Your local health service

There are important changes taking place in the NHS in Wales from 1st April 2003. These changes will result in a service that is focused more closely on what people in your area really need.

Different areas of Wales have different health needs and priorities. It is therefore important that health services are planned locally by people who really know the area and what local people need and want. The changes that are taking place will bring this local focus.

The new Local Health Boards

From 1st April, the Health Authorities in Wales will no longer exist and Local Health Boards (LHBs) will take over. Around three quarters of the budget for the NHS in Wales will go to the LHBs and they will plan what health services their populations need and then pay hospital trusts, family doctors, dentists and others to provide these services.

Each LHB will have a board which will make decisions, made up of local doctors, a nurse, other health professionals, members of the local council and voluntary organisations, and others to represent the voice of patients. They will also have a small executive team to put the decisions into action and provide services for the public.

Working together to improve health

The LHBs will cover exactly the same areas as the 22 local authorities in Wales. This is to allow much closer working between the NHS and the local councils, which is important for planning how to tackle long term problems with health and well being.

Indeed, the LHBs and local councils now have a statutory duty to work together - in partnership with other local organisations - to produce strategies for improving health, well-being and social care for the people living in their area. Parts of Wales have some of the worst health in Europe, and it will take all these organisations working closely together to tackle this.

The LHBs will also work closely with their local population, consulting on significant changes and listening to local views.
Specialised services and public health

Although LHBs will plan and pay for most hospital and family health services, there are a few specialised services which are better planned across the whole of Wales. These include cardiac surgery, emergency ambulance services and some children’s services. These will be the responsibility of a new organisation, the Health Commission Wales (Specialist Services), also to be created on 1st April.

The important work of Health Authorities on public health is transferring to a single organisation covering the whole of Wales, the National Public Health Service. They will give advice and guidance to LHBs on a range of issues such as disease protection and control as well as child protection.

What does this mean for you?

Although these are important changes in the way the NHS is organised, your local hospital and family health services will still be there as usual. You should continue to see your doctor, dentist, optician and chemist just as you did before. As the new system gets to work, changes and improvements will become apparent on the ground.

Many people will never need to contact their Local Health Board, though you may still benefit from the work they are doing behind the scenes. However, your LHB will be able to help you with the following:

- Information on the range of healthcare services available in your area - for example, where your nearest GP or NHS dentist is located.
- If you have a complaint about a GP, dentist, optometrist or pharmacist which you cannot resolve with the people concerned. You must first make your complaint to the practice so they have a chance to correct matters. (The Local Health Board will not be able to respond to complaints about a hospital service - these should be addressed to the hospital trust.)

The addresses and phone numbers of the Local Health Boards are given on the following pages. If you have access to the internet, you can find their websites through www.wales.nhs.uk.
1 Anglesey Local Health Board
17 High Street
Llangefni
Anglesey
LL77 1LT
Tel: 01248 751 229

2 Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board
Station Hill
Abertillery
Blaenau Gwent
NP13 1UJ
Tel: 01495 313 838

3 Bridgend Local Health Board
North Court
David Street
Bridgend Industrial Est.
Bridgend
CF31 3TP
Tel: 01656 766 736

4 Caerphilly Local Health Board
Ystrad Mynach Hospital
Caerphilly Road
Ystrad Mynach
CF82 5YR
Tel: 01443 862 056

5 Cardiff Local Health Board
Trenewydd
Fairwater Road
Llandaff
Cardiff
CF5 2LD
Tel: 02920 552 212

6 Carmarthen Local Health Board
Glanmor Terrace
Burry port
Carmarthenshire
SA16 0NE
Tel: 01554 834 962

7 Ceredigion Local Health Board
1st floor offices, Natwest Bank
37 High Street
Lampeter
Ceredigion
SA48 7BD
Tel: 01570 423 983

8 Conwy Local Health Board
Glyn Colwyn
19 Nant Y Glyn Road
Colwyn Bay
Conwy
LL28 7PU
Tel: 01492 536 586

9 Denbighshire Local Health Board
Ty Livingstone
HM Stanley Hospital
St Asaph
Denbighshire
LL17 0RS
Tel: 01745 589 601

10 Flintshire Local Health Board
Preswylfa
Hendy Road
Mold
Flintshire
CH7 1PZ
Tel: 01352 744 103

11 Gwynedd Local Health Board
Eryldon
Ffordd Campbell
Caernarfon
LL55 1HU
Tel: 01286 674 218