH concerning the overall governance of controlled drugs in the community. It outlines what changes have been made to the
Controlled Drugs (Supervision of Management and Use) Regulations 2006 as a result of that consultation. There were 93 comments received in total. [http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/controlled-drugs-response/]

44. Final response to Red Tape Challenge on controlled drugs regulation
25 February 213 – DH
The DH’s final response to the Red Tape Challenge has been published. The department’s draft response to the comments it received was included in its consultation on changes to the regulations for controlled drugs in the community. [http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/response-rtc/]

45. Information about controlled drugs regulations
25 February 213 – DH
Additional information about the changes made to the controlled drugs regulations, which come into effect on 01.04.2013 and which promote good governance concerning the safe management and use of controlled drugs in England and Scotland, has been published. [http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/cd-regulations/]

46. Extra £2.7m for NHS dentistry
25 February 2013 – MK-News
An extra £2.7m in funding is available to help NHS dentists across Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire.

The DH has launched a £30m boost for NHS dentists across the country, and NHS Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire will receive nearly 10% of this money.

The exact amount, £2,746,000, will help 26,000 new patients visit and seek treatment by April next year. [http://www.mk-news.co.uk/News/Extra-27m-for-NHS-dentistry-20130225162931.htm]

47. New GMC guidance
26 February 2013 – DH
The GMC has published new guidance for doctors about safe prescribing and on handling allegations of assisting suicide.

The guidance came into force on 25.02.2013. [http://gp.dh.gov.uk/2013/02/new-gmc-guidance/]

48. The drug that’s harmed more children than Thalidomide
26 February 2013 – Daily Mail
Campaigners and researchers say that of the 48,000 children born to mothers in the UK who have taken the drug Epilim – which controls electrical activity in the brain to halt seizures – 40% have developed physical and mental problems.

49. Data fears over septicaemia deaths at Royal Bolton Hospital
27 February 2013 – BBC News
An investigation is currently under way into unusually high numbers of septicaemia deaths at the Royal Bolton Hospital.

Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) confirmed the trust recorded 800 cases from March 2011 to April 2012, four times higher than a trust similar in size would expect, according to Bolton CCG. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-21600440]

50. South East GPs criticised for phone number charges
27 February 2013 – BBC News
Dozens of GPs in the South East have come under fire for having 084 numbers, causing some patients to pay more to call their doctor.

Pressure group Fair Telecoms Campaign, said there were 28 surgeries in Sussex and 27 in Kent, with an 084 number and these can lead to callers paying more than an 01 number, despite Government advice against this.

NHS Sussex said some GPs were tied into contracts for the numbers but NHS Kent and Medway support a ban. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-21607607]

51. Doctor jobs 'revoked' after test error
27 February 2013 – BBC News
Medical graduates who were offered positions have had their job offers revoked after mistakes were uncovered in the marking process for one of their exams.

The UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO) said it has to now re-mark one of the tests involved as the process for electronically scanning the Situational Judgement Test (SJT) answer sheets was found to be flawed.

UKFPO said it may take until 08.03.2013 to compile the final results.

The problem affected all UK applicants who took part in Foundation Doctor training.

The problem is thought to affect 7,540 graduates across the UK. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-21605982]

52. Family sell hero pilot’s medals to pay for care
27 February 2013 – The Times
The family of the Royal Air Force’s most successful night fighter pilot are having to sell his medals to pay for his nursing home care. Wing Commander Bran-
some “Branse” Burbridge was twice awarded the Distinguished Service Order and Distinguished Flying Cross for his bravery.

53. CQC confirms decision to close two GP practices
28 February 2013 – Pulse Today
The CQC has refused registration for two practices, which look set to close on 01.04.2013.

The commission issued closure notices to the practices in January to inform them they proposed to refuse their registration. The practices failed to submit an appeal against the closure notices within 28 days so the CQC has decided not to register them, so they will have to close on 01.04.2013.

They do have a further 28 days to submit an appeal against the decision by the CQC. http://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/practice-business/practice-topics/regulation/cqc-announces-decision-to-close-two-gp-practices/20002091.article

54. Third batch of 62 CCGs given the go-ahead
28 February 2013 – Pharma Times
Clinicians serving 42 million people in England now have the go-ahead to make decisions on the delivery of local national health services, after the third wave of clinical commissioning groups (CCG) were authorised.

The National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHSCB) has issued a green light for 62 more CCGs to plan and purchase health services for their local communities, bringing the total number approved to 163.

Six managed to sail through the process and win authorisation without conditions, but the majority failed to meet all 119 criteria for independent operation and so will need some sort of formal help to ensure they reach the standards required. http://www.pharmatimes.com/Article/13-02-26/Third_batch_of_62_CCGs_given_the_go-ahead.aspx

55. Leicester Forest East GP closure angers patients
28 February 2013 – BBC News
A Leicester GP surgery is closing, which will leave thousands of patients without a doctor's surgery.

Hunters Lodge Medical Centre in Leicester Forest East, which had 3,200 registered users, is shutting as the GP who co-owns the site is retiring.

Some patients complained they were only given three weeks notice of the change and other surgeries were inconvenient.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-21612416

56. Liverpool Care Pathway independent review: sessions with families and carers
28 February 2013 – DH
Baroness Julia Neuberger will be holding some sessions with families and carers to listen to their experiences of the Liverpool Care Pathway for Dying Patients (LCP). Sessions have now been arranged for 20.03.2013 in Leeds and 16.05.2013 in Preston.

If anyone wishes to attend one of these sessions, they can request to do so by email to: liverpoolcare-pathwayreview@dh.gsi.gov.uk or by post to:

Liverpool Care Pathway Review
Department of Health
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NS

http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/lcp-sessions/

57. Disclosure & Barring Service - Court of Appeal ruling: an update
28 February 2013 – D&B Newsletter
Last month, the Home Office was seeking leave to appeal a Court of Appeal judgment on the disclosure of old and minor convictions. The Court found the law which requires people to disclose all previous convictions and cautions to employers is a breach of human rights. It found the current system disproportionate in dealing with historic and minor spent convictions and cautions.

The Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Justice have recently lodged an application to appeal against the judgment.

Pending the Supreme Court's decision on permission, the Court of Appeal's judgment has been temporarily suspended.

The Disclosure & Barring Service will keep you updated with the latest information on this judgment via DBS News and website.

58. Confirmation of Payment by Results arrangements for 2013-14
28 February 2013 – DH
Confirmation of the arrangements for Payment by Results (PbR) in 2013-14 is now available. The PbR road test exercise finished on 25.01.2013, and changes were made as a result of the feedback. http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/14-pbr/

59. Weekly flu information – 28 Feb 2013
28 February 2013 – DH
Estimates suggest that flu-like activity, the number of people with flu-like symptoms seeing their GP – is currently low. For week 24.02.2013, the weekly pri-
mary care consultation rate for flu-like illness in England was 15.3 per 100,000.


60. Hospitals short of staff after blunder over doctors’ exams
28 February 2013 – The Times
More than 7000 junior doctors had their placement offers withdrawn after the UK Foundation Programme Office admitted flaws in this year’s exam marking process. While students face an anxious wait, hospitals are having to find staff to fill the shifts the junior doctors were due to have filled.

61. Facebook, Google and Amazon join fight against cancer
01 March 2013 – Telegraph
Facebook, Google and Amazon have teamed up with Cancer Research UK to design a mobile game to allow members of the public to help the search for cure for cancer drugs.

The project will allow smartphone users to play to investigate vital scientific data at the same time as playing a mobile game.


62. Department seeks chair of NHS Blood and Transplant
01 March 2013 – DH
The Secretary of State for Health is looking to appoint a chair to NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT).

NHSBT is responsible for the provision of reliable, efficient supply of blood to hospitals in England, North Wales and associated services to the wider NHS. It is also the organ donation organisation for the UK, responsible for matching and allocating donated organs.

Candidates will have a track record of leading a performance driven board, experience of working as a non-executive at board level or equivalent and experience of substantial transformation in a public or private sector organisation.

The Chair will receive remuneration of up to £63,000 per annum for a time commitment of approximately 3 days per week.

The Secretary of State for Health determines the length of appointment, which will be for up to a maximum of four years.

If you require an alternative format such as Braille, large print or audio please call Holly Wainwright on 0113 254 6135 quoting the reference SP12-28.

The closing date for applications is midday on 22.03.2013.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/03/chair-nhs-blood-transplant/

63. Jeremy Monroe confirmed as Non-Executive Director of NHS Blood and Transplant
01 March 2013 – DH
Jeremy Monroe has been confirmed as a Non Executive Director of NHS Blood and Transplant.


64. Transfer of public health staff from PCTs to local authorities – pension provision post 1 April 2013
01 March 2013 – DH
Letter from the Public Health England Transition Team to Directors of Public Health and PCT HR Directors sets out the agreement on pension provision for transferring staff, ‘new starters’ post 01.04.2013 and the groups of staff to whom ongoing access to the NHS pension scheme has been agreed.

http://healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/pct-staff-pensions/

65. Further Centre Directors appointed for Public Health England
01 March 2013 – DH
Six more Centre Directors are now appointed for Public Health England.

66. Health behaviours through lifecourse: baseline report published
01 March 2013 – DH
Report commissioned by the DH and independently conducted by the market research company GfK NOP and it is a summary of the first stage of research, which was carried out in March 2012, that records how health behaviours vary across life stages.

The report is the first of a series of twice yearly surveys which track core health behaviours, their interactions and influences, and how these vary across key life stages.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/03/lifecourse-tracker/

67. Liverpool Care Pathway: fifth of doctors quesy about always telling relatives
01 March 2013 – Telegraph
A survey has found that a fifth of doctors are hesitant or even hostile to always telling relatives that they are putting a patient on the Liverpool Care Pathway.

The survey of some 563 doctors involved in end-of-life, carried out by the British Medical Journal and Channel 4, revealed a substantial minority disagree with that view.

The survey, to which doctors responded ano
70. Reforms to elderly care could still penalise you
02 March 2013 – The Times
Experts are warning that pensioners could end up paying more under the new means-testing threshold, thanks to a “perverse consequence” of how care costs are calculated.

A person who would pay the “full” amount under the current system – because they are over the means-test threshold – could pay more under new rules even when they fall below the new means-test cap.

71. CCGs partnerships with social enterprises
March 2013 – CMM
A major investment from the NHS Commissioning Board means that communities across England will receive funding to help them build partnerships between Clinical Commissioning Groups, charities, community groups and social enterprises.

72. Relatives and Residents Association launch Keys to Care
March 2013 – CMM
The Relatives and Residents Association have launched Keys to Care – a set of 13 cards on a keyring giving a durable checklist of key points to remember and actions to take in a range of situations. This practical resource is designed to provide reminders of key tasks and why they are important.

73. Inquiry into NHS death rates to ignore whistleblowers’ concerns
20 February 2013 – The Times
A Government enquiry into high death rates at 14 hospitals will not speak to staff who have blown the whistle since leaving the NHS. NHS Chiefs have said that they will encourage current members of staff to “come forward quietly” but would not look into “historical” issues.

74. Four London A&E units to shut down
20 February 2013 – The Times
Emergency services will be closed or downgraded at Ealing, Central Middlesex, Charing Cross and Hammersmith. In addition, Charing Cross hospital is to be demolished. The radical overhaul reflects the intense financial pressures facing London hospital trusts.

75. New powers to check language skills of doctors
25 February 2013 – DH
New checks will be introduced to make sure that all doctors who work for the NHS can speak English well enough to treat patients.

The checks are detailed in the Government response, published on 25.02.2013, to the House of Commons Health Committee Report ‘2012 Accountability Hearing with the General Medical Council’.

The paper gives the Government’s response to the three recommendations that were directed to the DH – two of them concerned language controls for doctors and the third focused on a right of appeal for the General Medical Council against Medical Practitioner Disciplinary Tribunal decisions.
76. Healthcare services to receive £50 million boost  
25 February 2013 – Herald  
Emergency and urgent healthcare services are to be given a £50 million overhaul to try to improve treatment times and patient care.

The Scottish Government wants to reduce the number of A&E attendances but concedes that existing trends could lead to a 13.5% increase by 2020.  

77. Royal Cornwall Hospital bed-blocking increase  
25 February 2013 – BBC News  
January saw the worst bed-blocking rates at the Royal Cornwall Hospital for four years.

A report to the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trusts Board described “exceptionally high numbers of delayed discharges of care”.

Cornwall’s Acute Care at Home service will now be extended to cover the whole of the county to ease bed pressure.  
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-21571447

78. Andrew George MP calls for an end to the NHS ‘bed-blocking crisis’  
25 February 2013 – This is Cornwall  
Andrew George, a Cornish MP says that a multi-million pound contract awarded to a private firm to run Cornwall’s cottage hospitals should be renegotiated if bed shortages cannot be sorted.


79. Mid Staffs 'could happen anywhere'  
25 February 2013 – Telegraph  
Senior doctors are warning that the Mid Staffordshire hospital scandal could happen anywhere. They say that the NHS has “lost its focus” and a change of culture is needed to ensure there is no repeat.

Hospitals are now under pressure on a “daily basis” because of increasing numbers of old people being admitted with multiple health problems, they say.  
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9892313/Mid-Staffs-could-happen-anywhere.html

80. NHS Change Day – 13 March 2013  
26 February 2013 – DH  
On 13.03.2013, NHS Change Day will be bringing together the individual creativity, energy and innovative thinking of thousands of NHS staff from across clinical and non-clinical areas, in a single day of collective action to improve care for patients, their families and carers.

Change Day is an NHS grassroots initiative devised and driven by new, young and emergent clinical and managerial leaders from primary and secondary care across the NHS in England. They want to make this call to action the single largest simultaneous improvement event in the NHS.  
http://gp.dh.gov.uk/2013/02/26/nhs-change-day-2013

81. NHS recognises that mindfulness meditation is good for depression  
26 February 2013 – Guardian  
Scientists have now discovered that mindfulness meditation can give patients control over levels of depression, anxiety and chronic pain, according to a paper published earlier this month in the journal Frontiers in Human Neuroscience.

http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/feb/26/mindfulness-meditation-depression-nhs

82. NHS Trust puts Android and Apple devices head to head  
26 February 2013 – Computer World  
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust (WWL) are all running a pilot using both Samsung Galaxy Android Tabs and Apple iPad Minis before it decides on one operating system and spends £24,000 rolling out devices across the Trust.

WWL plan to use the devices in all wards across the Trust to collect patient data to be used for the DH’s Commissioning for Quality and Innovation Payment Framework (CQUIN).  

83. Lib Dem pressure forces Jeremy Hunt to rewrite NHS provider regulations  
26 February 2013 – Guardian  
The Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, will be forced by his Liberal Democrat coalition partners to rewrite controversial regulations that prompted Labour warnings of a backdoor privatisation of the NHS.

Hours after he accused Labour of scare tactics, Government sources said Hunt was prepared to review the regulations to satisfy the Lib Dems amid fears of a fresh rebellion over health reforms at the party’s spring conference.  
http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/feb/26/jeremy-hunt-nhs-regulations-rewrite

84. Andy Burnham backs NHS boss David Nicholson  
26 February 2013 – BBC News  
Shadow Health Secretary, Andy Burnham, says that NHS boss Sir David Nicholson should remain in post.
Sir David has come under pressure to resign as chief executive of the NHS following the public inquiry into the failings at Stafford Hospital.

Mr Burnham said David Cameron had been right to defend Mr Nicholson and it was "important to see the overall context".

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21594557

85. NHS boss 'steps aside' over fears high death rates were masked
27 February 2013 – Telegraph
The head of an NHS trust has "stepped aside" after fears that staff tried to mask high mortality rates by recording the wrong cause of death for patients.

In 2011, Bolton NHS Foundation Trust recorded a large spike in septicaemia deaths – but were not included in official mortality figures – at the Royal Bolton Hospital in Greater Manchester.

During the same year, it also recorded a significant improvement in death rates and was given an award for the "most improved" trust, but a recent audit demanded by local doctors has unearthed evidence that these improvements may have been fictional.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/put-patients-first/9898427/NHS-boss-steps-aside-over-fears-high-death-rates-were-masked.html

86. Mid Staffs: culture change must happen 'immediately'
27 February 2013 – Telegraph
Robert Francis QC has called for an immediate culture change in the NHS in the wake of his public inquiry into the "disaster" at Stafford Hospital.

He said that healthcare workers should not wait for Government recommendations to implement a change of attitudes towards care in the health service.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/9898006/Mid-Staffs-culture-change-must-happen-immediately.html

87. South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation trust's chief speaks after national report on care
27 February 2013 – Gazette
A Teesside hospital trust said there are identified areas for improvement after a national report highlighting appalling patient care elsewhere in the country.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation trust's Chief Executive, Tricia Hart, said that the trust already has a "culture of putting patients first".


88. Wye Valley NHS Trust 'could be broken up'
27 February 2013 – BBC News
Managers at the Wye Valley NHS Trust say that they need to save £8.8m over 2013-14 and that the trust was too small on its own to survive. As a result, it could be taken over, broken up or privatised.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hereford-worcester-21592523

89. Data fears over septicaemia deaths at Royal Bolton Hospital
27 February 2013 – BBC News
An investigation is looking into unusually high numbers of septicaemia deaths at the Royal Bolton Hospital.

Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) confirmed the trust recorded 800 cases from March 2011 to April 2012, which is four times higher than a trust similar in size would expect.

The investigation is looking at allegations that records were altered to make the hospital's mortality rates look better.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-21600440

90. Redditch A&E could be downgraded
27 February 2013 – BBC News
The A&E department at the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch could be downgraded under plans to shake-up NHS services.

Proposals put forward by the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, mean that some A&E patients could be treated at the Worcestershire Royal. However, all three of its hospitals in Kidderminster, Worcester and Redditch will remain open.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-21609582

91. Rotherham NHS Trust IT failure delays cancer treatment
27 February 2013 – BBC News
Monitor, the NHS regulator says that failures in a new appointment system could have delayed treatment for cancer patients at Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust.

Problems have led to 5,000 missed outpatient appointments and lost Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust £1.4m.

The trust said an immediate review had been ordered and an independent expert engaged to resolve the issues.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-21599213

92. Norovirus outbreak shuts wards at Eastbourne hospital
27 February 2013 – BBC News
Two wards at a Sussex hospital have now been closed to new admissions after an outbreak of the
norovirus bug.

Visitors to Eastbourne District General Hospital have also been asked not to visit family and friends if they have suffered from symptoms of the virus.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-21802373

93. Labour is accused of suppressing reports on NHS ‘culture of fear’
28 February 2013 – Daily Mail
Labour has been accused of suppressing damning reports revealing a ‘culture of fear’ in the NHS five years ago.

Months before the Mid Staffs scandal, three independent reviews commissioned by then health minister Lord Darzi were produced by top consulting firms but were never published.

One report says “the risk of consequences to managers is much greater for not meeting expectations from above than for not meeting expectations of patients and families”, “because of the fear of what will happen if targets are not hit, it’s not uncommon for managers and clinicians to hit the target and miss the point”.

94. On day Man With No Shame faces showdown meeting...NHS hit by new hospital deaths cover-up
28 February 2013 – Daily Mail
NHS hospitals last night stood accused of fiddling figures to mask the numbers of patients dying needlessly.

Sir Bruce Keogh said “it is absolutely unacceptable for any part of the NHS to deliberately manipulate any patient information”.

Bolton Foundation Trust had one of the highest mortality rates but in 2011 figures suddenly dropped by 10 per cent and the trust was named one of about 50 with ‘lower than expected’ death rates.

95. NHS chief will face more pressure to go
28 February 2013 – The Times
Sir David Nicholson, who has been accused of presiding over a culture of bullying culture that puts NHS targets ahead of caring for patients, has been challenged to show that he has learnt the lessons of the Mid Staffordshire scandal. He has been under pressure to resign since the public enquiry.

96. The NHS closes ranks
28 February 2013 – Telegraph
Over three weeks have passed since the Francis report into the Mid Staffs hospital trust exposed the appalling standards of care that led to the premature deaths of hundreds of patients, and not a single person has accepted responsibility for this dreadful state of affairs, nor has anyone been questioned by police, let alone arrested, for what by any measure was a dereliction of duty on an unprecedented scale.

The police declined even to mount an investigation until Staffordshire’s new Police and Crime Commissioner insisted that the county constabulary took the matter seriously.
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/telegraph-view/9900213/The-NHS-closes-ranks.html

97. Hospitals plan sweeping changes to staff terms
28 February 2013 – FT.com
A group of hospital leaders have proposed sweeping changes to terms and conditions for NHS staff, which include lower sickness pay, shorter holidays and locally-set pay rates for some consultants.

The plan has been drawn up by a consortium of almost 20 hospitals in the southwest and argues the changes are needed if the health service is to meet a target set by Sir David Nicholson, NHS chief executive, to save £20bn a year by 2015.
http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0b7b4b38-81cc-11e2-b050-00144feabdec0.html#axzz2MEE6D6e47

98. Means-tested funding introduced for outpatient NHS healthcare in Runcorn and Widnes
28 February 2013 – Runcorn and Widnes Weekly News
Runcorn and Widnes residents with ongoing health problems are to be assessed to determine whether they should receive NHS funding to pay for their healthcare.

The move comes after a DH announcement last year by Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, which introduced eligibility criteria for having their services funded.

The deadline for assessment requests is 31.03.2013.

99. Scandal hit Mid Staffs 'faces being dissolved'
28 February 2013 – BBC News
Scandal-hit Mid Staffordshire NHS trust 'to be put into administration'
28 February 2013 – Independent
Scandal hit Mid Staffs 'faces being dissolved'
28 February 2013 – BBC News
The scandal-hit Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust now faces being dissolved after regulators announced the administration process was to begin.
The trust was at the centre of one of the worst scandals in NHS history after neglect and abuse led to hundreds of needless deaths from 2005 to 2008 and has also faced serious financial problems - it got a £20m bailout by Government last year.

The regulator Monitor has now decided it should be put into administration.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-21613932
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-21624407

100. Results of the 2012 NHS staff survey published
28 February 2013 – DH
The results of the 2012 NHS staff survey were published on 28.02.2013. A total of 202,000 NHS staff were invited to participate by postal questionnaire. Responses were received from 101,000 staff, a response rate of 50% (compared to 53.7% in 2010).

The results are primarily intended for use by NHS organisations to help them review and improve staff experience so that staff can provide better patient care. The CQC will use the results from the survey to monitor ongoing compliance with essential standards of quality and safety. The NHS Commissioning Board will use the results to help make better commissioning decisions. The survey will also support accountability of the Secretary of State for Health to Parliament for delivery of the NHS Constitution.

The survey results can be viewed at the National NHS Staff Survey Co-ordination Centre
http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/staff-survey-2012/

101. Doctors don’t trust their own hospitals
28 February 2013 – Telegraph
Up to two-thirds of doctors and nurses at some hospitals said that would not recommend that their family and friends are treated where they work.

The link below takes you to a chart showing the survey results for each hospital.
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9901354/Doctors-dont-trust-their-own-hospitals.html

102. NHS whistle-blowing policy in Gloucestershire is under review
28 February 2013 – This is Gloucestershire
Gloucestershire’s nurses and other NHS staff will now have to follow a new set of whistle-blowing guidelines following a review this year.

The move was made after Government warnings against NHS Trusts forming a "defensive culture".

103. NHS emergency and urgent care – 28 Feb 2013
28 February 2013 – DH
There were 32 A&E diverts in place during the week ending 24.02.2013.

An A&E divert is an agreed temporary diversion of some patients from one hospital to other A&E Departments to provide temporary respite. A divert is only undertaken as part of the local health systems’ planned and managed escalation when a hospital is under pressure.

104. Prescription charges to rise by 20p under new changes
01 March 2013 – Telegraph
NHS charges from April 2013 announced
01 March 2013 – DH
Prescription charges in England are set to rise 20p to £7.85 from 01.04.2013.

Health Minister, Earl Howe, said NHS dental charges will also increase on the same date.

In a written statement to Parliament, he said the cost of a prescription pre-payment certificate (PPC) would remain unchanged.
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9902286/ Prescription-charges-to-rise-by-20p-under-new-changes.html
http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/03/prescription-charges/

105. NHS reform 'complete waste' warning
01 March 2013 – BBC News
Dr Michael Dixon helped to draft plans to open most of the NHS in England to private firms. However, he fears it could alienate doctors and render the reforms "a complete waste of time".

He says the legislation's wording on competition must be amended or doctors could get "bogged down" in the process and distracted from patient care.

The Government insisted there was no policy to privatise NHS services.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-21625758

106. Directors at scandal-hit Staffordshire health trust quit in response to it being placed in administration
01 March 2013 – Daily Mail
Eleanor Chumley-Roberts and Dr Lyn Hulme resigned at a board meeting in protest at the Mid Staffordshire Health Trust going into administration.
107. Final deadline approaches for NHS Continuing Healthcare claims
01 March 2013 – DH
People who believe they should have an assessment of eligibility for NHS Continuing Healthcare funding are being reminded again that they should apply soon.

The DH has set a deadline of 31.03.2013, which applies to claims for previously unassessed periods of care that happened during 01.04.2011 – 31.03.2012.
http://mediacentre.dh.gov.uk/2013/03/01/final-deadline-approaches-for-nhs-continuing-healthcare-claims/

108. New licensing regime for providers of NHS services: response to consultation
01 March 2013 – DH
The DH’s response to the consultation on proposals for implementing a new licensing regime for providers of NHS services has been published.

The department received 70 responses to the consultation from a wide range of parties.
http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/03/licensing-approaches-for-nhs-continuing-healthcare-claims/

109. Ensuring fair and transparent pricing for NHS services: response to consultation
01 March 2013 – DH
The DH’s response to proposals for objecting to proposed pricing methodologies has been published.

The DH received 48 responses from various parties to the consultation to help ensure fair and transparent pricing for NHS services.
http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/03/pricing-responses/

NHS could lose 12,000 nurses by 2015, claims Labour
01 March 2013 – Nursing Times
For full report, see Nursing—Item 124

110. Survey: 63% of NHS staff would recommend care to relatives
01 March 2013 – ITV.com
Up to two thirds of doctors and nurses at some hospitals say that they would not recommend that their family and friends are treated where they work according to the result of an NHS survey.

The results varied quite a bit between different NHS organisations: Less than 40% at North Cumbria University Hospitals and United Lincolnshire Hospitals would recommend their services, compared with 94% at Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in East Grinstead, West Sussex.

The figures are based on an internal NHS survey of 101,000 staff at more than 259 NHS organisations across the country.

111. New licensing regime for providers of NHS services - Response to closed consultation
01 March 2013 – DH
The Government response to the consultation on proposals for implementing a new licensing regime for providers of NHS services has been published.
http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/03/licensing-response/

112. NHS needs staff to work harder, says boss
01 March 2013 – Telegraph
Chris Dowd, Chief Executive of Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in Dorset has been leading a group of 19 trusts - dubbed the ‘South West Consortium’ - which last year raised the deeply controversial subject of regional pay.

At the moment doctors and nurses throughout England are, like other public sector workers, paid the same no matter where they live.

The consortium dropped their regional pay plan after ministers said they were unhappy with the move, despite earlier noises from George Osborne, the Chancellor, that he wanted to end national pay rates.

The consortium is now attempting to make staff work harder by changing conditions within existing national contracts, such as the nurses’ Agenda for Change deal.
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9902866/NHS-needs-staff-to-work-harder-says-boss.html

113. Interserve starts £300m NHS Leicestershire contract
01 March 2013 – BBC News
The management of all NHS buildings and support staff across Leicestershire and Rutland has been handed over to Interserve, a private company.

Interserve signed the £300m, seven-year deal in December, with the local NHS trust saying it expected to save £100m.

Over 2,000 staff have been transferred to Interserve, which will maintain 550 buildings and deliver services such as catering and cleaning.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-21627266
114. NHS trust spent £2m keeping skilled surgeon off work
01 March 2013 – Telegraph
A tribunal has heard how an NHS trust has paid at least £2 million of taxpayers' cash to stop a highly-regarded consultant surgeon from working after management took a dislike to him.

Bernard Palmer was put on ‘gardening leave’ for almost six years, until he reached 65, and was still prevented from working despite his firm desire to do so.

Mr Palmer practised at the Lister Hospital in Stevenage, Herts, and is still subject to a ‘gagging order’ preventing him from talking about financial aspects of his case, despite winning legal victories in the High Court and at employment tribunal.

Campaigners say his case highlights how NHS trust boards can continue to throw public money at legal cases, with little external scrutiny.

Mr Palmer was originally suspended in 2003 after being accused of working outside his "area of expertise" during operations on two women with bowel obstructions.

115. Hospital hired me to fiddle death figures: Expert claims NHS ordered cover-up
01 March 2013 – Daily Mail
A whistleblower has claimed that she was hired by an NHS hospital to fiddle its shocking death rates.

Sandra Haynes Kirkbright says she was headhunted by Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust and employed as a ‘health coder’, an administrative role recording patients’ care in hospitals.

She said she was then suspended after refusing to take part in a cover-up, and even claims she was ordered not to put her concerns in writing in case they reached the Press.

The allegations were denied by the hospital.

116. Grieving families walk out in fury as the man with no shame snubs them
01 March 2013 – Daily Mail
Sir David Nicholson claims he is “very passionate about care” after declaring there is no chance he will resign.

At a meeting in Manchester senior managers backed Sir David saying he is “fundamental” to the health service.

Relatives and campaigners who had attended the meeting stormed out of the room in disgust after hearing the news.

117. No horse meat in hospital food, says Hull NHS trust
02 March 2013 – This is Hull and East Riding
The trust in charge of Hull Royal Infirmary and Castle Hill Hospital has confirmed that no food used in the hospitals has been contaminated with horse meat.

Hull East MP Karl Turner wrote to the trust asking for assurances hospital food did not contain horse.

118. NHS patients being placed on controversial ‘death pathway’ by doctors who have never previously been involved in their care
02 March 2013 – Daily Mail
Leading doctors are claiming NHS patients are being routinely placed on the controversial Liverpool Care Pathway by out-of-hours medics who are "strangers" who have never been involved in their care.

The claims are suggesting that patients are often left to die on the end-of-life regime, which involves being deprived of drugs, food and water, after doctors make decisions based on “bedside evidence” alone and without fully understanding the patients’ condition or medical history.

The Liverpool Care Pathway was designed to ease suffering in the final hours or days of those suffering a terminal illness.

119. Hospital hired me to fiddle death figures
02 March 2013 – Daily Mail
Sandra Haynes Kirkbright says she was headhunted by Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust and employed as a 'health coder', an administrative role recording patients' care in hospitals.

After concerns over the shocking number of weekend deaths, Kirkbright was offered nearly double her salary to distort mortality figures. “They wanted me to fix it. But they didn’t want me to fix it properly”. She claims the Trust hired an independent company in 2011 to advise coders how to make deaths count for less on the mortality score – though she made sure this was not acted on.
Patients were recorded to have been treated by the palliative care team, as this means the death is 'unavoidable' and doesn't therefore, affect the mortality rates. Between 2009 and 2011, Wolverhampton's death rate dropped by 13 per cent while the number of deaths recorded as 'palliative care' rose from 21.19 per cent to 20.3 per cent.

Chief Executive of the Trust “categorically” denies the allegations.

120. NHS watchdog to tackle malnutrition in hospitals
03 March 2013 – Guardian
Nearly 1,200 people have starved to death in NHS hospitals because 'nurses are too busy to feed patients'
03 March 2013 – Daily Mail
The DH has stated that it is "unacceptable" for patients to go hungry or be malnourished in hospitals. It has now increased the number of unannounced inspections by the care watchdog to tackle the issue.

The announcement was made after it was in the news that 1,165 people have starved to death in NHS hospitals over the past four years.
http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/mar/03/nhs-watchdog-malnutrition-hospitals

121. NHS 'life coach' Jayne Morris under fire for telling staff to sleep on the job
03 March 2013 – Telegraph
Jayne Morris, the health sector life coach for NHS Online, had announced that overworked employees should grab 20-minute power naps to recharge their batteries, even in the middle of the day and at work. She has since come under fire for her statement.

122. NHS surgeon who delivered Sam Cam’s daughter sued by sixty female patients 'after two decades of medical blunders'
03 March 2013 – Daily Mail
The surgeon who delivered Prime Minister David Cameron’s fourth child, Rob Jones, was allowed to continue working for more than 20 years despite the fact that concerns were raised over his performance on more than 20 occasions.

The Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust is now facing legal action from 60 female patients after a series of serious errors.

123. Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust care award finalist
03 March 2013 – This is the West Country
Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is now in the final of the national Skills for Care Accolade Awards.

The winner will be announced on 14.03.2013.

Nursing

124. NHS could lose 12,000 nurses by 2015, claims Labour
01 March 2013 – Nursing Times
An NHS Check report has indicated that the number of nurses working for the NHS is likely to fall by 12,000 by 2015.

The report, produced by Labour claims that care of the elderly is at risk as the number of nursing positions in Britain continues to decrease. The report claims there are now 4,000 fewer nurses employed by the NHS since the Coalition Government came to power in May 2010.

The analysis claims that the figure is likely to rise to 12,000 leading to staffing issues in hospitals unless action is taken.

125. Many nurses 'feel discouraged' from raising care concerns
03 March 2013 – BBC News
Nurses 'scared to raise concerns'
03 March 2013 – Telegraph
A survey has suggested that many nurses believe the NHS has a culture that discourages staff from raising concerns about patient care.

Nearly 30% of 800 nurses polled by Nursing Times magazine said being seen as a troublemaker was the biggest barrier to them speaking out and inaction by managers was cited as a barrier by 23%.

The Government said it had taken measures to support whistle-blowers and was considering further action.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-21646239
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9905459/Nurses-scared-to-raise-concerns.html
Older People

126. A robot designed to help care for elderly people has been invented at the University of Salford
26 February 2013 – BBC News
Researchers Antonio Espingardeiro, have developed a robot, and said it can help care home staff and improve residents’ quality of life.

"Carebot" P37 S65 can be programmed to remind them to take medication and exercise, answer questions and even tell them jokes.

It can also be programmed with speech therapy and object recognition exercises to help people with dementia.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-21590182

127. Fujitsu makes 'smart walking stick' to help elderly
28 February 2013 – BBC News
A walking stick with built-in sat-nav has been developed by Japanese technology giant Fujitsu.

The Next Generation Cane helps elderly people find their way, as well as monitor things such as heart rate and temperature.

Its location can also be followed online - and can be set up to send email alerts if it thinks the user may have fallen over.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-21620624

Parliament

05.03.2013 – HoC - Social care in Bradford constituency - Mr David Ward
05.03.2013 – HoL – Statement – Health and Social Care Act Procurement Regulations - Earl Howe
06.03.2013 – HoL – Short Debate – Care in the community for elderly patients - Lord Turnberg
06.03.2013 – Select Ctte – Draft Care and Support Bill Joint Committee – Subject: Private Meeting

128. Parliamentary Questions and Debate from the Past Week

The following section is produced in conjunction with specialists in health and social care, PLMR – Political Lobbying & Media Relations – www.plmr.co.uk

26 February – House of Commons – Commons debate on the Children and Families Bill (second reading). The Bill now goes to committee.

To view online, click on the following link:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130225/debtext/130225-0002.htm#stpa_o48

26 February – House of Commons – Commons debate on the inclusion of mental health care services in Clinical Commissioning Groups.

To view online, click on the following link:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130227/text/130227w0004.htm#13022881000702

01 March – House of Commons – Written answer from Care Services Minister Norman Lamb in response to a question from Andrew Griffiths (Con, Burton) on social care spending for the over 65s.

To view online, click on the following link:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130225/text/13022677000944

27 February – House of Commons – Written answer from Care Services Minister Norman Lamb in response to a question from Ian Lucas (Lab, Wrexham) on the insurance industry’s role in funding continuing care for the elderly.

To view online, click on the following link:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130227/text/1302288000291

01 March – House of Commons – Written answer from Care Services Minister Norman Lamb in response to a question from Dan Jarvis (Lab, Barnsley Central) on the effect of loneliness on the mental health of elderly people.

To view online, click on the following link:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk//pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130227/text/13022677000944

01 March – House of Commons – Written answer from Health Minister Anna Soubry in response to a question from Hazel Blears (Lab, Salford and Eccles) on dementia research spending.

To view online, click on the following link:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk//pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130227/text/13022881000702
Social Care

129. Better management and tighter regulation needed
The Equality & Human Rights Commission has welcomed a new report into home care by the CQC, and said that better management and tighter regulation of home care must continue to safeguard the rights of older people. The CQC review of 250 care agencies was carried out following the publication of the Commission’s Close to Home Inquiry report. This in-depth formal Inquiry showed that inadequacies in care had a severe impact on people.

130. ‘Senior managers are so removed, they need a telescope to see the frontline’
27 February 2013 – Community Care
Social workers are very often complaining of a gulf between senior managers and frontline staff.

131. Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care – reappointment of member and chair of audit committee
28 February 2013 – DH
Andrew Hind was re-appointed as member and chair of the audit committee of the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care for two years with effect from 01.01.2013.

132. Work on extending Personal Health Budgets begins
01 March 2013 – DH
Care and Support Minister, Norman Lamb says that more people can now benefit from personal health budgets under new plans.

133. Extent of the funding gap in London highlighted
March 2013 – CMM
London Council, supported by Ernst and Young have undertaken collaborative research on the scale of funding pressures on adult social care. Budgets have not kept pace with the growing demand for social care services and it is estimated that spending on other council services will drop by 66% by the end of the decade.

134. DH seeks views on NICE standards
March 2013 – CMM
Norman Lamb, Care and Support Minister has launched a 12 week consultation to establish a full set of NICE quality standards and guidance with an aim to improve the quality of social care.

The department is seeking ideas from care users, their families and carers, service commissioners, care providers and front line staff to help decide on future topics for NICE standards and guidance.

Workforce

135. Managing religion or belief in the workplace
The Equality & Human Rights Commission has published new guidance to help employers and employees deal with the expression of religion or belief at work. The guidance follows the European Court of Human Rights judgment in four cases about religious rights in the workplace, one of which found that an employee suffered a breach of her right to religious freedom for being told not to wear a cross at work. However, this judgment could be overturned on appeal and it could take time for domestic courts to re-interpret existing domestic law, has the potential to cause confusion. The Commission has therefore produced straightforward, expert guidance to clarify the law.
Wirral Residential Care Fees

There has been yet another twist in the story of setting of fees for residential homes in Wirral Council area. Such has been the protraction and difficulty in the process the much delayed Council vote for 2012-2013 fees, yes that's right, 2012-2013 fees, took place on 7 February 2013.

Much evidence was given to the Council about the local and national cost of care and reasonable fee levels from sources such as Laing & Buisson, Joseph Rowntree Trust, BUPA etc as well as information on local costs given to them by providers.

On the evening of the Council meeting the item on the agenda before the residential care homes vote were the terms of redundancy for Council employees. The Chief Executive of the financially hard pressed Council strongly advised the Council to pay statutory redundancy only in order to save public money. However the elected cabinet of the Council voted, against that advice, for redundancy payments of up to 54 weeks, times 1.8 and uncapped.

The next item on the agenda was the vote on residential care fee levels. The following statement was made to the Council.

“I thank the leader of the council for allowing a representative of Wirral care homes to speak to the cabinet. My name is Lawson Stebbings. I am a director of Wirral Care Home Association Ltd

“This response will be released to the press at the end of this meeting.

“Before you take a vote on the question of fees payable to residential care homes I would like to remind Councillors of one or two facts that I am sure they have been informed of by their officers. I would also like to highlight some other issues for your consideration

“His Honour Judge Raynor in the case Sefton Care association and others versus Sefton Council stated, with reference to issue of “due regard to the cost of care” the following, and I quote from the judgement

“In my view, taken as a whole, the statutory Guidance and the Agreement do not contemplate that there will be any significant imbalance between the usual cost of care and the actual cost. If a local authority consciously fixes the usual cost in a sum significantly less than actual costs, then I do not see how it could be said to be having “due regard to the actual costs of providing care” as required by paragraph 2.5.4 of the Guidance.

“On the question of lack of Council resources he said “However, having set that threshold and found that a particular person surpasses it, an authority is under an obligation to provide care and accommodation in fulfilment of its section 21 obligations (under the National Assistance 1948), which is a specific duty on the authority owed to an individual, not a target duty: lack of resources is no excuse for non-fulfilment of that obligation…”

“To the credit of the director of Wirral adult social services he reported to the cabinet of Wirral council on 2 February 2012, and I quote “Clearly the Council has a duty to set fees in line with the actual cost of care.” The current fee proposals before you do not cover the actual cost of compliant care.

“On the issue of resources there is a section in Wirral Council accounts for year 2011-2012 headed “usable reserves” which shows a balance of £147,687,000. This figure included revenue reserves of £20,817,000 which went up £5,753,000 from the previous year.

“Whilst the fees proposed for your acceptance for 2012-2013 are a modest increase on the previous year they in no way compensate for the massive reduction imposed for the year 2011-2012 by a process now deemed unlawful.

“Indeed the fees proposed for 2012-2013 are less than 2% more than 2006-2007 fees. Since 2006-2007 inflation, according to Bank of England figures, has
been 22%. Therefore in effect the current fee proposal is in real terms 20% less than 2006-2007.

“Randstad employment consultants say public sector pay has increased 15.9% since 2006. They also report that as a group Health and Social services managers have received an average increase of 21.1% and social workers 17%.

“The employees who work in good private sector care homes are amongst the kindest, most compassionate and hardworking people in the country, many of them earning minimum or near minimum wage with, at present, no pension provision above the state pension. Their work is hard and in some aspects unpleasant and distressing. Their working conditions and livelihoods will be at continuing and worsening severe risk if the council does not pay the cost of compliant care.

“Finally, the Council may not be willing to pay for compliant care. But someone will pay. Amongst the people who will pay are the people who are unable to do the most basic of human functions for themselves. These vulnerable people may pay in lack of dignity, they may pay by being abused by neglect, they may pay by being left wet, or soiled, or unwashed, or in clothes that haven’t been washed for weeks. They may pay by being left hungry or thirsty or they may pay by injury or by death, but someone will pay.”

At the conclusion of this statement and without withdrawing for consideration the cabinet of Wirral Council voted, unanimously, to accept the fee levels proposed by their officers.

It could be that in the future it will emerge that there was a tragic irony in this vote being taken one day after the publication of the report about the failings of Stafford Hospital.

Consultation has now commenced on the 2013-2014 fee level figures. Every experienced health professional will know that there is an inevitability of consequence of Councils continuing on their present course of paying less than sustainable fees for residential care. There will undoubtedly be issues of sustainable capacity which will end up with the survivors in the industry holding the market power and not the Councils. If we are all lucky that will be the only consequence. It does not however take a huge leap of imagination to endorse what Wirral Carehome Association warned in the last paragraph of their statement and agree that the distressing, and avoidable, consequences may lead to further tragedies such as Stafford.

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