

MEDSERVE Wales

Chairman's Report 2018

This is my second formal report as chairman since I was appointed in December 2016 and looking back, we have had a great deal of change in the last 12 months. I would like to start by thanking and acknowledging several people whose role has come to an end this year.

Firstly, Dr Richard Lewis. Richard was one of the founder members of MEDSERVE and its first chairman. He has continued to respond from his home in Maesteg for more than 20 years, despite being in some high-profile posts with BMA Wales and Welsh Government. He has always supported MEDSERVE in any way he could – helping with the organisation of meetings and putting me in touch with John Jenkins, the BMA Wales Head of Public Affairs, who then became a MEDSERVE Wales Trustee. Richard was always a very useful sounding board for those awkward political problems, he always knew someone that could help! Richard decided to stop responding early this year, he has our grateful thanks.

Secondly, this year has seen the retirement of four trustees. They have all served MEDSERVE Wales over many years, for at least two of the seven-year terms, and have been supportive of all the charity has done over the years. Mr John Jenkins, former BMA PR guru, has been invaluable in his knowledge of publicity and public relations; and Mr John Ayres, former senior manager at the Heath Hospital, was always a source of knowledge and encouragement. Mr David Jones, retired Regional Staff Officer for the Welsh Ambulance Service (WAST), has had a long association with MEDSERVE since its inception, used to host its meetings in Mid Glamorgan Ambulance control centre in Church village and subsequently in Caerphilly Ambulance station, and taught me and several others emergency response driving. Finally, Mr Keith Moger OBE, who was the chairman of the MEDSERVE trustees for 15 years, increased our profile via his Rotary Club connections, pushed us in the right direction in guiding us towards a new charitable status, and has been a fount of knowledge on so many subjects. I cannot overstate how the charity owes its continued running to these gentlemen, and they have my personal heartfelt thanks for all their time and effort.

Lastly, Leanne our administrative assistant left us to have a baby! Leanne monitored the email, took minutes at the meetings and kept things in order. She had a baby girl on the first of June. We send her our thanks and best wishes.

One of the highlights of the year for me was right at the beginning, when, in January, we were all issued with new equipment. This was the first time in 20 years responding for MEDSERVE that we all now had brand new, standardised equipment that will last us well into the next decade. This was made possible by Matt Creed, our Treasurer, who negotiated a grant from the Welsh Assembly Government of £246,000 for equipment to enable us to continue to provide our enhanced care service to South Wales for the next 5 years. All we have to provide them with in return is our continued blood, sweat and tears and annual statistics. This new equipment is one of the things that has provided a strong platform to allow us to expand and improve over the last 12 months, though it has also provided Matt a headache in where to keep it all! This was a massive effort on Matt's part and one that should be officially recognised.

Staying with financial matters, we are just coming to the end of a 12-month fundraising agreement with the Rebellion Group. This relationship was designed to take the fundraising pressure off the charity by devolving it to a third party. This has had limited success over the last year but has

brokered a fantastic partnership with Oil for Wales, a family run Cardiff based company who have generously supported us with free fuel in the last year and has promised the same for 2019. This donation is worth up to £2000 every year and we would like to thank Colin Owens and his team so much for this. You can read about our partnership on their website at Oil4Wales.co.uk

Another big leap forwards this year has been the development of our Tier system of responders. This has come about because of the significant increase of interest in MEDSERVE by people from a wide variety of professional backgrounds and levels of experience. We have therefore stratified our responders to ensure that we can include as many people as possible and group them accordingly. The biggest change has been the development of the Tier 3 responders. These are clinicians who do not respond solo but do as part of team, either on a shift or as a co-response. The development of these Tier 3 responders has had two very positive knock-on effects – the development of our education days and the start of our weekend car shifts.

The combination of a lot of new equipment and a lot of new personnel pretty much ‘forced’ us into having an education day. The enthusiasm shown by those attending the first day – on the third day of the only real snow last January - was very encouraging and made me determined to make these a permanent fixture. We now plan to hold a whole day event every 6 months to cover curriculum for the Tier 3 members primarily, though I have an idea that the popularity of these days will grow rapidly. The next education day is in January 2019.

The other effect of an increased number of responders all needing experience and wanting to use their new training was the introduction of the weekend car shift. This pilot is running at the moment and comprises a team of 2 or 3 responders providing a volunteer enhanced care response over a 8-9 hour shift every weekend until the end of March. The interim results of the first 2 months have been published and are very encouraging. One of the main positives of this venture is its educational value; for doctors who are interested in the Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine career pathway, and also for paramedics and nurses who want to expand their skill set.

Another highlight of this year was the introduction of three new trustees. The Charity Commission demands that each charity has a group of trustees who are strategically and fiscally responsible for the running of the charity and the actions of its members. We have always tried to keep our responders and trustees separate to allow the trustees relative independence, but with a whole group of trustees retiring together this year I have become a trustee temporarily to ensure that the charity always has at least 2 trustees. I have been very lucky in successfully recruiting three new trustees this year. Mr Eric Bellew is a serving South Wales Fire and Rescue Divisional Commander and a longstanding supporter of the charity. Dr Craig Williams is a Consultant Anaesthetist at Princess of Wales Hospital Bridgend and was a responder for MEDSERVE for 15 years. Mr Dick Knill is a retired police superintendent who had been working on counter terrorism training. As you can see these three individuals will bring a remarkable strength and depth of knowledge and experience to our charity and I am very happy to welcome them to MEDSERVE Wales. As I write I am also hopeful in recruiting 3 more trustees from different areas of expertise and hope to have good news on that front by Christmas. If this is successful, I will resign as a trustee next year. The trustees meet twice a year and supply a report at the AGM.

Looking forward, there are a few things that I would like to accomplish in the next 12 months. The first is work for the Trustees – the changing of the charity’s constitution. Our present governing document – a Trust Deed – is now obsolete and requires so much alteration that it is more efficient to change the charity into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which is a much more relevant

structure and offers a lot more protection to the trustees from any liability. This work has already been started but I would like to have this transition complete during 2019.

The second goal is to establish an agreed written MOU with WAST, which will allow all our responders to have honorary contracts with the ambulance service. This will offer better protection for the responders and allows regular review of who is active on our behalf. Again, work is already well in progress with the formation of BASICS Wales, which is an umbrella organisation for immediate care groups and the organisation through which the MOU will be formed – an agreement between the 3 immediate care groups in Wales, and then one MOU between BASICS Wales and WAST. This umbrella organisation will help to ensure standardisation of practice and procedures throughout Wales and save us from duplicating a lot of work.

MEDSERVE Wales will be 25 years old in 2019. I am very optimistic that our charity will continue to grow in size and reputation and with the response we have seen to our initiatives in 2018 I am confident that this will happen.

Finally, can I thank all our responders and supporters who give up so much of their time and put so much effort into making South Wales a safer and healthier place. Without you there would be no charity. Our Silver Jubilee will be a good one!



Dr Ian Bowler

Chairman

MEDSERVE Wales

