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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 sian.owen@welshconfed.org

A friend from 'down under'

The Welsh NHS Confederation is hosting a free event to hear lessons from health reform in New Zealand.

Chris Clarke was for six years CEO of Hawke's Bay District Health Board in New Zealand. He was also lead CEO of New Zealand's primary healthcare reforms and lead CEO for DHB research in NZ and has held previous roles with NHS Wales, WHO and as an Advisor to the then Minister of Health.

Following his experience of a Ministerial Inquiry into the governance of the Board, Chris will be speaking about the lessons for a CEO in anticipating, addressing and resolving a governance meltdown. He will also tell us about New Zealand's health reforms and some of the challenges that he believes lie ahead for NHS Wales.

You are invited to join Chris for the afternoon of 2nd July at the Cardiff City Hall. More information and booking forms will be sent to members soon. This event will be free of charge.

10 years of devolution

Our Director, Mike Ponton, contributed to a week-long series of features on devolution on BBC Wales Today. In a feature on health, we said that devolution had brought about a new focus on health in Wales and given us the ability to customize services to better suit the needs of the people of Wales. We have learned a lot in the first ten years but the new Health Boards now face the considerable challenge of continuously improving services in Wales in the face of the economic downturn. Success would depend on a more open and honest partnership between politicians at all levels, the NHS and local government to work with the people in their communities to change things for the better.

Welsh Annual Conference 2009 - Thinking forward, thinking different

Preparations are now well underway for the Welsh Annual Conference 2009 - *Thinking forward, thinking different*, which will take place at Cardiff City Hall on November 12-13th. Our conference is the biggest event in the Welsh health calendar, and every year, over 300 delegates, ranging from senior NHS managers, government officials, politicians and representatives from commercial organisations, come together to network and to hear from leading figures in the health and business communities.

We have already secured several top line speakers that include: -

Rhodri Morgam AM - First Minister for Wales
Scott Greer - Professor Political Science, University of Michigan
Irwin Turbitt - Warwick University Governance Unit
Julian Le Grand - Professor of social policy at the LSE

If you are interested in promotional or sponsorship opportunities for this year's event, contact sandra.cummings@welshconfed.org

Out of Hospital Care

As part of her personal development plan, Janette Wilkinson, Regional Manager of Sanofi-aventis, has been seconded to the Welsh NHS Confederation to undertake research and to prepare publications on out of hospital care. This is a six month project from which we will produce a report on Janette's findings and a second generation 'Picture of Health' booklet designed to describe how out of hospital care will operate, what it will set out to do and what it will look and feel like when people work in or use it.



Board development

We are working with the Welsh Assembly Government and NLIAM on the support to be provided to the new Health Boards in governance and board development. In particular, the Welsh NHS Confederation is developing a new pocket book for board members, which will be backed up with a web based guide on governance and member development.

Western Mail article on dementia

Our most recent Western Mail article discussed the findings of the Department of Health's national strategy for dementia. The Welsh Assembly Government is continuing its own policy work on dementia with the aim of producing a national dementia plan for Wales. The English strategy has several principles that apply wherever in the world you are, and it contains useful research and conclusions that can help to inform our approach here in Wales.

Read the article here:

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/health-news/2009/05/11/rise-in-dementia-cases-provides-a-challenge-for-wales-91466-23588744/>

Responding to the BMA

In a letter to the Western Mail, we countered claims by the BMA in their column that in straitened times, the NHS will have to reduce management costs and strip out initiatives that create "an army of bean counters". In our response, we dispelled the myth of the "army of bean counters" with facts that managers make up just 4% of NHS staff. In the tough financial times ahead, we are all up against it and we must work together, we said, doctors and managers included.

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/letters-to-the-editor/western-mail-letters/2009/05/08/friday-8-may-2009-91466-23572111/>

Progress with LSBs

The latest issue of the Welsh Assembly's newsletter on the development of Local Service Boards in Wales is now available on:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/improvingservices/localserviceboards/news/?lang=en>

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