



bulletin

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Issue 65

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 sian.owen@welshconfed.org

New negotiating unit for NHS Employers

Following a proposal made and worked up by NHS HR Directors in response to the Minister's wish to introduce all-Wales collective bargaining in NHS Wales, the Welsh NHS Confederation has put together a plan for setting up a Negotiating Unit for Wales. The unit will provide support and coordination to NHS Employers in all the work related to the Partnership Forum and its associated committees, and will manage the negotiation process on their behalf. LHBs and NHS Trusts are now considering this proposal and it is hoped that the Unit will become operational in the near future.

Consultation on restructuring the NHS in Wales

Preparing a full and comprehensive response to the consultation papers will be our main focus in the coming months. Our meeting on 15 April at City Hall will bring representatives from all Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts together to explore the issues raised in the papers. We will seek to find areas of consensus in the discussions, which will form the basis of our formal response. We have had a very positive response to this meeting, which is now fully subscribed. Read the consultation papers in full here:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/consultations/currentconsultation/healandsoccarecurrcons/nhswales/?lang=en>

Spring workshop on mental health

We very much regret that it has been necessary to postpone the Spring Workshops organised for 23/24 April in Llandudno. We felt the issue of the future of mental health services in Wales was important and topical, and that a discussion on the future of these services would help to inform and influence future plans. Unfortunately the recent consultation paper on the restructuring of the NHS has increased pressure on people's time. As a result, it has not been possible to attract a sufficient number of delegates to make the workshops viable.

We hope to be able to hold the workshops later in the year and all our speakers have confirmed their willingness to participate. In the meantime we are very sorry for any inconvenience or disappointment this has caused.

Welsh Affairs Committee inquiry into cross-border services

Mike Ponton attended the Welsh Affairs Select Committee to give evidence for their inquiry into the provision of cross border public services. He gave evidence together with the UK Confederation's Deputy Director of Policy, Jo Webber. The discussion mainly centred on the diverging health policies between Wales and England, the financial implications for border NHS organisations and how it impacts on patients.

To read the transcript of the session, please click here

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmwelaf/uc401-ii/uc40102.htm>

Hospital Car Parking

Following the Health Minister's announcement that hospital car parking charges are to be reduced or abolished, the Confederation gave extensive press comment to explain the Trusts' position. In interviews with BBC Breakfast News, BBC Wales Today, Radio Wales, Radio 5 Live, Radio 4, S4C Newyddion and ITV Wales, we explained that on the face of it, this appeared to be good news for patients, but it would inevitably add to the pressures placed on Trusts to provide services and balance the books. We raised concerns that it would exacerbate parking problems at many hospitals and highlighted the inconsistencies it would create with NHS green travel policies



Western Mail columns

The Confederation contributed to a week-long series of articles in the Western Mail on the 60th anniversary of the NHS. We explained how one of the biggest challenges facing the NHS for the future is the need to engage the public more effectively. We argued that the NHS needs to find new ways to capture the public's interest and show them that their views do make a difference to the decision-making process.

In our regular Western Mail column, we made the case for a full integration of health and social care services. We argued that the period of rapid change we are entering in public services in Wales gives us a golden opportunity to build a more integrated service from the ground-up. Ultimately, removing organisational barriers between health and social care will mean a much better service for patients.

NHS praised

A survey has found that an overwhelming majority of the Welsh public have had very positive experiences of the NHS. 94% of those questioned said they had been treated with dignity and respect at hospitals and said that staff had been helpful. Around 90% thought reported similar positive experiences at GP surgeries in Wales.

7,500 households in Wales were questioned for the *'Living in Wales Survey'*, carried out by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The full results of the survey can be found at: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/improvingservices/peoplefirst/research/surveyresults06/?lang=en>

Meeting room available for hire

The Board Room at our new office in Bridgend is available to hire for meetings. The brand new room can seat up to 24 (boardroom style) and will have video conferencing facilities soon. Contact Sandra at sandra.cummings@welshconfed.org for more information on rates and availability.

Fax number

We now have a fax machine up and running, which is available on **01656 657320**. This number, together with all our other contact information, is available on our website at <http://www.welshconfed.org/ContactUs.htm>

Diary dates

The Welsh Annual Conference will take place this year at Cardiff's City Hall on the 6-7th November. Please reserve the date in your diary. A full programme will be available in the summer.

THE **WELSH NHS** CONFEDERATION
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