



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

Hear Chris Ham's views on delivering results - Welsh Connection, 3-4 November



Former head of the Department of Health's Strategy Unit, Chris Ham was one of the key architects of the changes to the NHS over the past few years. One of the leading health thinkers in the country, he will be speaking at The Welsh Connection at City Hall in Cardiff on 3-4 November. His session is called

"Connecting strategy to delivery: next steps in delivering world-class care in Wales". Over 300 bookings for the conference have already been received, significantly higher than at this stage last year. We therefore strongly encourage you to book as soon as possible as we cannot guarantee places.

The conference programme is now available at www.welshconfed.org/events. Here you will also find further info about speakers, including biographies, as well as the conference brochure and booking form.

NHS funding - update

Raising the issue of financial pressures has been a key priority for us over the past few weeks:

- **Meeting with the First Minister and Health Minister:** this took place on 16 September and focused on our recent report: *Transforming the NHS – the financial dilemma*. We underlined our support for changes such as the new contracts for GPs, consultants and pharmacists, and Agenda for Change. But we said that the cost of these changes, combined with other rising costs such as funding NICE-approved drugs, are putting the NHS under massive financial pressure. These pressures, we said, are now directly affecting services and jeopardising much-needed changes. Efficiency savings had a part to play, but on their own they were not sufficient. What was needed to sustain the changes already under way, we argued, was political support and additional investment.
- **Increase in funding announced:** Finance Minister Sue Essex last week announced an increase of £107 million in the health budget, the biggest chunk of an overall increase of £240 million in WAG spending plans. We welcomed the fact that the need for extra investment had been recognised, and we will be looking at the detail of these plans as it emerges.
- **Raising the issue at Westminster:** in the next few weeks we will be meeting again with MPs from all parties at Westminster, to brief them on the situation.
- **Our briefing – *Transforming the NHS: investing to sustain change*** – can be found at www.welshconfed.org. The UK NHS Confederation has also just produced a briefing which outlines the financial pressures facing NHS organisations in England. Called *Money in the NHS: the facts*, it is available at www.nhsconfed.org



GMC to refer some complaints to local NHS procedures

The GMC receives over 5,000 complaints about doctors each year. However, many of these complaints would be more appropriately dealt with through local NHS procedures, as they would only justify action by the GMC if part of a wider concern about a doctor's practice. From 17 October 2005, the GMC will refer such complaints directly to the relevant NHS Trust or Primary Care Trust to take forward under their own complaints procedures. Further information is available at www.gmc-uk.org. A dedicated GMC helpline for employers will also be available from Monday 10 October 2005 on 0161 923 6424.

Celtic gathering – sharing lessons on health and devolution

A delegation from Wales recently attended the Confederation's Celtic workshop, where members from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have an opportunity to discuss the issues they face within the context of devolution. Finding the money for change was one of the key issues across all three countries, with Agenda for Change in particular leading to financial pressures. We will be considering how best to take forward the outcomes of this discussion, and how to extend these opportunities for learning across borders.

Where the future is already happening – February events planned

The Confederation's Future Healthcare Network (FHN) brings together organisations who are at the leading edge of change, delivering tomorrow's healthcare today. We are working with them to deliver a series of events in February in Wales. These will be aimed at highlighting some of the good work already going on in the NHS across the UK. More details will be available soon. Information on the work of FHN is at www.nhsconfed.org/fhn

North Wales LHB event 26 January

We are also working with North Wales LHBs on this event, which is aimed at LHB board members across the region.

HOPE international exchange programme – May-June 2006

HOPE brings together health leaders from across Europe, and one of their key initiatives is an annual exchange programme for health professionals. It aims to promote better understanding of the functioning of health care across Europe, and to encourage the sharing of best practice. They are seeking participants from the NHS who wish to go overseas, and NHS organisations who wish to host international visitors. The programme consists of a four-week attachment for all the candidates, which is followed by a conference and evaluation meeting. For details go to www.nhsconfed.org/hope

www.welshconfed.org - Connecting you

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- Looking for key health websites, in Wales and beyond?

If so, why not check out the links pages on our website: www.welshconfed.org

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