

“Bovine TB at ten year low, but we must work together to eliminate disease” – Wales’ Chief Veterinary Officer

Speaking at NFU Cymru’s Pembrokeshire Annual General Meeting last night, the Chief Vet highlighted the progress made, with over 95% of Wales’ herds now TB free.

The Chief Vet also pointed to the increase in cattle slaughtered and stressed that although still a cause for concern, it did not reflect a worsening situation as is often reported.

Instead, the rise is due to an increase in the use of the more sensitive gamma interferon blood test and more severe interpretation of the skin test, both of which are flagging infected cattle in herds with a history of bovine TB at an earlier stage.

This increased sensitivity of testing helps to identify infection sooner and reduces the spread of the disease. The number of cattle slaughtered is expected to fall over time as a result of this approach, and as the number of infected herds continues to reduce.

The Chief Vet also highlighted the Cabinet Secretary’s position on controlling the disease in wildlife, saying an “England-style” cull had been ruled out in Wales.

The Randomised Badger Culling Trial in England showed a net reduction of 16% of new incidents of bovine TB over nine years. In Wales, the number of new incidents recorded has reduced by 47% in eight years through application of increased testing frequency, improved biosecurity and other cattle control measures alone. However, it is recognised that in a number of long term TB breakdowns the disease picture points towards a wildlife reservoir of infection.

As a result the Cabinet Secretary has proposed a measured response to controlling the disease in wildlife in Wales. Focussing on these persistent TB breakdowns, where it can be objectively proven badgers are infected, it is proposed the infected groups of badgers are trapped and humanely killed.

The Chief Veterinary Officer reported that work has already started to develop bespoke action plans for each herd, including addressing any wildlife contribution to the problem.

Speaking at the conference, Christianne Glossop said:

“We all recognise bovine TB has a significant financial and social

impact on farm businesses and the wider rural economy. While it is encouraging to see the number of new herd incidents falling, even in our highest incidence areas, I recognise this is of little comfort to the farms currently suffering a TB breakdown. This is why we are focusing our efforts on eliminating the disease in affected herds.”

“The public consultation on our proposed Refreshed Approach to TB eradication is now closed and we welcome the responses we have received. We are committed to eradicating the disease in Wales, but we cannot do this alone. It’s encouraging NFU Cymru has welcomed the plans for a regionalised approach, as this is aimed at protecting the low incidence area while bearing down on the disease elsewhere. This will help us to build on the progress made so far as we progress towards our ambition of a TB free Wales.”

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, is considering all response to the consultation on the Welsh Government’s refreshed Bovine TB Eradication Programme. The refreshed programme is expected to be published in the spring.

You simply cannot empower local government if you impoverish it – Pearce

Commenting on the LGA’s warning that local authorities face a £5.8 billion funding black hole by 2020, Teresa Pearce, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, said:

“The £5.8billion funding gap facing local councils is a damning indictment of this Government’s indifference to the fate of communities across the country. Year after year, councils have warned that the sheer scale of cuts they have been dealt will lead to a tipping point. Now, we are at that tipping point, and the Government is simply not listening.

“The scale of funding cuts that local government has endured – predicted by the IFS to be a 79% cut in direct funding by 2020 – will leave them able to only offer a threadbare service, such as the minimum statutory services in adult social care and child protection, and little else. The libraries and museums have already been closed, youth services have been cut back and all viable efficiency savings have been made.

“There is an unprecedented crisis in social care, with care providers handing contracts back to councils, 1.2 million elderly people living without the care they need and bed-blocking in the NHS at an all-time high. Yet the Government failed to provide a penny extra for social care in the Local Government Finance Settlement. The Prime Minister’s claims of “new funding for social care” amount to nothing more than pushing the numbers around in existing budgets.

“Councils, such as Surrey County Council, have been forced into the unwelcome position of holding a referendum on steep council tax rises in an attempt to plug the funding gap. But council tax rises are a short-term sticking plaster for a problem that needs long-term solutions.

“Local councils play an invaluable role in society – caring for our elderly, looking after the disabled and supporting our young people. It is local services that support, shape and enrich the communities we live in. You simply cannot empower local government if you impoverish it.”

[News story: Accelerator face-to-face meetings](#)

From:

First published:

27 January 2017

An opportunity to book a meeting with the Defence and Security Accelerator team to discuss your research idea.

The Accelerator is holding a series of 30-minute face-to-face meetings across the UK to give you the opportunity to discuss your innovative research idea in private.

Meeting slots will be announced for Newcastle shortly, while other meetings will be arranged at different locations across the year.

The Accelerator focuses on innovations which can provide advantage to defence and national security to protect the UK from its adversaries. It funds the development of suppliers’ innovative ideas and provides support through to potential application. This is through [the enduring competition or specific themed competitions](#).

Before you come to your meeting please prepare by thinking about:

- what is your research idea?

- what do you think is the military benefit? will it save time/costs, improve capability/performance/reliability? why should MOD invest in this work?
- what will your approach be? how will you structure your research?
- what will you deliver? what evidence will you produce?
- what will the impact of your research be? how will you demonstrate progress towards the claimed benefit?

The main purpose of this meeting is for you to ask questions, and most importantly, receive advice from the team, so please leave time for this during your 30 minutes.

Spaces will be on a first-come, first-served basis and an organisation should only register once.

Government response: Citizen Go's campaign about Marie Stopes International (MSI)

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The Department of Health's response to the Citizen Go campaign about Marie Stopes International (MSI).

Ministers agree that [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\) inspections and reports](#) have raised considerable concern about compliance by Marie Stopes International (MSI) clinics with requirements set by the Department of Health and the CQC.

Findings of non-compliance related both to practices in the clinics inspected and at a corporate level and were so serious that they led to the suspension of certain services provided by MSI until steps were taken to ensure that these issues had been resolved to the satisfaction of the CQC. The CQC also issued 4 warning notices to MSI in response to regulatory breaches around 'consent', 'safeguarding', 'care and treatment' and 'governance', as well as a number of 'requirement notices' to support improvement.

The CQC considered MSI to have made sufficient progress and allowed services to be resumed from 7 October 2016. The CQC continues to monitor the progress of MSI and plans to inspect its centres and UK administrative offices again

in the near future to ensure that ongoing improvements are made and maintained. The re-inspections will determine exactly how embedded the improvements have been.

The CQC has made clear that it will not hesitate to take further action, if necessary, to guarantee that MSI meets the standard of care it expects and that its patients deserve.

The Department continues to monitor the situation, with particular regard to the statutory approval responsibilities of the Secretary of State.

“Urgent action required” as Theresa May’s NHS Crisis continues – Jonathan Ashworth

New figures published today show that there were 315 cancelled urgent operations in the NHS in December, including 12 cancelled for the second or more time.

In total there were 4,093 cancelled urgent operations in 2016, up from 3779 in 2015 and 3216 in 2014.

The NHS situation report for the week ending 22 January has been published today, showing further evidence of the strain on the health service:

- 51 different trusts reported serious operational pressures at some point.
- 11 trusts registered an OPEL 4 incident – indicating that they were unable to deliver comprehensive care, with increased potential for patient care and safety to be compromised.
- 43 temporary diverts from one A&E to another to provide temporary respite.
- 18 Trusts had bed occupancy over 99 per cent.

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary, responding to the latest winter pressure data, said:

“Theresa May’s NHS crisis continues, and the problems are worse and more widespread than in previous years. By underfunding and overstressing the NHS, the Tories have pushed health services to the brink.

“Even urgent operations are now being cancelled in record numbers – 4,093 in 2016, up 27 per cent in just two years. The Prime Minister needs to explain what she’s going to do to fix this mess – not just pass the buck to local health providers. Cuts to social care have left patients stuck in hospitals across the country even when they are ready to leave, with knock on effects for those waiting for treatment.

“Urgent action is required and Labour is calling for a sustainable health and social care package to be brought forward in the March Budget, so that the NHS and its patients never have to go through a winter like this again.”