

A note on the first Public Meeting hosted by the Bevan Commission

By the Chair, Professor Sir Mansel Aylward CB

I am very pleased that the Bevan Commission held its first public meeting on Wednesday 11 December 2013, at the Dragon Hotel in Swansea. I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the public who attended and participated, giving their views on the issues facing NHS Wales.

In addition to brief presentations from members of the Commission on their work so far, there was also the opportunity for members of the public to speak and give their views on what they feel the priorities for healthcare should be.

Many of those who attended had a professional interest in NHS Wales, either working for health boards and trusts, or for organisations linked to healthcare. But there were also people there whose experience of the service was that of people who used and relied on it, and their input was especially welcomed.

During the course of the evening the audience were invited to vote interactively on key issues and the results are an interesting barometer of both public perception and the public mood. The voting results acted as useful discussion starters, even though they are from a small sample of people, so are very unlikely to be representative of the wider public.

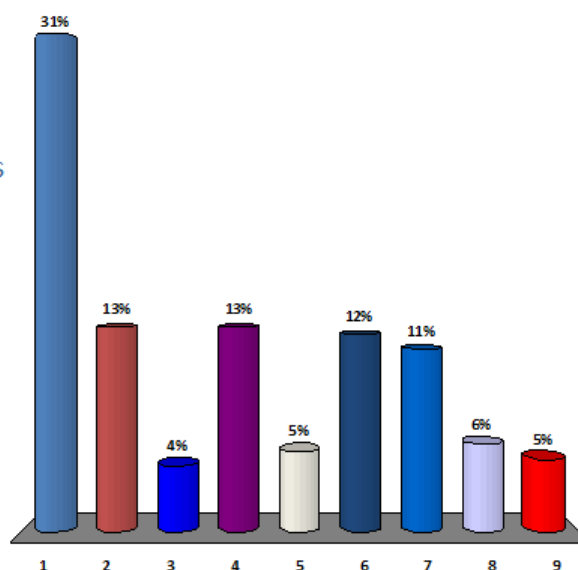
I have written this short note to put these results in the public domain, with the hope that they will elicit a response. We would welcome comments from members of the public and invite people to contact us via the website's feedback from that can be found at www.bevancommission.org/feedback

The voting results

Given financial stringencies – zero growth or even net reduction in budgets – what do you think are the key challenges facing health and well being in Wales?

Please choose **up to 3** of the following options and **rank them** in order of importance. Enter the **most important first**

1. Increasing demand – population growth, ageing, chronic conditions
2. Growing major PH challenges e.g. obesity
3. Cost of technological and medical advances
4. Increasingly high expectations of patients, professionals and the public
5. Out of hours and GP access
6. The need to communicate and engage support for change from politicians, professionals and the public
7. Imperatives to reduce health inequalities
8. Contractual and workforce constraints
9. Other challenges



Chairman's note: It seems clear from this that a third of respondents identified 'demand' as an issue. The changing demography of Wales has been well-reported, and the Bevan Commission noted it in 'Forging the Future', the Commission's report in 2011 that has informed subsequent health strategy.

Other suggestions from the audience included

- Education
- Poverty
- Mental health: Services
- Mental health: The illness and the way it's understood and dealt with
- Self care: Implementation
- Unmet need
- Use of technological advances and cost comparisons of alternative interventions (health economics)
- Improving evidence base
- Converting A&E to Trauma and Casualty Departments

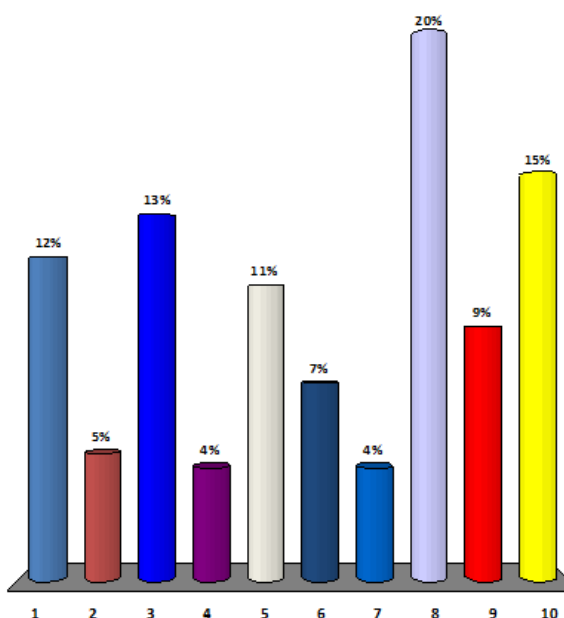
Out of Hours access is a major discussion in the political arena, but didn't figure highly in the voting.

Mental health was raised by two members of the public with quite strong statements about difficulties with current services. Given the impact of mental health problems on other aspects of a person's health, and the way this can impact on other health services, NHS Wales may want to address this.

Brainstorming possible solutions

Please choose **up to 3** of the following options and **rank them in order of importance**. Enter your **most important first**.

1. Enhance self care
2. Easier access & signposting
3. Cut acute services/invest in community
4. Informing on cost
5. Stop ineffectual services
6. Keep market out/demmedicalise
7. Politicians to DO follow evidence
8. Leadership/accountability
9. Responsive system/Patient voice
10. Health in all policies



Chairman's note: The public were then asked to work in small groups and suggest solutions. These were then voted on.

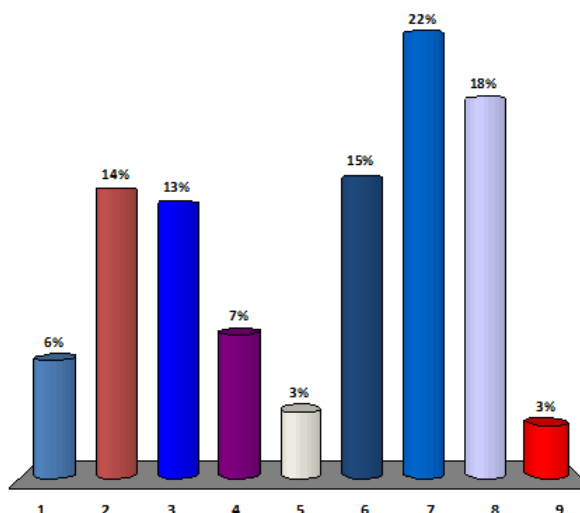
Leadership was clearly regarded as the most important solution. The group that suggested leadership defined it as a patient-centred approach with continuity and accountability.

Within the votes there is support for reorganising healthcare services and the way it is delivered (options 1, 3 and 5). This is interesting, considering the difficulties many NHS Wales organisations have faced when discussing planned changes to services with the public in the past year or so.

Potential ways of increasing income

Please choose **up to 3** of the following options and **rank them** in order of importance. Enter the **most important first**

1. Identifying opportunities to increase total budget and following up reports
2. Gaining additional resources from private sector, European funds or other national opportunities
3. Charging for some services
4. Charging co-payments to supplement service costs
5. Charging payments for those on higher incomes
6. None of the above
7. Barnett formula
8. Penny on tax
9. Reduce NHS Pension contribution



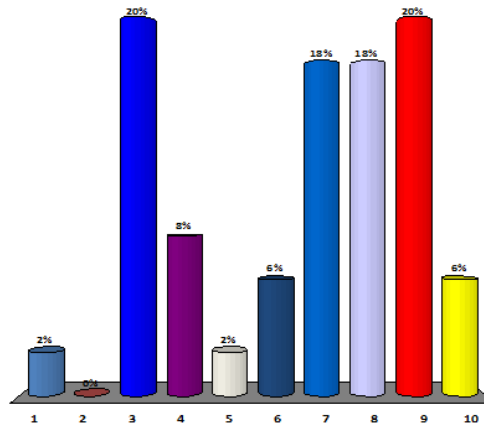
Chairman's note: this was the most controversial vote. Options 6-9 were added in on the night, but the initial voting saw option 3 – charging for some services – receive the most votes (at 22%). The votes for 3, 4 and 5 indicate that some people appear to be open to alternative ways of increasing income for the NHS, even if it is greatly prized as a hallmark of the NHS, and, indeed, reflects the original principles of Aneurin Bevan.

In this revised voting, redefining the Barnett formula that determines the amount of money apportioned to Wales by the UK government, and adding a penny to income tax that would be given straight to the NHS received the most votes. However, neither of these options are open to the Welsh Government as the Barnett formula and income tax rates are set by Westminster.

Potential ways of reducing costs: The STAFF-BASED options

Please choose **up to 3** of the following options and **rank them** in order of importance. Enter the **most important first**

1. Reduce staffing
2. Reduce pay
3. Increase productivity
4. Job sharing
5. Voluntary unpaid sabbaticals
6. Volunteers
7. Paid community workers
8. Task shifting
9. Other STAFF-BASED options
10. None of the above

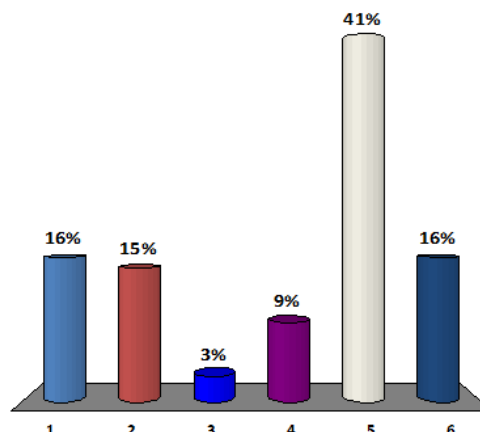


Chairman's note: the call for increased productivity perhaps indicates perceived inefficiency in the current system that could be driven out to free up much needed funds.

Potential ways of reducing costs: The SERVICE-BASED options

Please choose **up to 3** of the following options and **rank them** in order of importance. Enter the **most important first**

1. Identify lower cost options
2. Identify what can be done that is 'reasonable'
3. Cut services
4. Consolidate capital
5. Re-design/re-model services
6. Other SERVICE-BASED options



Chairman's note: the support for redesigning and remodelling services could be an indicator that people think NHS Wales should use its resources more effectively and efficiently, and perhaps current models are no longer fit for purpose.