

Action Cerebral Palsy

Political & Parliamentary Monitoring

Week Commencing 14th January 2019

Last night the Government narrowly won a vote of no confidence, just 24 hours after suffering a historic defeat in the House of Commons. The rare victory for Prime Minister, Theresa May, will allow her to maintain her grip on power and remain in Number 10. On Tuesday evening, the Government lost the vote on the Prime Minister's Brexit deal by 432 to 202. The FT calculated that 118 out of 317 Conservative MPs voted against the Government.

Jeremy Corbyn's failure to pass the motion of no confidence means it is unlikely there will be a fresh election, a key demand of the Labour Party. Following her narrow victory yesterday evening, the Prime Minister invited the leaders of major parties to meet with her for talks on the way forward. In response, the Labour leader indicated that he would only meet if Mrs May was willing to guarantee that 'no deal' would not take place.

The failure to pass the Prime Minister's Brexit deal means there are few options available to Mrs May moving forward. Revoking Article 50 and remaining in the European Union would break her promise to "respect the will of the people." At the same time, there is little consensus within her own party regarding the next steps. A second referendum is supported strongly by some remainers, such as Anna Soubry, whilst other groups are calling for the UK to adopt a 'Canada+++' trading model or, indeed, leave without a trade deal at all.

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Acupoint Injection Therapy helps improve blood flow to brain

A study published in the Journal of Molecular Neuroscience shows a combination of conventional rehabilitation therapy and acupoint therapy significantly improves blood circulation in the brains of children with cerebral palsy, promoting nerve cells' growth and function recovery. Whilst 'conventional' rehabilitation methods have been successful in improving motor impairments associated with cerebral palsy, historically the effects on mental disability have been far from satisfactory.

Now, new research shows that acupoint injection therapy – where conventional and homeopathic medicine, vitamins, and supplements are injected directly into damaged tissues – has been used to treat more than 100 different disorders, including cerebral palsy. For the research, a group of 90 children were divided into three groups: those given acupoint injection therapy, those treated with conventional rehabilitation therapy, and those treated with a GM1 compound designed to promote nerve cell maturation applied under the skin.

The results showed that in those young people who has been given acupoint injection therapy has the largest increase in their mental development index score and psychomotor development index score. Additionally, children given the acupoint therapy showed a clear improvement in brain blood circulation, something which was not detected in the two other groups.

Whilst the report itself acknowledges that “further research is needed in order to discover optimal drugs and treatment methods for treating children with CP”, it will be of interest to ACP to find that a mixture of different therapies, including acupoint and conventional, provides such benefits to the brains of young people with cerebral palsy.

NHS plan 'at risk' from nurse staffing shortages, MPs warned

Health service leaders have [warned](#) that shortages of nurses in key areas like mental health, district health and community nursing risk scuppering the delivery of the 10-Year Plan for the NHS. Speaking to the Health and Social Care Select Committee, Nigel Edwards, Chief Executive of the Nuffield Trust, said that the number of nurses in particular areas had “fallen significantly behind demand”. He added that work to boost retention must begin immediately.

In 2006-07 the training and education budget was five per cent of the total HS budget, but that has since fallen to just three percent. Chris Hopson, Chief Executive of NHS Providers, said that Trusts were grappling with staffing issues on a daily basis. This, he said, was making it difficult for managers and teams to focus on the 10-Year Plan, adding “the implementation plan needs to set out a very,

very clear path about how we are going over the longer term general sufficient numbers of people to provide the extra demands placed on the service.”

Richard Murray, Chief Executive of the King’s Fund, also spoke to the Select Committee this week, and shared the concerns colleagues were airing. Regarding a solution to employment problems, Mr Murray said that health service needed to look at developing the roles of other professionals like pharmacists and physios to help take the pressure off over-stretched frontline clinicians, adding that “it is not that difficult to retrain some of those staff just to add a bit extra on so they can take on wider duties.”

This news will be of interest to Action Cerebral Palsy. Under the 10-Year Plan, the NHS foresees individuals having greater control over their own health care budget. Thus, demand on community nursing is likely to increase, and having staff in place is vital to create a responsive and efficient NHS.

Ofsted set to fail off-rolling schools

We have reported over several months the practice of off-rolling, and its impact on children and young people with special educational needs. In some cases, children deemed a “nuisance” or “distraction” have been excluded from schools, in some cases for long periods of time. The concern, as has been outlined in previous monitoring documents, is that off-rolled children are not registered at another school and thus ‘disappear’ from sight.

Now, Ofsted inspectors have been instructed that any schools that are found to have off-rolled pupils under its new framework will be judged as “inadequate”. The new framework for inspections, published by Ofsted, is set to place an increased focus on schools where pupils are removed from school rolls in order to boost exam results.

Inspectors will also be encouraged to praise schools with a “zero tolerance” policy to anti-social behaviour and those schools which punish the smallest misdemeanours. The inspectorate’s annual report for 2018 warned that 19,000 pupils were taken off school rolls between Year 10 and 11 within one year, with around half of these not reappearing on the roll of another state-funded school.

Ofsted has already compiled a list of 300 schools, which it has identified as potentially being guilty of off-rolling because of the high number of pupils moving between Years 10 and 11. Chief Inspector

Aanda Spielman has previously describe the inspectorate's plans as a "shot across the bows" of schools that are getting good results the wrong way.

Action Cerebral Palsy will welcome this news from Ofsted. Off-rolling has been used as a tool against those children with special educational needs, in most cases to improve exam results or limit the obligation the school has to that child. Whitehouse will continue to monitor education developments.