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Member's Update Issue 4 | 11 June 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.

GP contract event report – Minister urges members to engage in the debate

The GMS contract is exceptionally important for the whole of the NHS in Wales and Confederation members need to be fully engaged in the discussions – this was the message from Health and Social Services Minister Jane Hutt in her address at the recent event on the new contract. Over 60 representatives from member organisations attended, from local health groups, trusts and health authorities. As well as the Minister's call for engagement in the process, delegates also heard a very detailed presentation on the framework from Dr Tony Snell, a member of the core Confederation team negotiating the new contract on behalf of the four health departments across the UK. Bob Hudson, chief executive of Gwent Health Authority, outlined the context in which the framework would sit, and group discussion was led by facilitator and public policy expert Ray Flux from Civil Eyes Research Ltd. Reflecting on the event, Welsh NHS Confed Director Richard Thomas said: "We were very pleased that the event was a success, and we owe a debt of thanks to all our speakers and delegates. This is such an important issue for the NHS in Wales, and it's vital that LHBs in particular play a full part as members of the Confederation so that they have the opportunity to influence the debate on issues like this. We will be gathering the outcomes of the discussions, distributing them to members and feeding them into the negotiation process" For info on the GMS contract go to: www.nhsconfed.org/gmscontract

Confed to lead policy work on social care at UK Social Services conference

The UK national social services conference takes place in Cardiff from **16-18 October**. The NHS Confederation will be leading a session which brings a primary care perspective to bear on recent work on social care from the Institute of Policy and Public Research (IPPR). For details of the conference go to www.adss.org.uk. Further details on the session to follow.

Biggest ever UK conference a great success

The Confederation's UK conference at Harrogate from **22-24 May** was a big success. Over 1600 delegates from across the UK made this year's conference the biggest to date. In keeping with the theme of "*connecting*", the event brought together not only senior NHS figures but also representatives of government, including the National Assembly, the voluntary and commercial sectors, and a wide range of other health-related organisations. Speakers included Jack Silversin suggesting why doctors are unhappy, NASA astronaut James Bagian talking about how to create a culture of patient safety, and outgoing Royal College of Physicians' president George Alberti giving a frank and personal view of the future of healthcare provision.

One of the key themes of the programme was culture change, and how we can go about achieving it. In her first address to conference, chief executive Dr Gill Morgan emphasised that "*we must lead and inspire cultural change as well as manage and administer the service effectively and efficiently*".



"Our task is to make excellence the norm everywhere. It is down to the people in this room to lead this cultural revolution and to start seeing the world through the eyes of the user. It is our role to support you."

It was an opportunity to mingle pleasure with business too! The main event in the social calendar for many Welsh delegates was undoubtedly the Celtic dinner. Held at an Italian restaurant in Leeds, over 90 delegates from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland wined, dined and were entertained by a professional magician!

Date for your diary:

- 8-10 July - **Connecting 2003**, Brighton.

New Confed rep on UK Council

Bob Hudson joins Hugh Thomas, Gren Kershaw, Margret Price and David Hands as our fifth representative on the Confederation's Council, the UK-wide forum which oversees the organisation's activities.

Meeting with MPs and AMs

On **Friday May 10** Jonathan Davies attended a public/private sector forum in Merthyr Tydfil to hear presentations from Dai Harvard, MP for Merthyr; Huw Lewis, AM for Merthyr; and Andrew Smith - the then Chief Secretary to the Treasury. Andrew Smith spoke at length about the budget and the Government's hopes and expectations for the NHS in light of the increased investment and he was interested, if not a little shocked, to learn that the money from this year's budget would take at least two years before it filters through to the budgets of members.

Dai Harvard and Huw Lewis both expressed interest in building links with the Welsh NHS Confederation and said they would welcome a regular publication from the Welsh Confederation keeping them apprised of the current issues facing our members in Wales.

News from management committee

The committee met on **16 May** and amongst the business discussed were the following points:

Policy divergence across the UK - to help share learning across boundaries, the Confederation would be looking into the similarities and differences in issues and approaches across the 4 countries of the UK. We are making contact with other experts already working in this field.

Current concerns of members - issues raised were the SAFF round, financial deficits, adjustment of waiting time targets, implications of the Townsend formula. We will be looking into how best to take forward work on these areas.

Briefing politicians - to help increase the level of understanding amongst Welsh politicians about the issues facing members, we will be broadening our political links with MPs and AMs, and providing them with a regular briefing service.

Confed influencing on primary care and IT - your views sought

We are currently planning campaigns on primary care and IT. 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. We are very keen to ensure that these are strongly anchored in members' views and we would therefore be very pleased if you would like to contact us with any comments about the key points we should be making on these areas:

- **primary care** - kevin.sullivan@confed.wales.nhs.uk
- **IT** - jonathan.davies@confed.wales.nhs.uk

Diary date - 7-8 November 2002

**"The Welsh Connection 2002 -
management learning across boundaries"**

Welsh NHS Confederation Annual Conference,
Hilton Hotel, Cardiff,

Contact info@confed.wales.nhs.uk