‘Building a Vision for NHS Wales’
Who we are

The Welsh NHS Confederation is a membership body representing all the organisations making up the NHS in Wales: seven Local Health Boards and three NHS Trusts. We support our members by acting as a driving force for positive change through strong representation and our policy, influencing, communications and engagement work.

The Welsh NHS Confederation’s mission is to improve health and well-being by supporting our members to deliver high standards of care for patients and best value for taxpayers’ money.

Our vision is for the NHS in Wales to provide a continually improving comprehensive health service that is available to all and based on clinical need, not an individual’s ability to pay.

All of our work is underpinned by our core values:

- Listening and responding to the needs of our members;
- Working in partnership to create dialogue and build consensus;
- Acting in the interests of patients and the public.

How we achieve this

Our work includes:

- Influencing health and social care policy;
- Engaging with Ministers, Assembly Members and officials;
- Responding to consultations, inquiries and reviews;
- Appearing at Committees with members and providing support;
- Sharing best practice;
- Building relationships with the media and communication teams both within and outside of NHS Wales;
- Developing a strong NHS Wales brand, particularly through the use of social media;
- Building relationships and working in partnership with other organisations;
- Organising and hosting events and meetings that bring key NHS Wales staff and stakeholders together;
- Representing our members at conferences and external events;
- Producing briefing documents and reports to help inform and shape debate;
- Championing the need for change within NHS Wales.

Our vision is for the NHS in Wales to provide a continually improving comprehensive health service that is available to all and based on clinical need, not an individual’s ability to pay.
Influencing debate and policy

On behalf of our members, staff and patients, we want a sensible and mature debate around the NHS in Wales. Through our publications and by directly engaging with all political parties and stakeholders, we outline the challenges facing Health Boards and NHS Trusts and provide context to help inform, lead and shape this debate.

Examples of how we do this

**Working with the National Assembly for Wales**

We support the development of health policy and legislation by acting as a key link between the National Assembly for Wales and the NHS.

We support our members to provide evidence to National Assembly Committees by researching and producing all-Wales written evidence, and by providing comprehensive briefings for representatives giving oral evidence.

We regularly give evidence to inform the Health and Social Care Committee’s inquiries, as well as the Committee’s scrutiny of legislation, such as the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Bill and the Public Health (Wales) Bill.

In addition, we also provide comprehensive responses to a number of Welsh Government consultations, including the Green Paper: Our Health, Our Health Service, the Local Government (Wales) Act 2015 and draft budget proposals.

**The 2016 Challenge: A Vision for NHS Wales**

As the National Assembly Elections in 2016 draw nearer, the Welsh NHS Confederation has increased its engagement with Assembly Members, candidates and the media.

In 2015, we published *The 2016 Challenge: A Vision for NHS Wales*. It outlines the five main challenges for the health service and what the Welsh NHS Confederation and its members believe needs to happen to address them. Based on the views of our members gathered in a survey of chairs, chief executives and directors of Health Boards and Trusts, the document gives a clear and authoritative view from health service leaders on what is needed to deliver high quality services in the future, including a long-term vision for the NHS in Wales.

More information: tinyurl.com/visionNHSWales

**Building partnerships across sectors**

The Welsh NHS Confederation has published a series of papers under the theme ‘From Rhetoric to Reality’, following the initial discussion paper of this name published in 2014. The key themes of ‘From Rhetoric to Reality’ were explored in more detail in publications on health and education (with NIACE Cymru), housing (with Community Housing Cymru) and patient information (with the Patient Information Forum). We have also published briefings on the link between socio-economic deprivation and health, and on the future challenges for the NHS Wales workforce.
**Elections**

Ahead of the General Elections in 2015, we worked hard to support members to respond to criticism and to be assertive in promoting the good work done by the NHS in Wales and its staff.

Following the elections, we provided a pack for all newly elected MPs with facts and figures on each of the Health Boards in their area and on Velindre NHS Trust and the Welsh Ambulance Services Trust.

We are continuing this work in the run-up to the National Assembly Elections in 2016, keeping members informed of any health and social care announcements made by all the parties. We work closely with communications teams to support their local discussions through our 2016 Challenge document, and to help them plan for the election period.

We also attend party political conferences to build understanding of NHS Wales, using the opportunity to promote key messages from the 2016 Challenge briefing.

**Policy Forum**

The 2016 Challenge Policy Forum is made up of over 30 organisations including Royal Colleges and a wide range of third sector organisations. The Forum provides an environment to discuss health policy with representatives of all six political parties (Plaid Cymru, Welsh Conservatives, Wales Green Party, UKIP, Welsh Labour and Welsh Liberal Democrats).

We are leading on a collaboration between members of the Forum to produce a document outlining ‘Ten steps required to improve health, social care and well-being in Wales’. This will pull together common themes for the political parties to consider going into the elections. The Forum also produced the welfare reform briefing ‘The impact of welfare reform on people’s health and well-being’.

http://tinyurl.com/NHSwelfare

**Chair of a Health Board**

“Your briefings are excellent”.  

**Member providing evidence to a Committee hearing**

“I forgot to say a big thank you to you as well for giving us so much material and insight it was hugely appreciated”.
Communications and Events

Communications

Our communications work varies widely and sees us building relationships with the media, heads of communications within NHS Wales and communications teams outside of the health service.

Examples of how we do this

Strengthening the NHS Wales brand

We have continued to play a leadership role in strengthening ‘NHS Wales’ as a brand, working with local communications teams to increase collaboration and provide an authoritative, independent NHS Wales voice. Action is being taken by Health Boards, NHS Trusts and the Welsh NHS Confederation to develop this and communications between all organisations have been stepped up, which has helped with preparedness and consistency of messages.

Media relations

We regularly issue press releases on behalf of our members in NHS Wales, with statements on finance, performance and service change. We have written a number of articles and also have a regular column in the Western Mail. We are working closely with the media to promote the ‘calls’ made in our Challenge 2016 document in the run-up to the National Assembly for Wales Election.

We often work ‘behind the scenes’ to support our members in communicating the good work being done by the NHS. We worked with BBC and ITV in 2015 on special health weeks, co-ordinating filming opportunities across Wales and securing positive coverage of initiatives that are improving patient care. This year has also seen the start of a co-ordinated programme of proactive media work, focusing on different key themes every month, such as integration, patient experience and research and innovation.

Social media and online

We make great use of social networking and blogs to promote our key messages, often using these channels to communicate key messages from our consultation responses and written evidence in a more concise format to reach a wider audience.

In addition to this, we work closely with our members to support all-Wales campaigns and initiatives, such as the NHS Wales Awards, Choose Well and Beat Flu.

Events

Every year, our events programme aims to equip our members with the information and training they need to support them in their work. Our events also provide a valuable networking opportunity for NHS leadership and colleagues from the private and third sectors.

Annual Conference

Our annual conference and exhibition is a platform to set the tone for the coming year. The annual conference is an ideal opportunity for delegates to build on existing relationships and create new ones.

It also provides a platform for many of our key messages. The Health Minister once again used his keynote speech last year as an opportunity to make key announcements on the Welsh Government’s flagship prudent healthcare policy, while our annual YouGov survey secured coverage across media outlets in Wales, focusing on the public’s support for change for NHS services.

The 2016 event takes on particular significance in raising the profile and influencing future plans for health and social care in the run-up to the National Assembly for Wales Election.

We also attend the NHS Confederation’s annual conference to share good practice from Wales and pick up ideas from across the UK.

A View From...

In 2015 we continued our ‘A View From...’ series of networking seminars to provide an opportunity for Confederation members and partner organisations to come together to examine a range of topics related to the health service in Wales.

We held ‘A View From the Frontline’ where delegates heard the experiences of those working in the ambulance service, A&E and primary care about what it’s like to work in these areas on a day-to-day basis. ‘A View From Westminster’ examined the outcome of the General Election while ‘A View From Our Partners’ featured examples of successful partnership working between NHS and organisations from other sectors, and was supported by a compendium of case studies of third sector and NHS partnerships in action.
Collaborative working

One of the key aims for the NHS in Wales is to bring about a fundamental shift, from a service that treats ill health, to one that supports people to maintain health and wellbeing and live as independently as possible.

But securing people’s health and wellbeing is too important to be seen as a standalone issue that is the sole responsibility of the NHS.

We have continued our close working with partners outside of the NHS to continue the strategic shift towards person-centred services that revolve around the needs of the individual.

The Welsh NHS Confederation and ADSS Cymru have undertaken a programme of work to assist in the national health and social services collaboration agenda. A key driving force for this work is to support organisations to implement and realise the benefits of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act which comes into force in 2016.

Other aspects of our collaborative work include the publication of a special Wales edition of The Journal of Integrated Care, which features six examples of collaborative working in Wales.

This work is supported by a collaborative agreement that the Confederation and ADSS Cymru have signed with Care Forum Wales, Community Housing Cymru, the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action and the WLGA to solidify our commitment to helping services across Wales achieve the changes required for the successful implementation of the Act.

NHS Wales Employers

NHS Wales Employers is the voice of employers in the NHS in Wales. The organisation works to support and represent NHS organisations on workforce related issues, including negotiating terms and conditions of service and the Welsh NHS Workforce and Organisational Development (OD) policy and strategy.

Highlights this year include:

- Developing strategic approaches to pay including the Workforce and OD submission to the Review of the NHS Workforce;
- Leading, advising and working with employers on negotiations and consultations on pay and terms and conditions of service including the development of an All Wales Pay Progression Policy and a revision to the Organisational Change Policy;
- Supporting effective partnership working with employers on the Welsh Partnership Forum and Workforce Partnership Council and representing employers on the UK NHS Staff Council;
- Development of revised NHS Principles as part of the “Common Principles” project to underpin a new approach to workplace policies and procedures;
- Representing NHS Wales on the NHS Pension Scheme Governance and Working Longer Groups; disseminating advice, guidance and insight into future developments;
- New policies developed and ratified during 2015 include a new Procedure for Staff to Raise Concerns, a new simplified Dignity at Work process, a suite of policies regarding the use of the internet, email and social media;
- Facilitated the review of and reissuing of the All Wales Sickness Absence Policy, supported by a training package;
- Led the development of responses to consultations, particularly from a workforce and OD perspective, on behalf of Health Boards and NHS Trusts.
Looking ahead

There is no doubt that the NHS in Wales, in common with healthcare services across the UK, faces significant challenges and new ways will have to be found to deal with these.

While we welcome scrutiny of the NHS, what we really need throughout this time is a sensible discussion with the public and politicians about the future of the NHS and how we can transform patient care.

We will continue to work hard to influence and provide context and a voice for NHS Wales during the campaigning in the run-up to the National Assembly Election.

As part of this work, we will continue to build and strengthen relationships with other organisations as we all work together to address some of the many shared issues that the future holds.

As we do this, we will focus on our vision for the future of the NHS in Wales, as articulated in our Challenge 2016 briefing.

Our aim is for an NHS that meets the needs of the people it serves, and is ready to change to meet those needs in the future.

We believe a health and care system fit for the future should:

• Invest in prevention and early intervention to support and maintain health, well-being and independence in communities;
• Provide person-centred care that is integrated, compassionate and joined-up across sectors;
• Empower and inform people to take responsibility for their health and shape their own care around their individual needs, ensuring they are involved in decision-making;
• Listen to and learn from the experiences of patients, their carers and staff and be accountable to the public;
• Continually improve quality and safety, engage and equip staff to work in new ways and embrace innovation and technology to achieve this;
• Reduce inequalities in outcomes, eliminate discrimination and value mental and physical health equally; and
• Use finite resources responsibly, efficiently and fairly, making tough choices which ensure sustainable services.

For more information please visit our website www.welshconfed.org and follow us on @WelshConfed

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February 2016