

“Reform is an essential part of the future” says Vaughan Gething

Speaking ahead of the conference, Vaughan Gething said:

“2016 was a tumultuous year for our country. A year of unprecedented political upheaval and uncertainty that will impact on society and public service delivery for many years to come.

“But despite that uncertainty and despite record demand, our NHS delivered better health care for people across Wales. Welsh Ambulance performance is now the best in the UK, cancer survival rates continue to improve faster in Wales than any other part of the UK and overall waiting times are down 20% on last year.

“Whatever services people use – hospitals, GPs, social care, mental health services – they expect good quality care in a timely manner. Above all else, delivering on that is our prime concern.

“Our staff have worked extremely hard this winter and we have seen diagnostic and planned care waiting times reduce dramatically over the past year. I want to thank them for their dedication and commitment to the values of the NHS and to providing high-quality care.

“I’m proud of our achievements, but I want us to be more ambitious for 2017. I want us to continue to reduce planned care and diagnostic waits. I want us to build a health service that meets and delivers on the needs of our patients and that is sustainable, in spite of the challenges.

“Reform is an essential part of the future. If we do not reform then we will not deliver the change and improvement that is needed.

“This is our mission. It won’t be easy but it will be worth it.

“It’s time good performance was recognised. I want to encourage the boards and trusts that are operating well, that are delivering for local people, and incentivise excellence in our health service. We will be exploring how we can best make that happen.”