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Member's Update Issue 3 26 April 2002

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@confed.wales.nhs.uk.

Responding to the Budget and the Wanless Report

Wanless was published on the same day as the budget, and in our comments we underlined that they both recognised that there had been decades of underinvestment in the NHS. We warmly welcomed the extra resources announced by the Chancellor and the confirmation by Finance Minister Edwina Hart that the increase in the block grant would "enable the Welsh Assembly government to continue improving the quality of health care in Wales". We further note that this money will not be entering the system for over a year and that in the mean time our members will have to deal with much increased public expectations. Our key message was that there is a basic need to invest in infrastructure and capacity. This means facilities, IT and of course staff and we emphasised that investment in these areas is an investment in patient care. We also underlined that there is no quick fix. Our comments were picked up in several articles in the Western Mail, BBC News on-line, and HTV News.

NHS Plan - structures

Richard Thomas and Kevin Sullivan met with Bryan Mitchell, Director of the NHS Plan Structural Change Programme. We will be seeking ways in which the Confederation can play a constructive role in helping to ensure that the implementation process makes full use of the experience and expertise of Confederation members.

UK Council meeting feedback

GP contract - Chief executive Dr Gill Morgan highlighted the key principles for the new contract and said that she was "very pleased with the significant progress we have made". She added that members across the UK would be consulted fully about the future involvement of the Confederation in negotiations.

Budget and Wanless - Council supported the key messages about emphasising that modernisation was a long-term project requiring local freedom for managers, and calling for increased investment in social care.

GP contract members' event – Thursday 6 June

This event will take place on Thursday 6 June at the Village Hotel, junction 32 of the M4. Speakers will include Mike Farrar, head of the NHS Confederation negotiating team for the new contract, and Bob Hudson, chief executive of Gwent Health Authority. The aim of the day is to inform delegates about the framework for the new contract and provide an opportunity for questions and feedback. Member organisations are entitled to three delegate places each for this event, but on a first-come first served basis as capacity is limited. The event is free of charge. For details and to book your place contact sandra.cummings@confed.wales.nhs.uk



Welsh Confed Conference takes shape 7 - 8 November

Planning is now well under way. The conference is entitled 'The Welsh Connection 2002 - Management Learning Across Boundaries' and will be held in the Hilton Hotel in Cardiff.

We are pleased to have already secured as speakers Professor Aidan Halligan from the NHS England Modernisation Agency and Professor Michael West who is Director of Research and Professor of Organisational Psychology at Aston University. They will provide differing perspectives on ways in which learning across boundaries can benefit management. Jane Hutt, Health Minister, Ann Lloyd, Director NHS Wales, Gill Morgan, Chief Executive of the NHS Confederation and Nigel Edwards, NHS Confederation Policy Director, have all kindly accepted our invitation to speak.

A further interactive session is planned on what we can learn from our European neighbours. We are, at the time of going to press, hoping to secure the services of several chief executives from major European healthcare providers who will provide an excellent insight into the day-to-day lives of health managers in their respective countries. Publicity brochures to follow soon.

Confed influencing agenda - your views sought

We are currently planning campaigns on primary care, IT and the importance of management, in keeping with our business plan. The aim of these campaigns will be to get across our key messages to politicians, civil servants and the media, enlisting the support of other organisations where possible. Listed below are draft key messages for each of these campaigns. We are very keen to ensure that these are strongly anchored in members' views. So please contact us with any comments about the key points we should be taking forward under these headings - (kevin.sullivan@confed.wales.nhs.uk)

Primary Care

- Strengthen PC as a sector
- Invest in PC management
- Integrate PC vertically with secondary care and horizontally with non-NHS partners
- Redesign around patient
- PC team should be the building block
- PC Action Plan priorities should be: workforce, premises, IT, workload, quality

Management

- Management is essential in the NHS - this needs wider recognition
- Management increasingly includes clinicians
- The price of not investing properly in management is less effectiveness and less efficient use of resources.
- The NHS has not invested enough in management.

IT

- IT is essential to the modernisation agenda and improved patient care - as Wanless argued, the cost of **not** having modern IT infrastructure is enormous.
- A lifelong electronic health record (EHR) for every resident should be the goal.
- GPs, hospitals and community services should be linked via the NHS information highway, sharing information across existing boundaries, with remote on-line access to services reducing necessary travel and delay for patients.
- Improved IT would provide health planners and managers with the information they need to support local health improvement programmes.