



bulletin

27th SEPTEMBER 2004

ISSUE 29

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

Influencing policy – your views sought

We are currently involved in consultations on several different policy issues. We are very keen to ensure that our evidence on these issues is anchored in members' views. If you have any comments that you would like to feed in, please contact us. Likewise, if your organisation is submitting evidence, we would be grateful if you could let us have a copy for reference (kevin.sullivan@welshconfed.org).

1 Mental health bill

The amended bill, covering Wales and England, was published for Pre-Legislative Scrutiny on the 8th September. We are very keen that Welsh members' views are taken into account so we have sent out a short survey on the changes to the bill (covering areas such as tribunals and compulsion). If you have not received a copy of the survey but would like to complete it, just let us know. The deadline is Monday 4th October. We will also be setting up a virtual Expert Reference Group that will provide expert advice as the bill travels through the legislative process. If you or members of your staff are interested in joining this group please email jonathan.davies@welshconfed.org

2 Smoking in Public Places

The Welsh Assembly Government has established a committee to look at this subject, and we have been invited by the committee to give evidence. The issues we have been asked to comment on are as follows:

- Health risks of environmental smoke
- Economic impact of restrictions on smoking in public places
- The impact of a ban in reducing the prevalence of smoking
- The effectiveness of extractor fans and other ventilation equipment in removing tobacco fumes
- Human rights arguments in respect of smokers and non-smokers
- Enforcement

3 Mental Health NSF provisions for user and carer participation

We have been asked to give evidence on these provisions, which are covered in standard 2 of the NSF. Specific questions are:

- What does 'full' and 'genuine' participation mean to you/your organisation?
- What are the barriers to full and genuine user and carer participation in: the development of individual care plans; the planning, design, commissioning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of mental health services?
- How can these barriers be overcome and by whom?
- What should be the role of the different partners?
- Do people with mental health problems feel stigmatised, and if so what should be done to eliminate it?
- What examples are there of good practice in encouraging participation by users and carers?



Management committee report

At its quarterly meeting in Wrexham on 16th September, the management committee agreed amendments to the constitution of the Welsh NHS Confederation. These include a new provision for the management committee to form an executive group of two trust and two LHB members of the committee. The purpose of this group would be "to advise the Chair and Director on urgent business decisions or policy issues that need resolution between management committee meetings". The amendments to the constitution are subject to approval at our AGM which takes place during our conference in November. The committee has also agreed to circulate copies of the papers for its meetings to all members.

Supporting NEDs and NOMs

We recently met with non-executive directors and non-officer members from across the membership to discuss their needs and the ways in which the Confederation might support them. It was clear from the discussion that there is a very strong need for NEDs and NOMs to be offered more support in their increasingly demanding roles. Members also endorsed the idea that the Confederation could help deliver this support. In light of this, we will be considering how best we can meet members' needs. We are already planning sessions and networking events aimed at NEDs and NOMs at our conference, and we are also exploring options for providing a rolling programme of activity. We will be giving further details as soon as possible.

Strengthening political links

We recently met with Baroness Finlay of Llandaff and we have agreed to keep her informed of members' views on key issues. We have also offered to attend a meeting of her fellow Welsh peers in order to outline key issues facing the NHS in Wales. We are already in the process of providing this briefing to MPs from all parties. We also have a presence alongside our UK colleagues at the party conferences currently under way, which provides us with a good opportunity to brief Welsh politicians (for details contact jonathan.davies@welshconfed.org).

Briefing the BBC's agenda-setters

A key part of our work with the media is to brief them and to help shape their agenda, rather than simply respond to it. With this in mind, we met last week with senior BBC producers and editors from their radio and television output. It was an opportunity to give them an insight into the challenges facing members at a time of such

unprecedented change. We are hoping to secure other opportunities like this with the BBC and other media organisations.

"17 million reasons" – Confed highlights long-term conditions

The UK-wide Confederation is playing a leading role in a new partnership of 20 organisations who have come together to make the case for a better deal for the 17 million people in the UK living with long-term conditions (www.17millionreasons.org). The partnership has produced a manifesto which aims to influence the health debate across the UK, in the run-up to the general election. The key points according to the manifesto are that we need to:

- **start right** – by ensuring people have rapid access to expert diagnosis and needs assessment.
- **put patients in the driving seat** – with proper access to information and advice to help people make the right choices to maximise their quality of life.
- **personalise services around each individual** – with a Care Plan to ensure people have the care they need, when they need it.

In Wales we are playing our part in putting people with long-term conditions at the heart of the health agenda. We are looking at further opportunities to highlight good practice and will shortly be producing a briefing on chronic disease. If you have good examples that you wish to highlight we would be very pleased to hear from you (kevin.sullivan@welshconfed.org).

Don't forget...

Book your conference place and bed asap (if you haven't done so already)! This is already our biggest conference ever, with 250 delegates already booked. Download the booking form at www.nhsconfed.org/connecting/the_welsh_connection_2004. Rooms in Llandudno are going fast. Contact North Wales Conferences on 01492 873397 (bed.bookings@conwy.gov.uk).

Send us your award entries by 22 October. Supported by GlaxoSmithKline, the award is worth £3000 and will be presented by Rhodri Morgan. You can send as many entries per organisation as you like. Brochures have been sent out, but if you have not received one contact us (kevin.sullivan@welshconfed.org).

Further copies can be obtained from:

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CODE 001 Registered Charity no. 1090329

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