Dear Colleague

South Wales Programme: Formal Public Consultation

You’ll remember that we were in touch last year about the South Wales Programme, which was established in 2012 by the five health boards across the region, and the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust, to look at the challenges facing a small number of important, specialist services.

I am writing now to let you know that the Boards of all of the organisations involved in the Programme agreed yesterday (May 22, 2013) to proceed to formal public consultation on four options for the future of consultant-led maternity and neonatal care, inpatient children’s services and emergency medicine (A&E) for South Wales and South Powys. The formal consultation period begins today (May 23) and runs for an eight-week period until July 19.

The South Wales Programme was established in response to the increasing fragility of these important services recognising that, as a South Wales health community, we needed to address together the issues that these services currently face.

Following a series of clinical conferences in May and June 2012, which involved hundreds of clinical staff and others from across the region, an extensive 12-week engagement process was undertaken in the autumn of 2012, involving a wide range of stakeholders, staff and the public. This raised awareness of the challenges facing these services and outlined some ideas in terms of how they could be configured to provide safe and sustainable services in the future.

The feedback from this engagement process has informed the options which we are now consulting formally on and I very much hope that you will help us to gain feedback by sharing your views and getting involved in the consultation process.

This is a real opportunity to shape the future of some of our most important services across South Wales and there are a number of ways for you to let us know what you think.

We have established a South Wales Programme website – [www.wales.nhs.uk/swp](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/swp) - which provides a wealth of information to support the consultation process, as well as a link to an online questionnaire and details of public meetings being held across South Wales and details of others ways to share your views.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Battle
Chair

22nd May 2013
All responses to the consultation will be shared with an independent research company, Opinion Research Services, which will be analysing all the feedback, as well as Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Community Health Council. We will also be publishing our consultation responses, although you have the option to opt out of this, should you wish your contribution to remain confidential.

I hope you will feel able to take part in this consultation, as we genuinely value all views in this open process. Please feel free to circulate this information to colleagues and contacts, as we are keen that as many people as possible are aware of, and contribute to, the consultation.

I look forward to seeing many of you over the next eight weeks and to enjoying some robust and stimulating discussions on the future of these specialist services.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number shown above. Alternatively, you can email the South Wales Programme Team at swpresponse@wales.nhs.uk

Best regards

MARIA BATTLE
Chair
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board