

## **Reform of Car Parking Charges in the NHS in Wales**

**3 March 2008**

### **Edwina Hart, Minister for Health and Social Services**

This statement sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's plans to fulfil its **One Wales** commitment to reform charges for hospital parking.

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to improving the patient experience and car parking reform is an important aspect of this.

At present car parking charging policy varies across the NHS. At some sites parking is provided gratis, at some specific groups are given exemption, while at others patients, staff and visitors are charged. Facilities may be managed internally or by external contractors.

I am pleased to announce that from 1 April 2008, car parking on all NHS Trust sites is to be provided free of charge for patients, staff and visitors, unless external contracts are in place. For car parks where there are commercial contracts in place and trusts are legally bound to honour the terms of these contracts, I am requiring NHS Trusts to introduce from 1 June 2008 schemes to reduce costs for patients, staff and visitors. These schemes will remain in place until the end of their contractual commitments.

I have asked all Trusts to let me have a car parking plan by 1 May to show how they will meet the costs of the reforms, encourage green transport and manage demand.

These reforms will set in introduce a fairer and more consistent car parking policy across Wales. Over time all NHS patients, their visitors and those who care for them will not have the expense or inconvenience of car parking charges. By the end of the current Assembly Term, the vast majority of NHS sites will have free car parking for all.