



Listening to our patients

Network News

Welcome

Summer 2009

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Welcome to the summer edition of **'Network News'**. In this second edition there is news on the Readers Panel and some other activities where you have made a difference. We are introducing a new feature called 'spotlight on...' where you can learn about our Partners in Healthcare Team and other Network members.

We also have an update on how your feedback and involvement has enabled us to make changes to the way we deliver our services.

May we take this opportunity to thank you for your continued involvement and support in helping us to ensure that your views and feedback are at the centre of our Service.

Partners in Healthcare Network Activities

Readers Panel

In March 2009 members of the Readers Panel carried out their first evaluations on three proposed draft information leaflets. Two leaflets were successfully approved and will now be available for the public. The leaflets are entitled 'Your Rights, your information' for both the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust and NHS Direct Wales. The third was recommended for a complete rewrite and will undergo further work prior to going back to the Readers Panel for assessment.

There was a great response of over 70% in the number of returns on the proposed materials and many thanks to all members who returned evaluations, comments and suggestions. Copies of the published leaflets will be sent to all members of the Readers Panel. The leaflets can be viewed and downloaded from our website www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk



You've told us - we've listened

In this section we want to show you how we've used your feedback to develop services. Below are three examples of how listening to people have improved our services.



Involving Minority Ethnic Communities

Feedback from a number of focus groups with Minority Ethnic communities highlighted the need to review our materials which advise people about how they can access our services in a variety of other languages. It became clear during the focus groups, that people were unaware that 'Language Line', a translation and interpretation facility, is available when they contact the Ambulance Service and NHS Direct Wales. As a result, information on how to access the Ambulance Service and NHS Direct Wales is now available in 12 languages through the websites. We are also reviewing all of our promotional materials to consider other ways in which we can promote the Language Line facility.



Deaf Community and Hard of Hearing – update

We continue to work with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and have attended further focus groups across Wales. Work is underway to develop a dedicated contact point for people who are deaf and hard of hearing to access our services. Following feedback from the focus groups about their concerns in communicating with staff, we have developed a Medical Information Card, which has been consulted on within local communities and relevant stakeholders.

To date, positive feedback has been received and we are now looking at the next steps to develop this work. The Medical Information Card will hold key information about an individual's medical history and other important details to help improve communication between patients and health professionals.

This card has received attention from the Centre for Equality and Human Rights as an example of good practice.

Laryngectomy Patients

Following meetings with the Cwm Taf Laryngectomee Support Group, we have been able to implement new operational working practices for First Responders. Raising awareness of the issues Laryngectomy patients face when needing ambulance services has resulted in First Responders being appropriately trained to care for laryngectomy patients along with carrying specific laryngectomy oxygen masks. The oxygen masks are also now part of the standard ambulance kit for all operational front line vehicles. We recognise that there is still further work to be undertaken and will be looking at developing an Ambulance Registration Scheme for identified Laryngectomy patients to enable continued appropriate patient care.



Profile of the Partners in Healthcare Team

Introducing the Partners in Healthcare Team - led by Leanne Hawker the Team is responsible for developments and activities that ensure patients and public continue to sit at the heart of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust. As Leanne states "Our vision is for Partners in Healthcare to make a valued contribution at all levels across the Trust, is patient-centred, clinically engaged, and has a culture of care that supports people to make safe, appropriate and informed healthcare choices".

PIH Team

clockwise from the top - Andrew Clement, Alison Johnstone, Nia Davies, Gareth Thomas, Fiona Maclean, Helen Sullivan, Keri Van Den Berg, Leanne Hawker and Mandy Jenkins.



Partners in Healthcare Activities

All of the following activities associated with the Network relate to capturing patient's experiences to enable the Trust to ensure that all services and developments are patient centred.

Partners in Healthcare Panel:

Members can contribute to discussions, evaluations and delivery of Patient and Public Involvement across the Trust and have the opportunity to attend Trust meetings.

Readers Panel:

As a member you will be able to review new (proposed) materials to ensure they are easy to read and well designed.

Patient Stories:

You can share your 'patient story' that will provide a valuable insight into the quality of the healthcare you received. You can give your story online on our website: www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk.

Customer Satisfaction Research (Mystery Shopper):

By participating in Mystery Shopper exercises, you will help us to make sure that the services we are providing are of a high standard.

Surveys:

Planned public surveys on our services are carried out by telephone and post; you will have an opportunity to participate in these planned surveys.

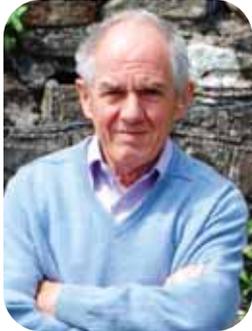
Open Forums/Events:

Open events are held in local communities across Wales. You will be able to attend these events and participate in discussions on services and developments within the Trust.

If you would like to take part in any of these activities please contact 01792 776252 ext 5400, email ppi@ambulance.wales.nhs.uk or join online: www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk

'Spotlight on'

We would like to raise the profile of our Network members and their contributions to our organisation and local communities, as well as learn from and share ideas, experiences and good practice. If you would like to share your profile please email ppi@ambulance.wales.nhs.uk with a brief outline of yourself and what you would like to share, or contact 01792 776252 ext 5400.



Our first 'spotlight' is Mr Melvyn Halls.

Melvyn is a member of the Partners in Healthcare Network and is assisting us to improve communication following his personal experiences of using ambulance services.

"I was told about the Partners in Healthcare Network by my local Alzheimer's Society branch that I am a member of. I decided to join the Network to use my experiences as a carer to help influence the service. My wife passed away in 2006, and I had been caring for her for over 6 years. During this time I called the ambulance service several times for my wife. I received both good and bad experiences of the service. The bad experiences could have been avoided if members of staff were more aware of the difficulties faced by Alzheimer's patients and their carers. I hope that sharing my experiences as a member of the Partners in Healthcare Network can make positive changes to the service and improve communication between staff and patients or their carers."



Introducing Dr Kevin Fitzpatrick

A strong champion for Partners in Healthcare, who believes in listening carefully to people about their experiences of using Welsh Ambulance Services.

Over the past 20 years he has established himself as one of the country's most passionate and knowledgeable advocates of the rights of disabled people. In the many roles he has undertaken including that of Wales' Commissioner of the Disability Rights Commission and managing his own company 'Inclusion 21 Ltd' he has developed as a constant campaigner who is determined that policy makers should pay more heed to disability matters and not treat them as an afterthought. For example, four out of every 10 people out of work are disabled, so employers should be more aware of the issues they face securing and keeping work. His work has often focused on the particular needs of young disabled people who are further disadvantaged by having to struggle to have their concerns heard, especially by those who have significant influence over their daily lives.

Dr. Kevin Fitzpatrick is a Non-Executive Director with the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust, Chairman of the Partners in Healthcare forum and a valuable Network member who brings his expertise and extensive knowledge to assist the Team in ensuring that equality of opportunity and choice is integral to all service developments within the Trust.

What's New?

Leaflets

Following feedback from staff and service users, new information leaflets are being written and will go to the Readers Panel for review. The themes for these new leaflets relate to practical information following a 'sudden death' and information on types of ambulances available for patient care and transport.

Suggestion Boxes

Three suggestion boxes have been placed in three different health locations in Carmarthenshire. These are a GP surgery, pharmacy and hospital. We hope to get feedback from a wide range of healthcare users and any thoughts or suggestions for service improvements. If you see one of the boxes please take the opportunity to complete a suggestion card. If you have any ideas as to where you feel these boxes could be located please let us know.

Did you know?

Information is Power - Looking after your health and well-being

Information can help you make decisions about your health and well-being and help you take control of your own and your family's health.

Health information can help you when:

- You've just been diagnosed with a condition or illness
- You need information on treatments or medical procedures
- You want information about someone close to you who has a condition or illness
- You are looking to improve your health and become more active

Just as a medicine or drug can be prescribed, so can information – and it can be a powerful form of treatment. Information Prescriptions are a great way to make sure good health information is available when and where you need it most. Information Prescriptions can include information on newly diagnosed conditions, long term conditions, how to get the most out of appointments, and how to access and use local services appropriately.

You can get an Information Prescription by contacting NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 and speaking to a Health Information Specialist about your information needs. Or you can visit the website www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk and fill out an 'online enquiry'. A DIY Information Prescription facility is also available which will allow you to choose and select relevant information and services suitable for you. Topics covered focus on long term conditions such as Arthritis, Cancer, Diabetes and Heart Disease. You can select the information you want about health conditions, and choose what information you need about local health services, including self help and support services.



Health Events Campaign - Sun Awareness

Don't let sunburn catch you out!

Skin cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer, and cases of skin cancer have increased steadily over the years. Exposure to sunlight is the main cause of the disease. Skin cancer is largely preventable and the best prevention against skin cancer is to be careful in the sun and limit the amount of time you spend in the sun.

Don't be fooled into thinking you'll only burn if you sunbathe – playing sport outside or travelling by car with the windows down all expose you to the sun. You can even burn through the clouds, so it's a good idea to wear sun protection lotion on your face all year round.

Those most at risk are people with fair skin, lots of moles or freckles or a family history of skin cancer. Know your skin type and use the UV Index to find out when you need to protect yourself.

A painful sunburn just once every two years can triple the risk of the most serious type of skin cancer.

UV radiation from the sun (which burns your skin) is most intense in the middle of the day (between April and September), at high altitudes (such as on skiing holidays) and the closer you are to the equator.

Whether you're at home or abroad, use shade, clothing and at least factor 15 sunscreen to protect yourself and reduce the risk by making the following relatively small changes to the way you behave in the sun.

- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm
 - Make sure you never burn
 - Aim to cover up with a t-shirt, hat and sunglasses
 - Remember to take extra care with children
 - Then use at least factor 15 sunscreen
- Also report mole changes or unusual skin growths promptly to your doctor.

For more information on skin cancer visit www.cancerresearchuk.org

Below is a **patient's story** recently submitted on our website:

"I have been unfortunate to need the Emergency 999 Service three times in the last four months owing to chronic heart disease. I only have praise for the crews who attended to me on these days, they are always calm and very knowledgeable and have saved my life at least once prior to being transported to Morriston CCU. I hear and read quite a lot about response times and again I have to say I have never been kept waiting more than a few minutes for either a Paramedic or for the Emergency Ambulance to arrive.

I would also like to say a big thank you to the Ambulance Control operators who are always very nice and very helpful no matter what time of the day I phone.

To finish I would like to say again a very very big THANK YOU to all at the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust for all your hard work, and in the nicest possible way I hope I don't see you again in 2009."

Thank You.



'Siren' Newsletter

You can sign up for and download the latest edition of 'Siren' the quarterly Welsh Ambulance Service newsletter. It regularly contains features about the role of different departments within our service which you may find interesting by using the following link www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk or contact the Partners in Healthcare Team by email ppi@ambulance.wales.nhs.uk or phone **01792 776252 ext 5400.**

What do **you** want included?

Please let us know if there is anything that you want included in our newsletters and we will try our best to do so or if you have any comments please contact the Partners in Healthcare Team by email ppi@ambulance.wales.nhs.uk or phone **01792 776252 ext 5400.**

This newsletter is also available in Braille, other languages, large print and audio format upon request.

Useful websites for sources of information and advice

www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk
www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk
www.cancerresearchuk.org