



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

Meeting with Health Minister

Our first formal meeting with Health Minister Dr Brian Gibbons since his appointment took place on 22 March and was very constructive. The points we made were:

- Recent WAG announcements on waiting times and capital investment were cautiously welcomed, but we would need to confer with members to assess the impact of these proposals.
- Members face major financial pressures given the budget settlement and the need to fund developments such as Agenda for Change and the new consultant contract.
- Political support for reconfiguration is critical.
- There was an urgent need to develop the commissioning process.
- Being tough on waiting times must also mean being tough on the causes of waiting times, and a focus on chronic conditions in particular had to remain central.

Dr Gibbons said that he was keen to meet formally with us on a regular basis. We are also taking every opportunity to raise these points in our regular meetings with other politicians, senior civil servants and special advisers.

MRSA briefing published

On 22 April we released our latest briefing, entitled *MRSA: key facts and how it's being tackled*. It provides answers to commonly-asked questions about MRSA, gives the latest figures for Wales (the lowest in Britain), and also includes examples of how NHS trusts in Wales are taking action to reduce the level of infections. The briefing has been distributed widely amongst politicians of all parties in Wales and Westminster. It can be downloaded from www.welshconfed.org

A Picture of Health 2015

Following the successful launch in March, we met with our co-signatories to discuss the next steps. The various organisations involved will be leading work over the next few months on individual areas such as the hospital network, community services, and professional roles and responsibilities. This second stage will also mean that other interested parties can have an input: NHS colleagues but also partner organisations from the voluntary, local government and commercial sectors. Whilst this work is independent of the ten year strategy currently being developed by the Welsh Assembly Government, we will be maintaining links with the WAG work. Further details to follow.

How to get your copy: you can download A Picture of Health at www.welshconfed.org Hard copies available from us on request.

Management committee update

The committee met on 21 April. One issue discussed was the membership structure for the Welsh Confederation. It was agreed that full membership should remain limited to trusts and local health boards, but that a single associate membership category should be open to all parties with an interest in the health field. The committee also received reports from the chairman and director on our recent activity, and a progress report on our work on *A Picture of Health 2015*.



General election – Confederation sets out its manifesto

Our own pre-election manifesto has been launched, calling on political parties to debate about the real health issues that affect millions of voters. **The manifesto calls for:**

- A better deal for 17.5 million people living with long-term conditions in the UK.
- A separate investment fund for health improvement to ensure that improving public health is a top priority.
- Improved integration of primary, secondary and social care so that patients who are being cared for in different parts of the health service get a better service.

All MPs were sent the manifesto, and it was highlighted in national newspaper adverts. NHS Confederation Chief Executive Gill Morgan said: *"We want all the parties to stop using NHS management, staff and patients as political footballs and to join us in a more honest debate about the real challenges facing the health service"*. The manifesto is at www.nhsconfed.org/imagine. A briefing on the health manifestos of the 3 main UK parties is also available from us at www.welshconfed.org

Working with devolution – cross-border workshop

On 10 March, representatives of NHS organisations from the border areas of England and Wales came together to discuss how to work with the fact that policies on certain issues are different in the two countries. There was a high degree of common ground in the issues identified. The Confederation is now arranging meetings between the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Health to take this work forward.

Patient safety conference 23 June, Cardiff

We are staging this major international conference in conjunction with HOPE (Hospitals Committee for Europe). Highlights include Professor Liam Donaldson, Chair of the WHO Alliance for Patient Safety, Lord Hunt and colleagues from the National Patient Safety Agency, and addresses from Rhodri Morgan and Brian Gibbons. The conference is open to all. Further details and booking forms available now on www.welshconfed.org

Wales v All Blacks to round off Welsh Connection 3-4 November

Last year our conference brought you WRU Chief Executive David Moffett. Building on this success – as you may have heard already – we are delighted to announce that Wales will be playing the All Blacks in Cardiff on Saturday 5 November, which provides the perfect climax to the Welsh Connection 2005! With Max Boyce already booked as our after-dinner speaker for the Thursday, it promises to be a great few days in Cardiff. It is also likely to be extremely busy in Cardiff in the few days before Saturday 5th. **We therefore strongly advise anyone planning to attend the conference to reserve any accommodation needed as soon as possible.** Like last year, accommodation should be booked with the hotels direct, rather than through our office. Further information about the conference programme will follow.

Health social care and well-being conference 8-9 June 2005, Cardiff

A major conference focussing on partnership, which will share and celebrate the 22 new health, social care and well-being strategies, explore opportunities for collaboration, and look ahead to the future. Speakers include First Minister Rhodri Morgan, Ann Lloyd, and leaders of the agencies involved in the partnerships for health. For details contact julia.nicholls@wlg.gov.uk (02920 468659).

UK Confederation conference and Celtic dinner

The UK conference is from 15-17 June at the International Convention Centre in central Birmingham. Speakers include Donna Shalala, Health Services Secretary in the Clinton administration, management thinker Cary Cooper, and public policy expert Julien Le Grand. www.nhsconfed.org/annualconference

Celtic dinner (15 June) – this is being organised by our head office colleagues in London, not by our office in Cardiff as in past years. The delegate booking form, available on the conference website, gives further details. If you have any queries please call **0870 24 24 427**.

Further copies can be obtained from:

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