



bulletin

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bulletin is a regular update for members on the work being carried out by the Welsh NHS Confederation on their behalf. It complements Interchange Alert, published by our London office, which gives members an overview of the Confederation's work at UK-wide level. If you have any queries about either publication, please contact kevin.sullivan@welshconfed.org

Representing members' views at Westminster

On 13 July a Confederation team went to Westminster to brief MPs at the regular meeting of the Welsh Parliamentary Labour Party. We have been steadily building our links with Welsh MPs in the last few months, briefing them for example on a recent debate on the European Working Time Directive. This visit enabled us to strengthen these links with MPs from all parts of Wales. At the meeting, and informally at dinner afterwards, we were able to raise with them face-to-face some of the key issues affecting members.

In the meeting, we gave an overview of key issues including:

Waiting times – we tackled this issue head-on as it is the main concern for most MPs. We assured them that members were doing everything possible to improve waiting times, in the face of enormous service pressures and whilst having to implement fundamental changes across the NHS in Wales. We also underlined that there must be a strengthened focus on tackling the causes of waiting times, in particular chronic disease and delayed transfers of care, to release pressure on hospitals and to release capacity for elective care.

Wanless – we reiterated that members strongly support the Wanless recommendations and that there was an urgent need to redesign services to make them sustainable. We highlighted the fact that LHBs had submitted their action plans and were making headway in dealing with an enormous agenda. Given the scale and potential sensitivity of the changes under way, we said that MPs had a key role

to play in helping to get the right messages across to the public. We urged them to engage as much as possible with their local LHBs and Trusts, so that they had the full picture about the changes in their areas.

Townsend – we told MPs that whilst there is support for the principle of allocating resources on the basis of need, there is concern that the data underlying the formula must be accurate, appropriate and robust.

Our overall key message was that unprecedented changes were set to transform the face of the NHS, that MPs had a vital role to play as leaders and opinion-formers, and that the Confederation wanted to engage them as much as possible in the debate.

We have undertaken to continue briefing them on a regular basis and to meet with them again in January. We are also planning to meet Welsh MPs from other parties in the next few months so that in Westminster, as in Cardiff Bay, we are ensuring that members' views are heard right across the political spectrum.

Recent media work

After Jane Hutt's recent announcement of the new 12 month target for waiting times, we wrote to the Daily Post and the Western Mail to say that the public debate on waiting times should focus on causes as well as symptoms, and that tackling chronic disease in particular was critical. We also worked with BBC Wales to help secure coverage from north and south Wales on how the NHS is preparing for the implementation of the working time directive.



Members gather to discuss the Wanless agenda

Over 70 delegates from member organisations across Wales attended our free event on Wanless in Cardiff on 14 July, which was aimed at updating members and gauging their views, one year after the publication of the Wanless review. The programme, which was led by independent consultant Pat Oakley, allowed plenty of opportunities for members to have their say on the issues they faced in tackling Wanless and the whole host of changes under way. Jan Williams updated delegates on the implementation programme and invited comments and questions from the floor. Issues raised included where to strike the balance between the role of the national, regional and local bodies, and the critical importance of engaging clinicians and communities in change at the outset. A panel of representatives from member organisations gave their views on what's happening at the front line, with local government and clinical perspectives too. In her session, Pat Oakley described the trends which form the backdrop to the Wanless agenda, and outlined some of the key issues which boards needed to address.

We will be circulating a report of the day shortly. If you would like a copy of Pat and/or Jan's presentations, please contact us (kevin.sullivan@welshconfed.org). We are considering holding another event on Wanless in the autumn, possibly in conjunction with our partners in local government. Further details to follow.

Review of Health and Social Care website

The communications team working on the review have launched a website which gives access to key information on the review and relevant links. The address is www.wales.nhs.uk/hscr

NHS Heroes – nominations sought

We are working with The Western Mail on the "health week" that they run in August. As part of this week, they are running an NHS Heroes competition, which they describe as a chance to "reward health professionals who are making a difference". They are seeking nominations from within the service as well as from their readers, and from all parts of Wales. If you have a nomination, write to Health Editor Madeleine Brindley at madeleine.brindley@wme.co.uk or at The Western Mail, Thomson House, Havelock Street, Cardiff, CF10 1XR.

The Welsh Connection, Llandudno 25-26 November – update

Book your conference place now!

We are attracting wide-ranging interest from across NHS and from partner organisations in local government. Brochures and booking forms have been sent out to members and partners in the last fortnight. To download a brochure and booking form go to www.nhsconfed.org/wales

Book your rooms now!

Accommodation in Llandudno itself is limited, so you are strongly encouraged to book this as early as possible. All accommodation queries and bookings are via North Wales Conferences. Contacts: www.northwalesconferences.co.uk
bed.bookings@conwy.gov.uk
Fax 01492 879687

The programme starts at around 10.30 on the morning of Thursday 25th. The management awards will be running again this year. More details to follow. For further details about the conference go to www.nhsconfed.org/wales

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