



Welsh NHS Confederation
Conffederasiwn GIG Cymru

The voice of NHS leadership in Wales

IMPACT REPORT 2022/23



Foreword

2022/23 has been a year like no other. At a time characterised by political change, economic upheaval and industrial disputes, we have made the case for the issues that matter most to NHS leaders in Wales and provided them with much-needed support behind the scenes.

Whether it's influencing the government for a fair funding settlement for the NHS, improving understanding of the challenges facing social care, urging the government and unions to end the industrial dispute or engaging with politicians on the need for a cross-government approach to tackle health inequalities, we have never shied away from playing our part in helping solve the problems the health and care sector faces.

The team's support for NHS leadership groups has been unwavering, streamlining leaders' programmes of work to improve the sharing of knowledge and expertise across Chief Executive, Chair, Vice Chair and Director peer groups. This has enhanced cohesion by increasing understanding of whole-system priorities, creating the impetus to explore shared challenges and develop collective solutions. Working so closely with NHS leaders gives us in-depth insight, enabling us to exert great influence in our policy work.

Over the last 12 months, the National Health Service has faced huge challenges and the Welsh NHS Confederation team has ensured that its leaders have been supported and heard. Therefore, it's good to look back and reflect on what we've achieved and what we've learned. This report provides a snapshot of some of the ways we've made an impact on behalf of our members over the last 12 months.

We will continue to represent, connect and support NHS leaders in Wales in the year ahead as they face fresh challenges and opportunities as we approach 75 years of the NHS.



Darren Hughes
Director
Welsh NHS Confederation



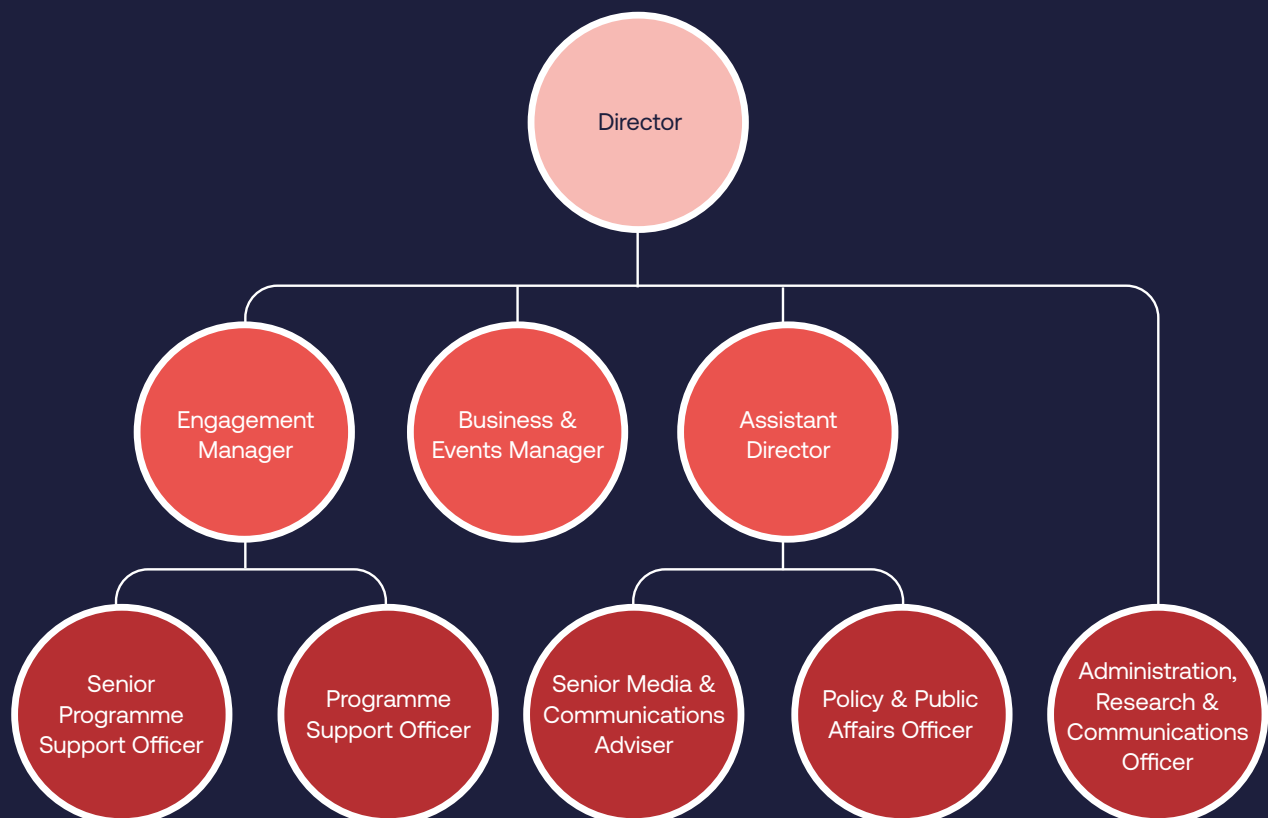
Who we are

The Welsh NHS Confederation is the national membership body representing the leaders of the organisations making up the NHS in Wales: the seven local health boards, three NHS trusts and two special health authorities.

We host NHS Wales Employers and are part of the NHS Confederation; a registered charity that draws its membership from every part of the health system in Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

Our team

The Welsh NHS Confederation is comprised of a small team who cover communications, policy and member engagement. The team works closely with NHS leaders to ensure they are represented, connected and supported at a national level.



What we do

We support our members by acting as a driving force for positive change through strong representation, connecting system leaders and our proactive policy, influencing, communications and engagement work.



Represent

We represent organisations and sectors to ensure local organisations and systems work in the best interests of service users, citizens and staff.



Connect

We connect the whole healthcare system to boost system working and develop solutions to shared challenges.



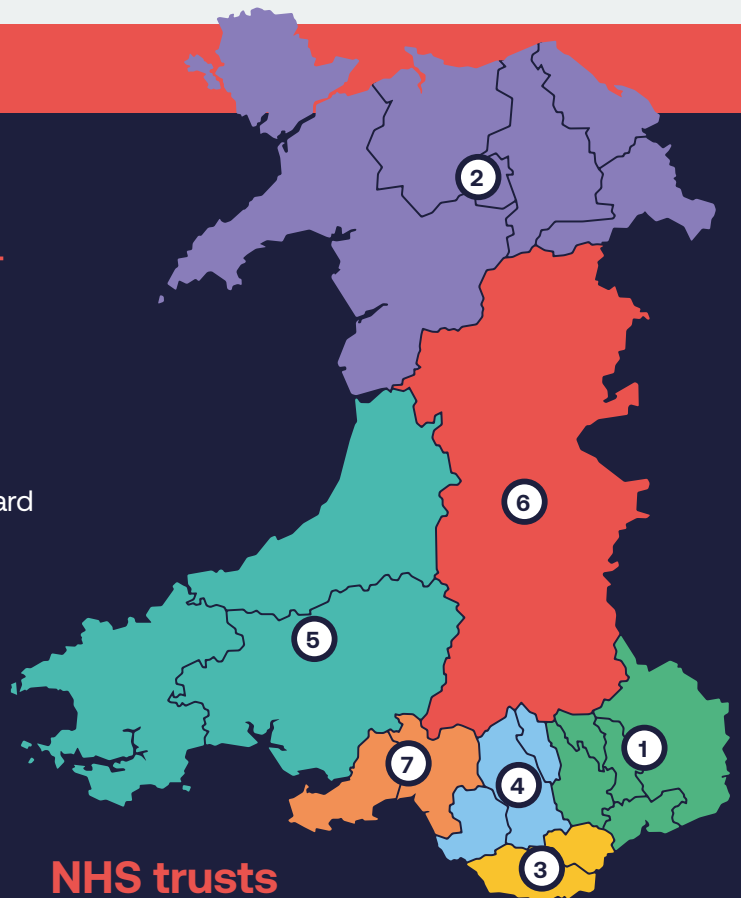
Support

We support leaders to develop and hone their leadership skills, equipping leaders with tools, ideas and insights and connecting them with a community of leaders.

Our members

Local health boards

- 1 Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
- 2 Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- 3 Cardiff and Vale University Health Board
- 4 Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
- 5 Hywel Dda University Health Board
- 6 Powys Teaching Health Board
- 7 Swansea Bay University Health Board



Special health authorities

- + Digital Health and Care Wales
- + Health Education and Improvement Wales

NHS trusts

- + Public Health Wales NHS Trust
- + Velindre University NHS Trust
- + Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust

2022/23 at a glance



Represent



Published **50+** press releases, blogs and comment pieces and received **80+** media inquiries, providing **30+** radio and TV interviews, resulting in **130+** mentions in the media



Responded to **12** Senedd Committee inquiries and Welsh Government consultations, resulting in **100+** mentions in the Senedd



Published **18** briefings and reports, calling for changes and showcasing good practice and innovation across the NHS in Wales

Connect



Hosted **12** thought leadership online events, attracting **1,000+** attendees from across the health and care sector and beyond



Hosted our Annual Conference and Exhibition, attracting **300+** delegates and **28** organisations as exhibitors



Posted to **6,000+** followers on Twitter and LinkedIn, garnering almost **160,000** impressions and nearly **2,000** interactions



Held **25** Health and Wellbeing Alliance meetings, bringing together **80+** health and care organisations

Support



Provided corporate and executive support to **60+** chair, vice chair and chief executive group meetings



Provided programme management and administrative support to **100+** executive director peer group meetings, coordinated **150+** guest presenters and monitored the delivery of **1,100+** peer group actions



Supported **40+** NHS representatives to provide oral evidence to Senedd Committee inquiries



Produced **200+** member briefings and updates, distilling latest news, views and developments

10 ways we've made an impact:

Political and media influence

By utilising and distilling member insight, we have become the trusted voice of NHS leaders in the media; influencing the national narrative, raising awareness and improving understanding of the challenges facing the health and care system in Wales, as well as potential solutions. This has enabled us to exert strong political influence to bring about effective change.


Our political and media influence has focused on the following four areas this year:

01 Influencing the government budget

We engaged extensively on the Welsh Government's Budget 2023-24 process.

This included attending stakeholder events, directly engaging with Members of the Senedd (MSs), providing written evidence to the draft budget consultation, supporting NHS representatives to provide oral evidence, commenting in the media, publishing a detailed report and providing briefings for Senedd debates.

We articulated our members' key financial calls, covering revenue, capital, digital, workforce and social care, to ensure the views of NHS leaders were heard and better understood. Our written response received 22 mentions in the Senedd and in Committee reports during the scrutiny process, more than any other organisation.



“The information received from the Welsh NHS Confederation has shaped the Health and Social Care Committee's line of questioning and we welcome their responses to inquiries. I've also drawn on their briefings in my Senedd contributions.”

Member of the Senedd

02 Raising awareness of the challenges facing social care

We strengthened our influence as the media's go-to organisation for system-wide patient flow issues.

We helped build journalists' understanding, shining a light on the challenges facing social care and how they're impacting the NHS and the wider population.

We conducted a survey of NHS leaders in Wales to enable us to better voice their views on integration and patient flow issues. Our report called on the government to provide sustainable funding for social care. We highlighted examples of work by NHS organisations, in partnership with local authorities and third sector organisations, to improve patient flow and provide better care.

This work led to responses from political parties, further discussions with MSs and the Minister for Health and Social Services, being quoted in a Senedd research blog, mentions in Senedd debates and coverage on BBC Wales.

03 Tackling health inequalities

Exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, tackling health inequalities has been a key priority for NHS leaders.

We put forward calls to the Welsh Government to focus on tackling the wider causes of health inequalities across a breadth of Senedd inquiry responses, including gynaecological cancer, the draft budget, dentistry and mental health inequalities. Our calls have been mentioned 13 times in Committee inquiry reports and debates, including extensively in the dentistry report.

We engaged with MSs and stakeholders on the implications of the cost-of-living crisis and presented at Senedd Cross-Party Group meetings. We hosted a topical webinar on how to protect people's health and save lives during the cost-of-living crisis.

“The Welsh NHS Confederation provides an invaluable service for the NHS in Wales through its work to provide clear, constructive and insightful communication between the service, Welsh Government and elected members across Wales.”

NHS Chief Executive

04 Highlighting key system pressure points

Throughout the year, we discussed, informed, represented and engaged with stakeholders on a range of other topics including the ongoing implications of COVID-19, population health, access to services and ongoing industrial action.

We have provided a Wales-wide voice to politicians and in the media throughout ongoing industrial action disputes in the NHS, urging governments and trade unions to leave no stone left unturned in working towards a resolution. This included improving understanding and influencing the media narrative, both through responses and radio and TV interviews with BBC Radio Wales, ITV Wales at Six, Global Radio and the Health Service Journal.



“I really value the work of the Welsh NHS Confederation in representing the voice of NHS organisations. Because of the close and regular links through the peer groups with every health board, trust and special health authority across the country, and the fact that they are a relatively small and tight team, they have a deep understanding of the issues we face as well as the wider political context.”

NHS Chair

05 Supporting and connecting leadership groups and programmes of work

We facilitated national conversations, connecting NHS leaders from across Wales and the UK.

The improved sharing of knowledge and expertise across peer groups has increased understanding of whole-system priorities and created the impetus to explore shared challenges and develop collective solutions.

We enhanced our secretarial and policy development support to chairs, vice chairs and chief executives, working closely with members on key strategic issues related to the delivery of their respective priorities. Director peer groups benefitted from our strategic insights, infrastructure and administrative support, enabling cross-organisational discussions and action.

We delivered a Forum event for all peer groups with over 120 executive director attendees. This allowed enhanced cross-peer group working to discuss and develop initiatives to transform NHS services.



“The support provided by the Welsh NHS Confederation has been invaluable. They provided a level of continuity and consistency during a period of disruption which was extremely helpful.”

Chair of executive peer group

06 Providing valuable insight and sharing good practice

We have continued to raise awareness of good practice and innovation across the NHS, which helps improve services and outcomes for patients.

Our regular briefings have spanned examples in primary and community care, prevention and early intervention and innovations in service delivery, including tackling the planned care backlog and supporting people to ‘wait well’.

We have kept NHS leaders informed of policy and political developments by sharing over 200 member briefings and weekly and monthly newsletters, providing updates and distilling the latest news to enable leaders to make decisions based on the most up to date information.

07 Building strong relationships through our Health and Wellbeing Alliance

We relaunched the Welsh NHS Confederation Health and Wellbeing Alliance, which now comprises over 80 health and care organisations.

We developed shared policy positions on areas including social care, mental health, obesity, climate and sustainability and health inequalities, resulting in greater political influence by working in partnership.

Mind the gap: What's stopping change?, developed in partnership with the Royal College of Physicians, featured calls for a cross-government plan to tackle inequalities, while the follow up publication Everything affects health detailed how organisations are working to break down these barriers. Both reports were endorsed by over 50 organisations and led to further engagement with Welsh Government officials and opposition parties, who supported our calls in the Senedd.



“The relationships and networks we've gained through the Health and Wellbeing Alliance are invaluable, and the collective voice is extremely powerful. The Alliance is a great initiative that we wholeheartedly support.”

Welsh NHS Confederation Health and Wellbeing Alliance member

08 Promoting best practice and thought leadership through events

Our Annual Conference and Exhibition brought together over 300 delegates from health, social care and beyond, with a sold-out exhibition, a breadth of strategic topics covered and positive feedback.

We established our Wellbeing for Wales webinar programme to promote thought leadership from across sector boundaries, attracting over 1,000 attendees across 12 events.

Responding to member needs, webinars included the development of primary care clusters, the impact housing has on health and wellbeing and how digital supports the transformation of health and care in Wales. We also hosted a keynote session with Judith Paget CBE, who shared her vision for health and social care in Wales.

09 Working in partnership to improve population health

This year, we continued to work in partnership with a cross sector of organisations to improve population health.

As part of our MoU with the Arts Council of Wales, we commissioned an evaluation of health boards' arts and health coordinator programme, which demonstrated how the programme has improved the health and wellbeing of patients, staff and the wider population. We showcased how Wales is leading the way in embedding arts and creativity across the NHS in a webinar with over 130 delegates.

We launched a joint report and member session with Community Leisure UK to examine how leisure and culture trusts can further support the NHS. We also hosted a joint event in the Senedd with ABPI Cymru Wales, engaging with 26 MSs and researchers on tackling health inequalities through innovative medicine.



“Collaboration with the Welsh NHS Confederation has been at the forefront of our health promotion work. Their network and insight has helped us build stronger connections locally and develop and expand their person-centred approach to health and wellbeing.”

Welsh NHS Confederation partner

10 Engaging with key stakeholders to represent the NHS in Wales

At meetings, events, conferences and as board and committee members across the spectrum of health and care, we voiced key issues on behalf of members, gathered insight and raised awareness of NHS challenges and opportunities, helping to influence policy.

We engaged with ministers, officials and sector bodies on issues of strategic importance to our members, including the interface between health and care, preparing for the COVID-19 inquiry, EU transition, the NHS Executive, health inequalities, ageing, disability, the climate emergency and the wellbeing of future generations.

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