



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

Raising members' concerns about service pressures

We met last week with the minister's special advisers and we underlined in the strongest terms that members were facing severe pressures and that politicians and officials needed to understand the scale and urgency of the problem. We asked for a Chatham House rules meeting with senior figures as soon as possible. This was accepted and we are now looking to set a date. Following our recent letter to the Minister spelling out the financial pressures facing the service, Nigel Towns is carrying out further work in this area at our request. We will also be raising this with the Minister when we meet with him.

Media work – defending NHS management

We wrote to the Western Mail in response to an attack on management by a disgruntled patient. Our letter was published on 12 February. We said that it was simplistic and unfair to blame management for anything that goes wrong in the NHS. We underlined that managers play a crucial role, and that without them the NHS could not function. We said that they help improve patient care, pointing to the 72 entries from our recent awards which showed how innovation by management is bringing benefits to patients.

We also commented on the survey into chief executives' pay by Incomes Data Services. We pointed out that the reason why the Welsh average was slightly higher than the English average was that Welsh trusts were bigger and provided a much wider range of services. We also said that chief executives in the NHS earn only around a quarter of their counterparts doing jobs of similar profile and responsibility in the private sector. Mike was interviewed on BBC Radio Wales and our comments were also reported elsewhere in media coverage.

Briefing – seeing the whole picture: lesser-known NHS statistics

We have just released this briefing, which aims to show how waiting times, though crucial, only reflect a small part of what the NHS does. The briefing is aimed at opinion-formers and gives a selection of lesser-known statistics which highlight the broader picture and which complement the more familiar measure of waiting times. We think this is important firstly because debate needs to be based on a full and rounded picture of what the NHS does, and secondly because specific areas (including waiting times) can only be tackled effectively if we understand how they relate to the wider picture. The briefing was sent to AMs and MPs together with the February waiting times figures on the day they were released. To see it go to www.welshconfed.org

Key statistics include:

- The complaint rate across the NHS is less than 1 in 4000 and falling.
- Wales has the lowest MRSA rate in Britain.
- One in four GP consultations relates to respiratory illness.

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Meeting with Alun Pugh

On the 7th of February we met with Alun Pugh, Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport to discuss the role of the NHS in Wales in the Health Challenge Wales programme. We impressed upon the Minister the important role that we feel the NHS has to play in both as a health provider and as the largest employer in Wales. The Minister agreed with this assessment and is keen to continue discussions with us.

Pharmacy contract – free member event

This event took place at the Millennium Stadium on 7th February, organised by the Confederation in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government. Around 40 delegates, from member organisations across Wales, attended. Speakers from the Welsh Assembly Government focused on different aspects of the implementation process, with Chris Town, who led the NHS Confederation negotiating team on the contract, giving his thoughts on the future for pharmacy. If you would like a copy of Chris's presentation please contact us: kevin.sullivan@welshconfed.org

SE Wales LHBs board day a big success

The LHBs in south-east Wales recently held a very successful event for their non-officer members, with speakers including Rhodri Morgan, Ann Lloyd and Dame Rennie Fritchie. Over 100 delegates attended the event, which was organised by the LHBs with administrative support from the Confederation. We will be discussing with members in other regions how best we can support similar initiatives they may wish to develop.

Board development work was identified by members as a priority in our recent survey. As well as supporting members' own initiatives in this area, we are also in discussions with the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare about possible joint work.

Making links with MEPs

Mike Ponton and Jonathan Davies had a very productive meeting with Jill Evans MEP on the 11th of February. Issues discussed included pan European public health issues and current European initiatives aimed at the reduction of health inequalities. It was also agreed that we would exchange relevant information and keep each other informed of local developments.

Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit

The organisation and delivery of health services can impact on the wider determinants of health in ways that are not traditionally recognised. HIA provides systematic yet flexible tools which organisations in all sectors can use. Some LHB members may already have discussed its role in relation to Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategies but it clearly has a role in wider LHB decision-making processes. The Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit provides free training and awareness raising sessions. **Contact:**

Cardiff: Alison Golby

tel: 029 2087 9161

email: golbya@cardiff.ac.uk

Wrexham: Liz Green

tel: 01978 313664

email: liz.green@wch.wales.nhs.uk

Details at www.whiasu.cardiff.ac.uk

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NHS Confederation Publication Sales and Enquiries
DS1 NE, 1 Enterprise Place, Rolling Mill Road
Jarrow, South Tyneside NE32 3DP

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THE WELSH NHS CONFEDERATION
CONFFEDERASIWN GIG CYMRU 

The Welsh NHS Confederation
Regus House, Falcon Drive
Cardiff Bay CF10 4RU

Tel 029 2050 4090 Fax 029 2050 4190

E-mail info@welshconfed.org

www.welshconfed.org