



BREXIT AT A GLANCE...

Weekly news, views and insights from the Welsh NHS Confederation
Friday, 17 May



What Happened This Week...

While there was no business this week in the House of Commons in terms of Brexit, politics and Brexit dominated the media both in Wales and across the UK.

At a UK level work was ongoing across the Chambers with cross-party talks continuing. We saw various announcements for upcoming Brexit developments including definitive votes and MPs voting on the Withdrawal Agreement Implementation Bill the week of 3 June. After the vote Theresa May will

announce, regardless of the result of, when she will step down as Prime Minister. Triggering many party members to announce that they will run in the upcoming Conservative leadership contest.

In the Assembly there has been major changes with four former Assembly Members (AMs) who were elected for UKIP in the 2016 National Assembly Elections have now joined Nigel Farage's [Brexit Party](#) and announcing plans to form an assembly group. Mark Reckless, who was elected for UKIP in South Wales East region and then joined the Welsh Conservatives group, was chosen as the Brexit Party group leader in the Assembly. The group also includes Mandy Jones (North Wales region), Caroline Jones (South West region) and David Rowlands (South East region).

The run up to the MEP elections continues to make headlines at a Wales and UK level. Despite being such a newly formed party, the Brexit Party is already topping polls. A YouGov survey put the party on 33% of the vote for the European Parliament in Wales which would land them two seats. Labour and Plaid would pick up one apiece with 18% and 16% respectively. The elections will take place in the UK on Thursday the 23rd of May, with results being announced on Monday 27th of May after all EU28 nations' elections have been held. In light of this, we will not be releasing a Newsletter next Friday, 24th of May, but will have an **Election Special on Tuesday May 28 summarising the results and what it could mean for Wales.**

This week we continued our work in maintaining the momentum gained over the last few months. We attended the Brexit Communications meeting where we agreed to review the communications and the cascade mechanism to get messages to frontline staff. The group will now meet once a month until there is a need for communications activity to increase.

We continued to link into stakeholders across Wales and have had initial discussions around organising an event in the coming weeks to discuss the

lessons learnt for health and social care during the preparations and contingency planning for a no deal Brexit (stay tuned for details) and we have been liaising with organisations from across health and social care to have initial discussions around the Immigration White Paper and how it will impact on the workforce.

I am looking forward to providing evidence to the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee with representatives from Welsh Local Government Association and Universities Wales. The evidence session will be an opportunity to highlight the current situation in terms of Brexit preparedness, the key priorities for our members and the resources that are currently in place to prepare for Brexit.

Since both the UK Parliament and National Assembly have upcoming recesses, after the Election Special newsletter we will resume publication the first week of June once both parties are back in session.

If you have any questions about the Brexit process, please see our [FAQs](#) page for more details which have been updated today, or email any questions to brexitfaqs@welshconfed.org. Please visit [our website](#) for more information and resources on current developments.

Nesta Lloyd-Jones,
Interim Director, Welsh NHS Confederation

Welsh Government News and Guidance

[Consensus, not red lines will get us out of the Brexit mess – Jeremy Miles warns](#)

Ahead of the meeting with the Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay in Cardiff on Thursday the Counsel General and Brexit Minister Jeremy Miles warned that

the Prime Minister's plans for a vote in Parliament on Brexit legislation is the wrong approach.

For further information, please see the [Preparing Wales for a no-deal Brexit](#) website and [click here](#) for more information on Health and Social Care sector planning for a no-deal Brexit.

National Assembly News

Monday 13 May: [External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee](#)

Changes to freedom of movement after Brexit: the implications for Wales

Proposals

Professor Jonathan Portes of the King's College London highlighted the [immigration white paper](#) published by the UK Government, arguing that both Brexit and "vagueness" in the white paper cause uncertainty on immigration. He highlighted proposals in the white paper for those who come for work purposes after Brexit, noting that people would have to apply for visas under either tier one or tier two. He said the current system requires people applying for these visas to have a certain level of qualification and job offer with a salary exceeding £30,000. He argued that the changes would cause a slight increase to migrants coming from the rest of the world, earning more than £30,000 due to this simplification. He said restrictions would cause a reduction in the number of migrants coming to Wales in the next 10 years.

Impact on Sectors

Prof Portes noted the impact on the health and social care sectors and highlighted the recent fall in the number of EU-qualified nurses who have come to the UK even though they have the same rights as before Brexit. He said many in the care sector would not make the £30,000 threshold. Huw Irranca-Davies (Ogmore)(Lab) highlighted the change towards the professionalisation of the care workforce, arguing that more carers with more skills are needed with an ageing population. He called for flexibility for devolved countries with different demographics. Prof Portes said there is a case for this and that the Migration Advisory Committee took a naïve approach when they said many jobs in care can be filled by UK-born people by funding the care sector properly. Huw Irranca-Davies asked if there will be enough people to fill gaps in sectors such as health and social care. Prof Portes said there is not a trade-off between immigration and jobs, arguing that fewer immigrants does not mean more people in jobs. He said raising wages and creating better pathways into care would reduce the need for immigration.

Evidence Session with Institute for Public Policy Research, Bevan Foundation and Oxford University

Devolution of Immigration Policy

Witnesses spoke to political, social and economic arguments for the regional variation of immigration policy, saying that it could be a means of addressing skills shortages and that giving people more control over immigration could assuage concerns over its impact.

Need for Migration

Witnesses argued that the focus on need is incorrect as it suggests an

absolute number for migration. Madeline Sumption, The Migration Observatory at Oxford University said this approach is appropriate for public sector workers such as doctors, nurses and teachers but less so for the private sector, adding that the economy benefits from having a larger number of higher skilled people. The committee argued that more migration would mean a growth in the Welsh tax base, with Ms Sumption saying that productivity also matters and that altering the make-up of a given demographic could have a bigger impact on the tax base than increasing its size.

Tier 2 Visas

On the £30,000 threshold, Madeleine Sumption said this does not apply across the board saying there are arguments for and against its extension. Marley Morris, Institute for Public Policy Research said that salary and skills thresholds need to align, with all witnesses agreeing that there should be no cap, when asked if there should a release of visas for targeted sectors.

[Brexit: A new timeline](#)

The National Assembly research team have produced this new blog explaining the latest Brexit developments and what they mean for Wales. Thursday 31 October 2019 is the new Brexit deadline, the UK will take part in the EU elections and cross-party discussions on a way forward continue. For background, see the Assembly's [latest Brexit Monitoring Report](#), published on 12 April 2019.

[Voting time: Wales and the European elections](#)

On 23 May, Wales will go to the polls to elect four Members of

the [European Parliament](#) (MEPs). The latest Brexit delay means that the UK will be a member of the EU until 31 October 2019 unless an agreement to leave is agreed before then. On 7 May, [the UK Government confirmed](#) that there was not enough time to pass legislation for an agreement before 23 May and so the UK would have to take part.

News and Reports

The number of nurses and midwives working in the U.K.'s National Health Service increased by 5,169 (0.9 percent) between March 2018 and March 2019, according to stats from the Nursing & Midwifery Council Register. Since the Brexit referendum, the number of newly registered U.K. nurses and midwives has steadily increased from 19,000 to nearly 23,500 in March 2019. But the number of newly registered nurses and midwives from EEA countries plummeted from over 9,300 to 805 between March 2016 and March 2018. There is a hint of improvement, however, as there was a slight increase in EEA newcomers, to 968 in March 2019. (Source: Politico Pro)

Mark Reckless [has announced](#) that he has left the Welsh Conservative group in the National Assembly in protest over the party's handling of Brexit. Mark Reckless, Caroline Jones, Mandy Jones and David Rowlands [have confirmed](#) that they are joining the Brexit Party. They are seeking to set up an official political group in the National Assembly, which will entitle them to significant staffing resources. Conversely, UKIP, which now has only two AMs left from the seven elected in 2016, will cease to be a formal political group. There has been pressure on Presiding Officer Elin Jones to refuse the Brexit Party's request, but she is currently [considering](#) the request.

The Wales Centre for Public Policy published [the paper](#) Migration in Wales: The impact of post-Brexit policy changes. The paper discusses the likely impact

on the Welsh economy of the policies outlined in the UK Government White Paper on Migration from December 2018.

[MPs to vote on withdrawal bill in early June](#)

Theresa May is giving MPs another chance to vote on Brexit in early June - whether or not the government and Labour have reached a deal by then.

[Theresa May considering 'definitive votes' as last throw of dice to break Brexit deadlock](#)

Theresa May is moving towards holding a series of "definitive votes" on different Brexit options in a bid to break the impasse if compromise talks with [Labour](#) break down. The options could include a customs union-based Brexit, the Norway model, no-deal, a second-referendum or Remain.

[Ward closures among UK hospital contingency plans for no-deal Brexit](#)

A no-deal Brexit will severely impact hospital services and could even prompt ward closures and interruptions to children's services, according to planning documents seen by POLITICO. The internal documents, released under Freedom of Information rules in response to a request from pro-Remain organization Best for Britain, include risk assessments and contingency plans formulated by hospitals since the Brexit referendum, as well as correspondence with NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Exiting the European Union.

EU Elections:

[Wales' European election candidates clash over referendum](#)

Candidates for the European election have clashed over whether another Brexit referendum should be held. The eight main party representatives appeared on a special edition of the [Sunday Politics Wales](#) programme.

[Plaid Cymru calls for Brexit reversal in European manifesto](#)

Leaving the European Union would threaten cooperation in tackling climate change, Plaid Cymru has said.

[Welsh Lib Dems 'are the party of Remain'](#)

The Welsh Liberal Democrats will launch their campaign for the European parliamentary elections later. Lead candidate Sam Bennett said Brexit would leave Wales poorer, less free and less able to shape its own destiny.

Negotiations:

[PM's negotiator to explore changes to future EU relations](#)

The prime minister's chief Brexit negotiator, Olly Robbins, is travelling to Brussels to discuss changes to the political declaration on the UK's future relationship with the EU.

[Watson and Starmer push for second referendum](#)

Brexit pressure on Jeremy Corbyn is intensifying. Two senior Labour frontbenchers - Tom Watson and Sir Keir Starmer - are demanding he agree to a second referendum.

[Cross-party deal must include confirmatory vote - Sir Keir Starmer](#)

A cross-party Brexit deal will not get through Parliament unless it is subject to a confirmatory public vote, shadow Brexit secretary Sir Keir Starmer says.

[France will not accept repeated Brexit delays – French official](#)

PARIS (Reuters) - France will not tolerate repeated extensions of the Brexit deadline, a French presidential adviser said on Friday

Brexit Frequently Asked Questions

The Brexit FAQs were updated last week to include information on latest guidance and developments. Visit the [FAQs page](#) to get the latest version as it's updated and send in any questions to BrexitFAQs@welshconfed.org

THE WELSH NHS CONFEDERATION
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Leading Social Services in Wales



Managing Brexit / EU withdrawal in health and social care in Wales: Frequently asked questions

UK Government & NHS England Resources

Overview from Westminster

The cross-party talks resumed for yet another week, but pressure is building on both sides to bring them to an end, with the main issues being the possibility for a customs union and a second referendum or confirmatory vote. [The Prime Minister's next two steps](#) remain the same:

1. Seek to agree [a single unified approach on Brexit](#) through talks with the Official Opposition. Any jointly agreed approach would then be put before the House of Commons for a vote.
2. If these talks do not succeed, the Prime Minister, in consultation with the Official Opposition, will put a small number of options for the future

relationship to the House of Commons in a series of votes (now re-branded as definitive votes).

House of Commons

Wednesday 15th May 2019: **Oral Answers to Questions: Shared Prosperity Fund**

Also, on Wednesday the [Brexit Committee](#) discussed the UK's approach to managing workers' rights, state aid, tax and environmental standards after Brexit. These policy areas are often referred to collectively as 'level playing field requirements'. [The EU has been clear that it wants the UK to provide "robust guarantees" in these policy areas to ensure a level playing field as part of a future UK-EU deal.](#) The [House of Lords European Union Committee](#) questioned Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay; this is his first appearance before a select committee since the new 31 October 2019 deadline was agreed at the European Council

Guidance

[Euratom exit: quarterly update, January to March 2019](#)

Fifth quarterly update to Parliament of the government's progress on the UK's exit from the Euratom Treaty.

Nuclear materials with medical uses

The Department for Health and Social Care's (DHSC) priority is for patients to continue to have access to medicines and medical supplies, including medical radioisotopes, throughout the Brexit process and there are robust contingency plans in place.

DHSC hosted a medical radioisotope roundtable event on 21 February in

collaboration with other government departments, including the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), to engage clinical stakeholders and discuss EU exit plans.

An action from the most recent roundtable was that, with the support of the DHSC, the Royal College of Radiologists would work with specialist clinicians to review medical radioisotope suppliers' contingency plans. As a result, on 5 March guidance was published to support the management of potential implications for the NHS. We know that many services will remain unaffected and that for other services the NHS is already working closely with suppliers to minimise the impact of changes to medical radioisotope delivery times.

The Brexit page on [UK Government](#) provides information about EU Exit including the article 50 process, negotiations, and announcements about policy changes as a result of EU Exit, such as the [Prepare for EU Exit Campaign](#). [NHS England](#) Preparing for EU Exit page where you can find Guidance and correspondence, which includes [continuity of medicine supply frequently asked questions](#).

Settled Status:

[EU Settlement Scheme: community support for vulnerable citizens](#)

Organisations funded to provide support to vulnerable and at risk EU citizens applying to the EU Settlement Scheme. (Including National organisations such as Crisis UK and local organisations such as Newport Mind Association).

[EU Settlement Scheme: ID document scanner locations](#)

Locations where you can go to get your biometric ID document scanned if you do not have an Android device with near field communication (NFC). Caerphilly remains the only location in Wales to scan documents.

Looking Ahead

UK Government Whitsun recess: 23 May – 4 June 2019

Monday 20

- [External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee](#) - follow-up work on Brexit preparedness (**Nesta Lloyd-Jones, Interim Director of the Welsh NHS Confederation, will provide oral evidence**)

Wednesday 22

- A Westminster Hall debate on 'Negotiations on the UK leaving the EU during the EU extension period' has been scheduled for Wednesday 22 May 2019 from 9.30pm to 11.00am. The debate has been initiated by Julia Lopez MP.

Thursday 23

- European Parliamentary elections
- UK Government Whitsun recess

Friday 24

- UK Government Whitsun recess

Upcoming Events

As part of the NHS Confederation conference: [1.7 Brexit – What now?](#)

19th June, 11:30-12:30pm, Confed19

Chaired by Dr Layla McCay, Director of International Relations, NHS Confederation, this session will be speaking at the Confed19 Conference where she will address the most pertinent challenges, opportunities, and questions for the NHS associated with Brexit. It will provide key information, and include opportunities for interactivity with a diverse panel of experts from the Brexit Health Alliance, NHS and others. The detail of this session will be directed by the evolving political situation, ensuring that the session provides the most current view. To book please [click here](#).



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