

Written Questions answered between 16 and 23 March 2006

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

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

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Questions to the First Minister

Owen John Thomas: Pa drafodaethau y mae'r Prif Weinidog wedi eu cynnal â Llywodraeth San Steffan ynghylch adran 8 o'r gyfarwyddyd Ewropeaidd a hawliau pensiwn cyn weithwyr ASW? (WAQ45969) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn ateb dros dro.

Y Prif Weinidog (Rhodri Morgan): Yr wyf wedi sicrhau bod adfer hawliau pensiwn llawn i weithwyr ASW yn flaenoriaeth ac yr wyf yn parhau i gydweithio'n agos ag Undeb y Gymuned ar ran ei aelodau. Bûm yn arwain dirprwyaeth i gyfarfod â'r Ysgrifennydd Gwladol dros Waith a Phensiynau ar 12 Ionawr i drafod ystod o faterion yn ymwneud â thrafferthion yr aelodau a ohiriwyd o'r cynllun pensiwn. O ran erthygl 8, mae gerbron y llys ar hyn o bryd a byddai'n amhriodol i mi wneud sylwadau pellach ar y mater.

Owen John Thomas: What discussions has the First Minister had with the Westminster Government regarding section 8 of the European guidance and the pension entitlement of the former workers of Allied Steel and Wire? (WAQ45969) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): I have made the reinstatement of full pension rights to ASW workers a priority and have worked closely with Community Union on their behalf and will continue to do so. I led a delegation to meet the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on 12 January, when we discussed a range of issues relating to the plight of former ASW staff. In relation to article 8, this is currently before the court and it would be inappropriate for me to comment further on the matter.

Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: What support is the Welsh Assembly Government giving to the staging of the 'Jerry Springer Show' in Wales? (WAQ46196)

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): The Welsh Assembly Government is giving no support to the staging of the *Jerry Springer—The Opera* in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government provides £750,000 of revenue funding each year to support the operational costs of the Wales Millennium Centre. These funds are unrestricted. The Welsh Assembly Government does not interfere in artistic decisions of directly funded arts organisations.

Questions to the Minister for Economic Development and Transport

Michael German: With regards to the EU funds which were allocated to provide broadband to black spot areas within South Wales East, will the Minister: a) state if the contract has been awarded and b) provide a breakdown by area of when broadband provision is likely to be received? (WAQ46180)

The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies): I am pleased to confirm that I announced on 14 March that a contract has been signed with BT Group for the roll-out of the regional innovative broadband support programme. Details of the roll-out of exchange enablement have been posted to the 'Broadband Wales' website, www.wales.gov.uk.

Lisa Francis: How much money has gone to tourism projects in the south Wales Valleys and will the Minister give details of the individual projects? (WAQ46182)

Andrew Davies: Moneys awarded to tourism projects in the south Wales Valleys from 2003 to date are as follows. Unless stated otherwise, all funds have been channelled via the Wales Tourist Board.

Project	Grant (£)
Blaenau Gwent	
Beaufort Street artwork, Brynmawr	14,285
Blaenau Gwent steel regeneration package funding (Tourism—four year project)	1,150,000
Elliott Colliery winding house, Tredegar	150,000
Caerphilly	
Aber valley access programme, Caerphilly	28,056
All country parks, Caerphilly	5,600
Bryn Meadows Golf and Country Club, Caerphilly	590,000
Cwmcarn downhill mountain bike course, Caerphilly	40,000
Cwmcarn forest development project (European regional development funding—Welsh European Funding Office)	332,000
Cwmcarn forest development project (local regeneration funding)	468,000
Hengoed viaduct, Hengoed	60,000
Llancaiach Fawr Manor, Nelson	100,000
Local nature reserves, Caerphilly	10,600
Pen y Fan pond country park, Blackwood	8,800
Penyfan caravan and leisure park, Blackwood	81,865
Windsor colliery memorial, Caerphilly	5,000
Merthyr Tydfil	
Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Merthyr Tydfil	14,063
Morlais Castle Golf Club, Merthyr Tydfil	16,000
Trevithick 2004 celebrations, Merthyr Tydfil	182,091
Ynysfach engine house, Merthyr Tydfil	25,000
Neath Port Talbot	
Afan forest park tourism development (ERDF—WEFO)	70,500
Afan trails mountain biking centre, Glyncoirwg (October 2003)	58,900
Afan trails, Glyncoirwg (April 2003)	90,000
Bryn Bettws log cabins, Port Talbot	25,000
The Castle Hotel, Neath	63,000
Cilhendre Fawr Farm, Pontardawe	25,000
Cwm Bach Cottages, Neath Port Talbot	9,900
Hawdref Ganol Farm, Neath	8,000
Jones & Jones Guest House, Neath	8,395
Margam Narrow Gauge Railway, Port Talbot	108,000
Margam park and castle redevelopment (ERDF—WEFO)	1,113,000
The Queens B&B, Port Talbot	12,500
The Refreshment Rooms, Cymmer	10,000
Rhondda Cynon Taf	
Aberdare Golf Club, Aberdare	36,000
Blaen-Nant-y-Groes Farm, Aberdare	20,000
Buckleys Hotel, Aberdare	31,250
Lady Windsor cycle route, Rhondda Cynon Taf	68,000
Muni Arts Centre, Pontypridd	5,200
Valleys Kids, Tonypandy	59,000
Torfaen	

Project	Grant (£)
Blaenavon industrial landscape, core route	50,000
Blaenavon Marketing (ERDF—WEFO)	100,000
Blaenavon Marketing (Pathways to Prosperity match funding)	125,000
Blaenavon World Heritage Centre, Blaenavon	225,885
Farm interpretation scheme, Cwmbran	10,297
Garn lakes, Blaenavon	5,732
HERIAN information point network, Torfaen	50,000
Parkway Hotel and conference centre, Cwmbran	100,000
Torfaen walking and cycling route, Torfaen	20,000
Ty Shon Jacob Farm, Tranch	3,775
Heads of the Valleys	
Tourism winners networking/marketing project (Heads of the Valleys programme)	50,000
Total Funds Awarded	5,983,15450,000

Lisa Francis: How does the Assembly Government intend to directly fund the regional tourism partnerships, considering they are limited by guarantee? (WAQ46183)

Andrew Davies: The current WTB funding powers will transfer to the National Assembly for Wales on 1 April. The status quo as regards funding regional tourism partnerships will therefore remain.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on current European social fund funding shortages affecting the Workers' Educational Association, South Wales? (WAQ46185)

Andrew Davies: The Welsh European Funding Office met WEA representatives in late February and had a positive discussion on issues relating to the 'building the community' project which is currently scheduled to finish in August 2006.

The 'progression through partnership' project managed by the University of Wales, Newport is also due to finish in October 2006, and WEFO is in correspondence with the project sponsor.

Both projects are funded under priority 4, measure 3 of the Objective 1 programme. A bidding round for the remaining funds under this measure was announced on 28 February and will specifically focus on assisting existing projects which are seeking additional funding under this measure. I would encourage the project sponsors to pursue this avenue.

I understand that the Workers' Educational Association will still be able to draw down funding from Education and Learning Wales, and, following the merger, the Assembly Government, to put courses on to cover tutor costs, materials, venues and organisational costs.

Lisa Francis: When precisely will the review of regional tourism partnerships be undertaken in 2006-07? (WAQ46194)

Andrew Davies: This will be determined as part of the normal business planning process of the new department for enterprise, innovation and networks.

Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Laura Anne Jones: What action is the Minister taking to address funding shortages affecting the Workers' Educational Association, south Wales? (WAQ46186)

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): The Workers' Educational Association will still be able to draw down funding from ELWa and, from 1 April, from the Assembly Government, to put courses on to cover tutor costs, teaching materials, venues and other organisational costs.

I understand that WEFO officials met WEA representatives in late February and had a positive discussion on issues relating to 'building the community' project which is currently scheduled to finish in August 2006. The 'progression through partnership' project managed by University College of Wales, Newport, is due to finish in October 2006, and WEFO are in correspondence with the WEA about this.

Both projects are funded under priority 4, measure 3 of the Objective 1 programme. A bidding round for the remaining funds under this measure was announced on 28 February and this is specifically focused on assisting existing approved projects which are seeking additional funding under this measure. I would encourage the WEA to pursue this avenue.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside

Nick Bourne: How many hectares of Forestry Commission land were clear felled to enable the construction of Cefn Croes windfarm? (WAQ46198)

The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones): 266.8 hectares of land managed by the Forestry Commission that previously had tree cover were clear felled to enable the construction of the Cefn Croes windfarm. The majority of this felling was necessary to help optimise electricity generation, rather than for pure construction reasons.

Nick Bourne: Has any land been purchased to replace the forestry land lost to build the Cefn Croes windfarm and, if so, how many trees have been planted? (WAQ46200)

Carwyn Jones: No land has been purchased to replace the forest area on which Cefn Croes was built. However an environmental management committee was set up with a remit and a budget for environmental improvements on the land adjacent to Cefn Croes, as there are considerable biodiversity benefits to be realised from some of the deforestation.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on the status of Forestry Commission land in relation to the National Assembly? (WAQ46206)

Carwyn Jones: The land managed by the Forestry Commission in Wales is owned by the National Assembly for Wales.

All land that was once owned by the Forestry Commissioners was transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food by section 4(6) of the Forestry Act 1945. Forestry land in Wales in the ownership of MAFF was transferred to the National Assembly for Wales by section 23 of the Government of Wales Act 1998.

Laura Anne Jones: How does the Welsh Assembly Government protect the interests of the forestry industry in Wales? (WAQ46210)

Carwyn Jones: Forestry Commission Wales acts as the department for forestry in Wales on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government and is funded for its activities in Wales by WAG.

FCW protects and promotes the interests of the forestry sector by supplying around 70 per cent of the timber grown in Wales from the estate it manages on behalf of the Assembly and also provides grant aid to private woodland owners for the establishment and management of their woodlands.

FCW and the Welsh Development Agency work closely with the timber processing sector throughout Wales to provide support for their activities and information on the future availability of timber which they can use when making their future investment plans.

FCW and WDA have also supported the establishment of the Wales forest business partnership. This is an industry-led group that seeks to develop the 'world-class forest products industry' identified in the National Assembly's woodland strategy, 'Woodlands for Wales'.

Laura Anne Jones: How is the Welsh Assembly Government assisting foresters in South Wales East who will be affected by the closure of the Sudbrook Paper Mill, Monmouthshire? (WAQ46211)

Carwyn Jones: Through its department for forestry, Forestry Commission Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government is working with representatives of the forestry sector in Wales to seek alternative markets for the approximately 14,000 tonnes of timber per annum from Wales that will no longer go to this mill when it closes.

Much of this timber has already been diverted to alternative markets and FCW is working closely with the Forestry Commission in England in order to ensure that the closure of St Regis has as little impact on the forestry sector in Wales as possible.

Questions to the Finance Minister

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on compensating local authorities with University towns for the loss of council tax income through student exemption? (WAQ46184)

The Finance Minister (Sue Essex): The distribution of the revenue support grant is calculated using council taxbase information provided by councils. Councils are required to calculate their council taxbase in accordance with regulations made under section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The taxbase data provided under these regulations take account of discounts and exemptions to council tax including student exemptions.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister publish all correspondence she has issued to local authorities about the provision of child trust funds for looked-after children since 20 September 2005? (WAQ46187)

Sue Essex: I have not issued any correspondence to local authorities about the provision of child trust funds for looked-after children. Portfolio responsibility for looked after children rests with the Minister for Health and Social Services.

The Assembly is presently consulting local authorities in Wales on arrangements to set up a new CTF grant scheme from autumn 2006 to encourage local authorities to make annual contributions to the CTF accounts of certain categories of children that they look after. The consultation sets out the arrangements

for the scheme and seeks views in particular on the eligibility criteria for a contribution under the CTF/looked-after children grant.

The consultation follows an earlier consultation undertaken last August. Copies of both consultations and the guidance on CTF issued by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs are available on the Assembly's children first website—www.childrenfirst.wales.gov.uk.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Nick Bourne: Under what circumstances can a local authority in Wales refuse to disregard housing costs and council tax when calculating charges for domiciliary care? (WAQ46169)

Nick Bourne: What guidance has the Assembly Government issued to local authorities with regard to housing costs and council tax when calculating charges for domiciliary care? (WAQ46170)

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on the implementation of 'Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care and Other Non-residential Social Services' following the abandonment of its commitment to provide free home care for the disabled? (WAQ46171)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Brian Gibbons): Section 17(1) of the Health and Social Services and Social Security Adjudications Act 1983 allows local authorities to charge for specified non-residential social services. Section 17(3) provides that, in making a charge, an authority shall not require a person to pay more than it is reasonably practical for him or her to pay.

One effect of the guidance, 'Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care and Other Non-residential Social Services' is to guarantee a level of income remains for those assessed for charging. Local authorities were required to have implemented the statutory elements of the guidance by April 2004.

The advice on housing costs and council tax is provided as best practice and may be taken into account by authorities at their discretion within the overall requirement of section 17(3) of the 1983 Act.

As I said in my Cabinet statement of 15 February 2006, we will continue to keep domiciliary care charging arrangements under review, and to make reforms when there is an opportunity and as we can afford to do so.

Nick Bourne: What are the Minister's spending priorities for the money previously allocated to providing free home care for the disabled? (WAQ46172)

Brian Gibbons: My Cabinet statement of 15 February 2006 outlined a funding package for a range of initiatives to reduce the impact of charging on disabled people and to improve the quantity and quality of domiciliary care for recipients and carers. The funding previously allocated to the provision of free home care services will be used to implement the proposed changes to the statutory charging guidance, including the buffer increase, and to provide the additional support promised for carers. Support for the capital elements of the package is in addition to the revenue funding earmarked for the implementation of the policy.

Lisa Francis: What is the cost to the NHS of employing agency staff for every year since 1999? (WAQ46174)

Brian Gibbons: NHS trusts supply details of ‘agency’ costs in schedules that support their annual accounts. These schedules relate to non-NHS staff where payments are made to external agencies. The following staff categories are covered:

Medical
Dental
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff
Scientific, therapeutic and technical staff
Administrative and clerical
Health care assistants and other support staff (including ancillary)
Maintenance and works staff
Ambulance staff
Other employees

The total costs recorded in the schedules since 1999 are as follows:

	£ million
2004-05	52.8
2003-04	47.7
2002-03	38.1
2001-02	28.5
2000-01	18.1
1999-2000	12.8

Lisa Francis: How many people are employed by the Welsh NHS for each year since 1999? (WAQ46175)

Brian Gibbons: This information is readily available on the Statistics Wales website at: <http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=1275>

Lisa Francis: How many patients have been treated by the NHS in Wales for every year since 1999? (WAQ46176)

Brian Gibbons: Information can be obtained from StatsWales at <http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>. As I informed you in the answer to WAQ45369, for answer on 18 January 2006, the data on StatsWales include consultant-led hospital activity only. It does not include day cases and does not relate to all patients seen but does relate to all cases (e.g. figures may include details of the same patient who is seen more than once).

Lisa Francis: How much is spent on NHS management and what is this as a percentage of the NHS budget? (WAQ46177)

Brian Gibbons: There is no single definition of management costs that is collected on a consistent basis across all NHS organisations and the information is not therefore available in the format needed to provide a response to the question.

The published accounts of NHS trusts include a statement on management costs. Where the managerial test is:

‘Managers have a responsibility for significant resources, or have a supervisory responsibility—including the maintenance of professional standards—or perform a support function e.g. planning or personnel, rather than a clinical or operational function’.

These costs are based on a definition set out in Welsh Health Circular (WHC (2000)113) and they include posts that fall within board and corporate functions as well as certain clinical, operational and support staff (i.e. where salaries are over a current salary threshold of £28,362). Details of these costs are available in the individual published accounts of NHS trusts. There is no similar statistic published in local health board annual accounts.

Lisa Francis: How many civil servants work in the Welsh Assembly Government's health department? (WAQ46178)

Brian Gibbons: The Permanent Secretary will write to you on this matter.

Lisa Francis: How many practice nurses work in GP surgeries in Wales? (WAQ46179)

Brian Gibbons: There were 1,301 practice nurses (whole-time equivalent of 794.8) practice nurses working in GP surgeries in Wales as of 30 September 2004.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister publish all correspondence he has issued to local authorities about the provision of child trust funds for looked-after children since 20 September 2005? (WAQ46188)

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister state the number of local authorities who provide child trust funds for all the children in their care? (WAQ46189)

Leanne Wood: How many looked after children have been provided with child trust funds by local authorities since 20 September 2005 and how many looked-after children were provided with child trust funds in (a) 2004-05 and (b) 2005-06? (WAQ46190)

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister list the percentage of looked-after children who have a child trust fund by local authority area? (WAQ46191)

Leanne Wood: How much additional money has been allocated by the Welsh Assembly Government to local authorities since September 2005, to enable local authorities to provide child trust funds for all their looked-after children? (WAQ46192)

Brian Gibbons: The Assembly is presently consulting local authorities in Wales on arrangements to set up a new CTF grant scheme from autumn 2006 to encourage local authorities to make annual contributions to the CTF accounts of certain categories of children they look after. The consultation sets out the arrangements for the scheme and seeks views in particular on the eligibility criteria for a contribution under the CTF/looked-after children grant.

The consultation follows an earlier consultation undertaken last August. Copies of both consultations and the guidance on CTF issued by HM Revenue and Customs is available on the Assembly's Children First website—www.childrenfirst.wales.gov.uk

HM Revenue and Customs is responsible for child trust fund accounts. For most children, CTF accounts will have been set up by their parents. All looked-after children with a date of birth after 1 September 2002 and looked after by a local authority on 6 April 2005 should have a CTF account set up with a minimum payment of £500. When a child becomes looked after, the local authority is under a statutory duty to notify HM Revenue and Customs so that a CTF account can be set up, if one does not exist.

HM Customs do not currently publish the numbers of CTF accounts set up through local authorities or by parents, but plan to make information available later this year. We are therefore unable to confirm how

many children in Wales or in any local authority area have set up a CTF for children whom they look after.

We estimate that when the CTF grant scheme is opened on 1 September 2006, some 650 children will be immediately eligible and that around a further 200 children will become eligible each year thereafter under the proposed criteria set out in the consultation letter issued in February.

To date no additional money has been made available to local authorities to reimburse them for contributions they make to the CTF account of children they look after. The plan is to start the scheme from September this year and local authorities will be reimbursed up to £50 for contributions they make to each eligible child's CTF account. Details of the proposed grant scheme are set out in the consultation letter available on the above website.

During the debate on CTF last September, I committed to report to Assembly Members the outcomes of the consultation and the detailed arrangements for the scheme to be implemented in 2006. I intend to do this by the summer.

Lisa Francis: What percentage of Wales's working population is employed by the NHS? (WAQ46193)

Brian Gibbons: Using information in *Public Sector Trends 2005*, published by the Office for National Statistics in November last year, there were 99,400 people employed by the NHS in Wales in 2004, accounting for around 7.5 per cent of all people employed in Wales in 2004.

Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister state how much funding has been allocated to the 'Agenda for Change', broken down by each NHS trust and including the NHS Business Services Centre? (WAQ46196)

Brian Gibbons: The amounts paid to NHS trusts and the NHS Business Services Centre in 2005-06 in relation to 'Agenda for Change' are as follows:

Bro Morgannwg	£3,906,000
Cardiff and Vale	£7,479,000
Carmarthen	£1,953,000
Ceredigion	£700,000
Conway and Denbighshire	£3,194,000
Gwent	£6,887,000
North East Wales	£2,964,000
North Glamorgan	£1,837,000
North West Wales	£3,032,000
Pembrokeshire and Derwen	£1,979,000
Pontypridd and Rhondda	£2,489,000
Powys	£1,390,000
Swansea	£4,440,000
Velindre	£1,110,000
Ambulance	£12,516,000
Contracts with English Providers	£1,895,000
LHBs and Service Centres	£320,000

Jenny Randerson: Did the Welsh Assembly Government put the contract out for a study and report on free home care out to tender and if so how many tenders were received? (WAQ46197)

Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister publish the details of the instructions and remit given to Professor Bell when he was commissioned to provide a report on free home care for disabled people? (WAQ46207)

Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister provide full details of the cost of the Bell report on free home care for disabled people? (WAQ46208)

Jenny Randerson: On what date was Professor Bell appointed to produce a report on free home care? (WAQ46209)

Brian Gibbons: The contract with the University of Stirling commenced on 23 May 2005. It was awarded following a single tender departure process in accordance with the National Assembly's procurement and policy guidelines. The university was contracted to provide an independent estimate of the cost of implementing the commitment to provide free home care for disabled people in Wales. I will need to consider the request to publish details of the tender and contract specification in accordance with National Assembly's Code of Practice on Public Access to Information. I will do this and a separate response will be sent to you.

Jenny Randerson: What are the planned funding figures for 'Agenda for Change' in the NHS in Wales until 2015? (WAQ46204)

Brian Gibbons: £56.839 million has been included within the 2006-07 local health boards and Health Commission Wales revenue allocations for 'Agenda for Change'. The funding is at 2005-06 price levels, and has been included within the discretionary allocations. It is therefore part of the NHS funded baseline that attracts annual core uplifts, and it has received an uplift of 4.5 per cent for 2006-07. The funding for years from 2007-08 onwards will depend on the core uplifts provided in those years.

Jenny Randerson: What is the rate of matching and assimilation under 'Agenda for Change' broken down by each NHS trust? (WAQ46205)

Brian Gibbons: The data on rates of matching and assimilation are shown in the attached tables:

Wales—Job Matching Data:

Matching Incidents—Completed				
	#	Rank	%	Rank
Bro Morgannwg	1,267	8	79%	14
LHBs except Powys (Business Services Centre)	607	13	75%	15
Cardiff and Vale	3288	2	100%	1
Carmarthenshire	726	11	80%	13
Ceredigion and Mid Wales	579	15	100%	1
Conwy and Denbighshire	2,212	3	87%	11
Gwent Healthcare	3,389	1	91%	8
North East Wales	2,010	4	93%	7
North Glamorgan	919	10	100%	1
North West Wales	1,246	9	90%	9
Pembrokeshire and Derwen	1,331	6	99%	5
Pontypridd and Rhondda	685	12	83%	12
Powys LHB	587	14	73%	16

Swansea	1,437	5	90%	10
Velindre	1,297	7	99%	4
Welsh Ambulance Services	153	16	96%	6
All Wales	21,733		92%	

*Of Expected. From the computer aided job evaluation system and transaction summary report.

Wales—Assimilation Data:

Employees Assimilated				
	#	Rank	%	Rank
Bro Morgannwg	1,879	6	24.9%	9
LHBs except Powys (BSC)	63	15	6.0%	15
Cardiff and Vale	2,838	3	24.1%	11
Carmarthenshire	956	11	24.6%	10
Ceredigion and Mid Wales	1,248	9	88.9%	1
Conwy and Denbighshire	786	12	15.9%	12
Gwent Healthcare	5,958	1	49.6%	4
North East Wales	389	13	8.8%	14
North Glamorgan	2,197	5	74.5%	2
North West Wales	3,294	2	65.9%	3
Pembrokeshire and Derwen	1,573	7	48.5%	5
Pontypridd and Rhondda	1,476	8	36.8%	7
Powys LHB	1,047	10	43.6%	6
Swansea	2,700	4	34.2%	8
Velindre	362	14	13.9%	13
Welsh Ambulance Services	0	16	0.0%	16
All Wales	26,766		34.5%	

*As indicated on TSR, compared to headcount.

Peter Black: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to reduce the number of cancelled NHS operations? (WAQ46213)

Brian Gibbons: The current system for the collection of cancelled operations information has been running since 2002, and followed the need to collect more detailed information on reasons for cancellation. The system collects cancelled operations for all reasons—those cancelled for patient reasons, which can account for up to 50 per cent of the total, and those cancelled by the hospital for clinical or non-clinical reasons.

The National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare guide to good practice programme is a two-year programme that has been running since April 2004. It offers guidance to trusts in the effective management of their waiting lists and development of their booking systems to ensure that patients are being treated in chronological order within clinical priority. This is helping to reduce cancelled operations across Wales.

As a result of this treat-in-turn programme, trusts have adopted the clinically prioritise and treat toolkit, which involves better waiting list management, validation, the use of chronological booking and the adherence to waiting list policy regarding patients who do not or cannot attend.

Trusts are also making more widespread use of pre-operative assessments, which ensures that patients are fit for surgery and that all the arrangements are in place for the surgery itself and any aftercare, therefore reducing the risk of a cancellation.

Patient-focused booking, also a part of the guide to good practice programme, is being adopted by all trusts in Wales. It provides more certainty for the patient, therefore reducing non attendances.

Through the adoption of good practice in waiting list management, the use of pre-assessment and the closer involvement of patients in booking their surgery dates, the numbers of cancellations have fallen across Wales. This work has been further enhanced with the publication of the new edition of the guide to good practice in September 2005 and endorsed in Welsh Health Circular WHC (2005) 090.

As part of the 2006-07 service and financial framework, one of the modernisation and efficiency targets is that all NHS trusts are required to reduce those operations cancelled either on the day of the operation or day before the operation as a percentage of all scheduled operations. The delivery and support unit will assist organisations who have difficulty in achieving the target.

There is also a move towards the adoption of more protected elective capacity and an increase in daycase rates in Wales, both of which are likely to reduce the numbers of cancelled operations. Examples are the new orthopaedic unit at Llandough Hospital, the ambulatory care and diagnostics unit at Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust and the orthopaedic development at St Woolos Hospital in Gwent.

Questions to the Business Minister

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail the funding made available from the Assembly to the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association for each year since 1999? (WAQ46181)

The Business Minister (Jane Hutt): Assembly Government funding to AWEMA since 2000, when it became a registered company, is set out below:

2000-01	£24,075
2001-02	£148,417
2002-03	£206,900
2003-04	£234,972
2004-05	£38,333
2005-06	£139,548

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the expected activities on AWEMA, in return for their Assembly funding, and will he detail the service level agreement between the National Assembly and AWEMA? (WAQ46212)

Jane Hutt: The Welsh Assembly Government provides grant funding for AWEMA's activities which includes the following:

- developing good practice guidance on consultation and communication:
- devising tools which lead to the increased participation of the diverse black minority ethnic communities in Wales in all forms of public life:
- developing information and help systems to support BME communities facing discrimination:

- evaluation and measurement methods: and
- providing advice on policy formulation.

In addition to this the Assembly Government also provides funding for the AWEMA EQUAL project which aims to combat racism and xenophobia in Welsh society, particularly within the labour market.