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19 May 2008

Issue 66

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

Partnership Forum

The Minister has approved the constitution and role of the new Partnership Forum so plans are now progressing for setting up an NHS Employers Terms and Conditions Negotiating Unit based at our office in Waterton park. Until the Unit is established the Welsh Confederation's team will provide support to Trusts and LHBs in Partnership Forum work and attend the various meetings that are involved. The first Business Committee will take place on 2 June 2008.

Proposals to restructure the NHS

Our meeting in April at Cardiff City Hall brought together representatives from all our members organisations for a wide-ranging discussion on the Minister's proposals. The meeting was very productive and revealed consensus on a number of the issues raised in the consultative document. We are working carefully through some of the more complex issues that brought out different views and perspectives, such as the future of community services. The discussions that took place at the meeting will be used to shape the Confederation's response to the Minister.

Board Development

We have been commissioned by NLIAH to provide a short induction programme for the new Non-Executive Directors of the merged NHS Trusts. The programme is designed to introduce the basics of NHS governance to board members who are new to the health service. The first series of workshops have recently come to an end and have been very positively received. We will be following-up these sessions in the early autumn, when we will focus on more specific aspects of NHS governance in three regional workshops for both Trusts and LHBs.

Political influencing work

A number of meetings have been scheduled in the diary with all the major political parties in Parliament in June. These meetings are a valuable opportunity to flag up health issues in Wales at a UK level, with particular focus on the proposals to restructure the NHS in Wales. If members wish to discuss these meetings in greater detail or suggest issues for discussion please e-mail: - jonathan.davies@welshconfed.org

Western Mail columns

In our recent Western Mail column, we responded to figures from a survey that revealed 80% of the public believe that NHS managers are to blame for hospital "superbugs" such as MRSA. We emphasized that it's not just managers, or frontline staff, or any one group of people who are responsible, but that everyone has a part to play in helping to tackle the spread of infection and reduce infection rates.

In another column, we looked at the issue of community services and how recent proposals to restructure the NHS could affect them. We said that the changing health needs of our population requires a greater focus on out-of-hospital services and any new structure should pave the way to a more integrated and seamless service, that enables health and social care staff to work in partnership.

Celtic Network

After the visits to Scotland and Northern Ireland to find out about their structural change, NLIAH has agreed to fund a Celtic Network which will facilitate discussions and learning between the devolved countries on topical health issues. We will tell you more about this soon. In the meantime the notes of the recent visits will be published shortly



Corporate Support for LHBs and Trusts

We have recently welcomed Tom Woods and Neil Desmond who have joined us as secondees to the Welsh NHS Confederation. We have worked with Tom and Neil for a number of years, but having them based at our office in Bridgend offers real benefits in joint working and shared resources. We look forward to working more closely with Tom and Neil as they provide valuable corporate support to the Trusts and Local Health Boards respectively. Their contribution is much appreciated by all our members and this new partnership will help to build closer relationships between all NHS organisations, local authorities and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Diary reminder

Planning for our Annual Conference in November is now gathering pace and we are working to put together a programme with a number of high-profile speakers. Full details of the conference will be available soon. In the meantime, please ensure that the dates are reserved in your diaries – 6-7th November at Cardiff's City Hall.

Press summaries

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Statistic of the month – Community Services

Around 60% of hospital bed days are accounted for by patients with chronic conditions. An estimated 30% of lung disease patients could be treated in the community instead if appropriate support were available, saving around 14,300 bed days per year in Welsh hospitals.

THE **WELSH NHS** CONFEDERATION
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