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Investment needed to sustain change - Confederation report published

The changes transforming the NHS are good news for patients, but the costs involved are considerable and investment is needed if the changes are to be sustained. This was the key message of our report released on 1 July, *Transforming the NHS - the financial dilemma*. Important developments such as the new contracts for GPs and consultants, Agenda for Change, and implementing new NICE guidance all mean that the NHS faces a rise in costs of 8.79% for this year, with an increase in funding of 5.48%. The report also looks ahead and predicts a similar gap for the two succeeding years. In addition, funding increases over the whole period are likely to be significantly less than in England. All of this, we argued, is putting these changes, and services, at risk. Whilst important, being more efficient is not sufficient, and we called for further investment to sustain change. We have written to the First Minister requesting a meeting with him to discuss these issues as soon as possible. The report was given coverage in a full-page article and supportive leader comment in the Western Mail, and we have also set out the key facts in a letter to the Daily Post. A briefing (*Investing to sustain change*) is available on www.welshconfed.org

European gathering on patient safety a big success

Over 350 health professionals from 27 countries across Europe gathered in Cardiff between 23 and 25 June for a series of international events, including a very successful conference on patient safety. The whole visit was organised by the Welsh Confederation, in conjunction with HOPE (Hospitals Committee for Europe). The event featured a range of high-profile speakers, including Professor Sir Liam Donaldson, CMO for England and head of the WHO World Alliance for Patient Safety, who gave a powerful and moving address about the impact of adverse incidents on patients. The First Minister welcomed delegates and Health Minister Dr Brian Gibbons gave the closing address. Speakers from the NPSA, from 4 UK trusts - including Conwy and Denbighshire - involved in a Health Foundation-sponsored project, and from the Danish Society for Patient Safety, all gave updates on their current work. The conference was supported

by the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Health, and came just a few days before the UK took up the presidency of the European Union, with patient safety as one of the two stated health priorities for the presidency. We secured widespread media coverage, including interviews with Sir Liam Donaldson and Confederation spokespeople across BBC Wales output, and coverage on BBC Wales Today of a pioneering patient barcoding project in Swansea Trust and of the safer patients initiative in Conwy and Denbighshire.

From the Rockies to the Rhondda - report on visit to Kaiser Colorado

The report was launched on 5 July, with the Minister and NHS Director Ann Lloyd in attendance. The report follows a visit to Colorado by a group of health professionals from Wales to see first-hand the work of Kaiser Permanente. The visit was organised by the Welsh NHS Confederation, working in partnership with Pfizer Ltd. Kaiser Colorado are one of the top 10 health plans in the US, rated on measures including patient satisfaction and quality of care. The key points of their approach are:

- They focus on providing better care for patients in their communities.
- They use hospitals very carefully, avoiding hospital admissions where possible, and providing excellent rehabilitation care.
- Target chronic conditions as this covers the single biggest group of patients and has by far the biggest impact on health resources. Disease management programmes can help patients to manage their own care.
- Teamworking - making the best use of everyone's skills, doctors and nurses, physiotherapists and pharmacists, and of course the patient's knowledge too.
- Technology - supporting patients through wide use of the telephone, and linking care together by a single electronic health record.

The report gives the group's impressions of Kaiser and suggests some areas where Wales could learn from their approach. The report and summary can be downloaded at www.welshconfed.org



Welsh Connection 2005 3-4 November - Chris Ham confirmed

This year's conference, which takes place in Cardiff from 3-4 November, is called *Towards 2015: getting the balance right*. We are delighted to announce that Professor Chris Ham, one of the UK's leading health thinkers, and Professor of Health Policy at the University of Birmingham, will be speaking. He joins a programme including English emergency care lead Sir George Alberti, US public health expert Larry Gostin, Harvard Business School's Earl Sasser, UK Confederation Chief Executive Gill Morgan, with keynote addresses from Rhodri Morgan and Brian Gibbons. The programme will run from around 10am on 3rd to 1pm on 4th. Booking forms will be available in the next fortnight. As an added attraction Max Boyce will be the guest speaker at the Conference Dinner on 3rd November - highly topical in view of the game the following Saturday!

Book rooms now to beat the All Blacks!

If you plan to attend the conference, and need accommodation in Cardiff, you are strongly advised to book this as soon as possible. This is because Wales play the All Blacks in Cardiff on 5 November and demand for rooms in Cardiff is already extremely strong. Rooms should be booked with hotels direct.

Workforce and modernisation - Agenda for Change launch

The launch of the benefits realisation framework for Agenda for Change took place on 20 June, and was organised by the Confederation in conjunction with the WAG pay modernisation unit. Around 120 delegates attended to hear about ways in which workforce changes relate to the wider modernisation process, with examples of how this can deliver real benefits to patients.

Picture of Health 2015 - update

We have spoken to various conference audiences - including CHCs and WCVA annual conferences - to outline *A Picture of Health*. Over the next 2 months, work on several areas is planned: the hospital network, professional roles, balance in services and chronic conditions. Different organisations are leading on each of these but input is sought from any interested parties. For further details please contact Jonathan.davies@welshconfed.org

Cross-border issues

A meeting took place on 30 June between John Hill-Tout of the Welsh Assembly, Richard Gleave of the Recovery and Support Unit of the DoH, with Mike Ponton and Nick Webb (Director of Finance from Shropshire County PCT and Honorary Treasurer of the NHS Confederation). The issues raised by members at the previous meeting held in March were further explored. A note of the meeting and an action plan will be circulated in the near future.

Diary date - WLGA conference, 3-4 October

The conference takes place at the Brangwyn Hall and will focus on the WLGA Manifesto for Local Government and Excellence Wales. Speakers include Rhodri Morgan, Sue Essex, auditor-general Jeremy Colman, MORI Social Research Director Ben Page and Millennium Centre Chief Executive Judith Isherwood. For latest information go to www.wlga.gov.uk

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