



# Working for members 2004-05

## Chair's introduction



The past year has seen the Confederation reinforce its position at the heart of the health debate in Wales. Two areas of work show this especially clearly. *A Picture of Health*, which described the NHS in 2015, has helped to refocus the health debate on the future. I would like to thank all those who worked with us on this project, which continues into 2006. The other highlight is our work on finances, which showed the real costs of change, and the urgent need to invest to sustain change. Across all our work, our unique strength is that we represent all NHS organisations in Wales, and can speak for all with a single voice. So I would like to thank our members for their continuing support. Looking ahead to 2006, we plan to extend our events programme, including a spring conference in north Wales and other regional events. We also plan to build on the successes of 2004-05, which I am pleased to present to you.

Meirion Hughes

## A Picture of Health 2015

What could the NHS and the wider health system in Wales look like in 2015? There are many changes already under way, but what kind of service are they leading us towards? In March we released *A Picture of Health*, which attempts to answer these questions. The report was produced and endorsed by an alliance of health organisations, co-ordinated by the Confederation, including the BMA, RCN, Welsh CHCs, Royal Colleges and health think-tanks. We secured extensive media coverage of the launch and the case studies which show where the future is already happening. We also attracted widespread interest from across the health and political community. The alliance continues to meet and work together.

## NHS funding – investing to sustain change

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 message of our July report *Transforming the NHS – the financial dilemma*. New contracts, Agenda for Change, and implementing new NICE guidance all mean that the NHS faces a gap between costs and funding, which is putting these changes, and services, at risk. Health funding increases for Wales are also far lower than for England. We met with the First Minister and Health Minister to discuss these issues.

An increase of £107 million in the health budget was recently announced. Though this budget has yet to be passed, we are continuing to make the case for this much-needed extra investment.

## Record audience wowed by WRU chief at The Welsh Connection 2004



Over 350 senior figures gathered in Llandudno on 25-26 November to attend *The Welsh Connection 2004*. It was by far the biggest conference to date. Every member organisation was represented, with delegates also drawn from the commercial and voluntary sector, from local government, and from England. The soft option is always the wrong option, said Welsh Rugby Union Chief Executive David Moffett in his typically frank speech, drawing on his experience of making controversial changes in Welsh rugby. The First Minister set out his vision for public services and congratulated the NHS in Wales on reducing long waiting times. He also presented our award for innovation to the Welsh ambulance service for their mobile treatment centres. We helped secure UK-wide press coverage for this example of innovation in Wales.



## Influencing the decision-makers

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- Met with First Minister to discuss finances and changing the way services are provided.
- Regular meetings with Dr Brian Gibbons, appointed health minister in early 2005.
- Held face-to-face briefings with Welsh MPs in Westminster, including Secretary of State for Wales.
- Began programme of meetings with Wales MEPs.
- Developed regular schedule of meetings with special advisers and senior civil servants.
- Presence at Welsh party conferences.
- Our briefings on issues such as MRSA, finances and chronic conditions, used and cited in political debates in Cardiff Bay and Westminster.

## Events - connecting

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- Welsh Connection 2004 was the biggest conference to date, with First Minister and WRU chief David Moffet amongst the speakers.
- Hosted major European conference on patient safety, and wider programme of activities, which brought 300 health experts from 25 countries to Cardiff, with conference speakers including Sir Liam Donaldson.
- Held free event for members on the new pharmacy contract.
- Helped co-ordinate the non-officer board member development day planned by LHBs in the south-east region.
- Organised event on Agenda for Change in conjunction with Assembly.

## Shaping the media debate

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- Secured widespread newspaper and broadcast coverage of good work on chronic conditions in Wales, following our report *From the Rockies to the Rhondda*.
- Commented in Western Mail, Wales on Sunday and on BBC on key role of NHS management.
- Provided regular media comment on waiting times, saying that we have turned the corner on long waits in Wales.
- With ambulance trust colleagues, generated huge media interest in award-winning field hospitals scheme, including UK-wide and US networks.
- Provided journalists with material from members which was used in positive news stories.
- Held regular private briefings with senior journalists to help inform their coverage of health issues.

## Briefing and Informing

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- Launched new website - [www.welshconfed.org](http://www.welshconfed.org) - with access to all our documents, plus key Assembly and other health reports, and useful links to health sites within Wales and beyond.
- Produced briefing on MRSA, underlining how Wales is leading the UK in tackling this problem.
- Published "lesser-known statistics" on NHS in Wales, to brief politicians in run-up to general election.
- Worked with ABPI to produce briefing outlining guidance on partnership with the commercial sector.
- Produced new briefings on chronic conditions and information and IT.

## At the heart of the policy debate

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- Led study tour to Kaiser Permanente Colorado and produced report *From the Rockies to the Rhondda*, outlining lessons for Wales.
- Commissioned independent academic view on improving the Townsend formula on resource allocation.
- Co-signed concordat aimed at improving the inspection arrangements in NHS Wales.
- Submitted evidence to Cardiff, Westminster and Brussels on issues including: mental health bill, EU services of general interest directive, Making the Connections, Designed for Life, Informing Healthcare, human tissue regulations.
- Strengthened our relationships with partner organisations in Wales, including Wales Centre for Health, Health Inspectorate Wales, General Medical Council, National Public Health Service, Wales Industry Group, Welsh Local Government Association, and the National Leadership and Innovation Agency.

## Moving forward

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- Welcomed new Chair Meirion Hughes, succeeding Lloyd FitzHugh.
- Welcomed new management committee, with representatives from NHS trusts and Local Health Boards.
- Established executive group of 4 trust and LHB representatives, to provide rapid response and advice when required for policy, press or other work.
- Retained 100% membership amongst NHS organisations in Wales.

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