

The King's Fund >

Annual Review
2007/08

Ideas that change health care



Contents

02 » Foreword

An introduction from Chairman
Sir Cyril Chantler and Chief
Executive Niall Dickson

04 » Shaping policy

08 » Influencing behaviour

12 » Transforming services

16 » Key facts and figures

The King's Fund seeks to understand how the health system in England can be improved. Using that insight, we work with individuals and organisations to shape policy, transform services and bring about behaviour change.

Our work includes research, analysis, developing leaders and improving services. We also offer a wide range of resources - in our central London premises and through our website - to help everyone working in health share knowledge, learning and ideas.

Our independence enables us to work across political boundaries, with all professional groups and public, private and voluntary sectors. Above all, we work to make a difference to people's health.

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Foreword

The King's Fund Chairman Sir Cyril Chantler and Chief Executive Niall Dickson share their vision for the organisation and pick out highlights from last year. »

Left
Sir Cyril Chantler
Chairman
The King's Fund

Right
Niall Dickson
Chief Executive
The King's Fund



This time last year the health care system was entering uncharted territory. The government had not changed but we had a new Prime Minister with a new team at the Department of Health and the likelihood was that they would want to make their mark in some way.

The signal came almost immediately. The surgeon Sir Ara (now Lord) Darzi was asked to carry out a review of the NHS, hailed by the Secretary of State as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. His final report is expected later this year but already it is clear that the government is going to rely heavily on more effective commissioning to drive up standards of care, target services where they are most needed and improve efficiency.

At the same time, we are seeing some real change on the ground. There have been significant moves to involve clinical staff in shaping services – partly as a result of the Darzi review, partly because new financial management systems have for the first time begun to give doctors and others the ability to see the costs of what they are providing.

At The King's Fund our aim is to help bring about that change by understanding and influencing national policy but also by shaping how it is implemented and developed in practice. And we believe it is more important than ever to make the connection between the two.

Our policy and research work has had an impact on both policy-makers and frontline services. Our review of how the very large increases in NHS funding have been spent, led by Sir Derek Wanless, had important messages and lessons for government and was widely welcomed – there are signs that its key recommendations regarding public health and productivity are being taken forward.

Building on our major review of social care funding, we led a coalition of organisations to stimulate debate and maintain the momentum for reform. The Caring Choices initiative (see page 6) has led the government to launch its own national consultation on long-term care and, together with the original review, has prompted changes in policy from all three main political parties in England.

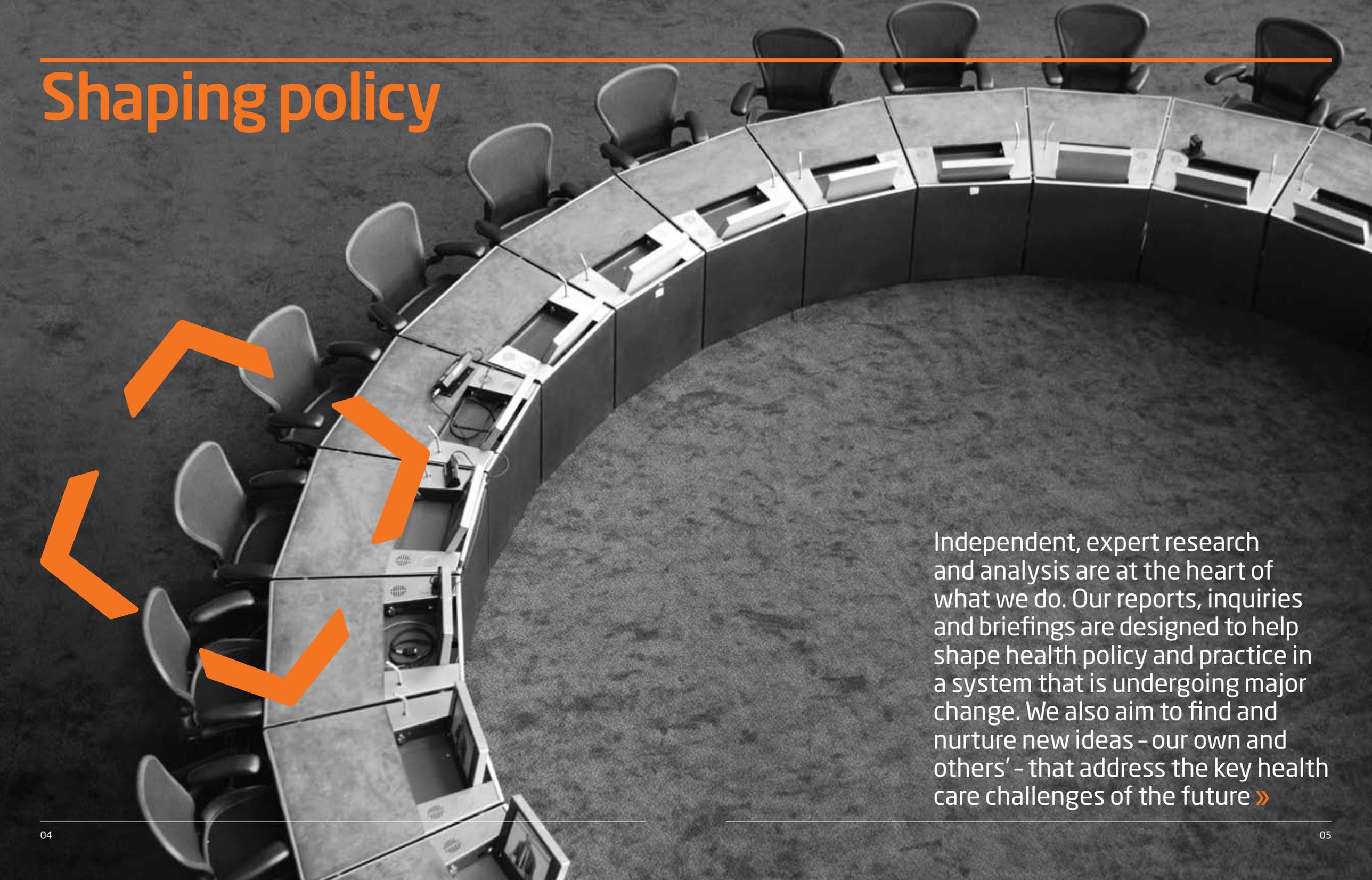
This year we commissioned a major independent inquiry chaired by Baroness O'Neill into the safety of maternity services (see page 14) with the initial aim of providing an objective analysis of safety standards, and from that identifying what needed to be done to ensure the care offered to women and their babies was as safe as possible. The recommendations of the inquiry have already been supported by leading organisations in this field and we are now committed to working with maternity services to follow up its findings and develop new ways of working.

The health service has always been rather better at treating the sick than looking after the dying and we continue to strive to improve standards of care at the end of life, as another part of our service improvement work. We have a close partnership with Marie Curie Cancer Care, and in the past year, as part of our Enhancing the Healing Environment project, we completed a pilot programme to improve facilities and standards of care in hospitals and hospices. Working with the Department of Health we hope to be able to roll this out across England in the coming year.

We also continue to engage directly with non-executives, managers and clinicians through our leadership work. Increasingly our open programmes are designed to provide sustained support as well as one-off development opportunities and we are undertaking a range of commissioned programmes for the NHS, including the NHS Management Training Scheme.

We are not a large organisation, but we don't need to be. We believe that combining our range of expertise and our objective approach with the knowledge, skills and passion of those working to improve health and health care – from strategic partners to individual managers and clinicians – allows us to have an influence and impact beyond our physical size.

Shaping policy



Independent, expert research and analysis are at the heart of what we do. Our reports, inquiries and briefings are designed to help shape health policy and practice in a system that is undergoing major change. We also aim to find and nurture new ideas – our own and others’ – that address the key health care challenges of the future »

Shaping policy

Making a clear link between policy research and impact on the ground is notoriously difficult. But The King's Fund's review of social care funding - and the follow-up Caring Choices initiative - have played a pivotal role in creating major change that has the potential to transform the lives of thousands of vulnerable older people.

From research to reform in long-term care

We were determined not to lose the momentum created by our review of social care funding for older people published in March 2006. There was clearly a need to debate the case for reform, but there was always the danger that the issue itself would once again fade into the background. We therefore joined forces with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Age Concern England, Help the Aged and 11 other organisations to consult older people, their families and carers as well as those working in long-term care. We wanted to know whether they thought reform was needed and, if so, the principles that they believed should underpin a new approach to funding.

The Caring Choices initiative held a series of consultation events in England and Scotland involving more than 700 people; it kept the issue of long-term care funding in the media and political spotlight and its final report pointed to important areas of emerging consensus as well as identifying and clarifying the difficult trade-offs that divided opinion.

From a starting point of little policy development in this area three years ago, all three main political parties are now committed to reform of the long-term care funding system. In May 2008, the government launched its own public consultation to help inform the development of a Green Paper, acknowledging the pivotal role played by The King's Fund's original social care review and the Caring Choices initiative.

Working in partnership with the country's leading older people's organisations was key to the success of Caring Choices. 'The final report reflected accurately what we were hearing in various parts of the country,' explained Pauline Thompson, Policy Adviser at Age Concern England.

'It was essential to keep up the momentum but it would have been very difficult for any one organisation to do it alone,' she said. 'It would have been very easy after the review [by The King's Fund] to let everyone forget about the issue, but Caring Choices kept the subject on the agenda.'

Views of the Caring Choices initiative

» It would have been very easy after the review to let everyone forget about the issue, but Caring Choices kept the subject on the agenda.⁰¹

01
Pauline Thompson
Policy Adviser
Age Concern England



More highlights

Influential but independent

At The King's Fund we value our independence and we believe others value it as well. We seek to engage with and influence clinicians, managers and policy-makers. We also aim to be a centre for debate and discussion where those who are interested in making health care better can exchange ideas and develop their thinking. And that includes political leaders. In the first few months of 2008, we have been championed by the Prime Minister, who said The King's Fund had 'been extremely influential in recent years' in social and health care policy. The Leader of the Opposition, David Cameron, gave a similar tribute adding that 'if you want to make a speech on health The King's Fund is the place to do it.'

Learning from spending

The first comprehensive assessment of the recent huge investment in the NHS was published by The King's Fund in September 2007. Five years on from his seminal report for the Treasury, which paved the way for the increases in spending, Sir Derek Wanless together with members of our policy team examined how the extra money had been spent; what the NHS had achieved; and whether

the pace and direction of reform had delivered value for money. The thorough and balanced report was welcomed by government and others, and the criticism of the progress on improving NHS productivity and on encouraging healthy behaviours has helped focus action in these areas.

Seeing the bigger picture

Rules and directives are a necessary part of any reform, but the health care system is not a machine and predicting how it will react to and cope with myriad changes is notoriously difficult. That is why we held the 'Windmill' exercise, which included an innovative two-day simulation of a fictional but realistic health economy from 2008 to 2011. Seventy senior managers, clinicians, policy-makers and regulators took part and helped us to develop some vital insights into how the whole NHS system could become more effective. Run in partnership with Monitor, Nuffield Hospitals and Loop2, the 'Windmill' exercise produced a report which called for much greater clarity about how the new system was intended to work as well as making far-reaching recommendations on areas such as rules for competition, greater clarity on regulation and improving the quality and supply of primary care.

Influencing behaviour



The King's Fund has a strong track record in developing and supporting leaders and organisations in health care. We help individuals respond to the changing opportunities and challenges they face and work with whole teams to maximise their effectiveness and drive change. Our leadership team runs a range of both open and commissioned programmes as well as a number of specialist networks »

Influencing behaviour

We are expanding our leadership work to offer ongoing support for individuals at key career points, from the earliest years of training through to board level posts. We help clinicians, managers and non-executives to reflect on the way they work and to develop the knowledge and personal resources required to create change. Increasingly, we are working with frontline staff to understand and meet new challenges, such as the joint project with the Royal College of Physicians to understand and harness the changing nature of medical professionalism.

Harnessing medical professionalism

The role of the doctor has changed significantly in recent years, reflecting major changes in the way health care is delivered as well as changes in wider society. Some of this has been unsettling, with reports of low morale and disillusionment. Last year, building on its own report and that of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP), The King's Fund joined forces with medical leaders to engage doctors and other health professionals in a major debate about the future role of the doctor.

We ran a series of 10 consultation events with the RCP across England and Wales, involving around 800 doctors and other health professionals. This was followed by four pilot events – specifically for medical students – run in partnership with the RCP, General Medical Council, NHS Institute for Improvement and Innovation and the Centre for Excellence in Developing Professionalism. More than 400 students took part and more joined the debate through a dedicated Facebook social networking group.

'I found the events absolutely fascinating,' said Dr Abby Gaunt, a junior doctor at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. 'There were some very inspiring people.'

'It can be daunting being a doctor in an age where patients have access to information and assume that you will know everything. Knowing how to deal with that, navigating and interpreting information for them is vital,' she said.

Dr Gaunt praised the events, which enabled participants to discuss issues in depth, while also having the opportunity to hear from senior figures in the profession.

A report from the first series of consultation events was published in May 2008 and its findings will feed into both Lord Darzi's review and an initiative led by Sir John Tooke, which aims to define the role of the doctor.

We are now working with our partners to roll out the student events to medical schools across the United Kingdom.

Views on medical professionalism

» It can be daunting being a doctor in an age where patients have access to information and assume that you will know everything. Knowing how to deal with that, navigating and interpreting information for them is vital.⁰²

02
Dr Abby Gaunt
Junior doctor
John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford



More highlights

Transformational leadership

The failure of the NHS to develop leaders from a wide range of backgrounds is a continuing cause of concern. Working in partnership with the NHS Institute's Breaking Through Programme, we have set up the Transformational Leadership Programme, which aims to increase diversity at senior levels by supporting and developing staff aspiring to director and chief executive level. Feedback from the first 24 participants in 2007 has been extremely positive and we are now working to develop the programme further.

Enhancing the Healing Environment

The King's Fund Enhancing the Healing Environment programme continues to expand and develop into new areas. By the end of 2007, more than 750 team members and 1,500 patients and staff had been supported in making major improvements to more than 150 areas used by patients and their families. The programme transforms people as well as buildings and we have now set up a learning network for those who have taken part. In the past year we have completed a Department of Health funded programme in 46 mental health and learning disabilities environments and a highly successful pilot targeted at environments for patients at the end of life. The government has now agreed to roll this pilot scheme out across England.

Refurbished viewing room
Royal Brompton Hospital
Enhancing the Healing Environment



Transforming services

Contributing new ideas and analysis is only part of what we do. Increasingly, we aim to build on that work to find better ways of delivering care. We create partnerships to take forward recommendations from our own projects as well as piloting or evaluating new approaches that emerge from other organisations»



Transforming services

From the outset, our major inquiry into the safety of maternity services was designed to have an impact on the ground. As well as producing an authoritative analysis of the issues with immediate recommendations for managers, clinicians and policy-makers, the intention was to develop new, practical interventions to create real and sustainable improvement.

Safe births

The publication of the report of our major independent inquiry into maternity services, *Safe Births: Everybody's Business*, in February 2007 has resonated with many obstetricians and midwives committed to improving care. It found that although the standards of care were safe for the vast majority of women, overall the service was not as safe as it could be. For this project then, the report marks the beginning of a major work programme, rather than the end.

Maternity care has been the subject of a range of critical reports in recent years. We focused on providing a new perspective on the challenges and possible solutions and, most importantly, how we could bring about real improvements on the ground.

We set up an independent inquiry panel with a range of skills to bring a fresh approach to often entrenched problems. The panel was chaired by the president of the Royal Academy and eminent philosopher Professor Onora O'Neill.

Jill Howcroft, a midwife based at York General Hospital and one of 600 individuals to submit evidence to the inquiry, agreed that the approach encouraged new thinking. 'It was important to have a panel of inquiry that was more objective. People who work on the wards can be too familiar with the problems; it is good to have a fresh pair of eyes.'

She also supported one of the Inquiry's main findings – that maternity services can be improved with more effective team working.

Consultant obstetrician Zoe Penn from Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trust, an expert adviser to the panel, also believed that the Inquiry had brought a new way of working. 'The profession had been going round and round in circles. We were so close to the problem that it was refreshing that the panel looked at every lever of change from the National Institutes that drive quality to the ward level.'

The report's findings have been widely supported. Health minister Ann Keen has promised to work closely with The King's Fund and others to improve the quality of maternity services. We are now committed to building a series of partnerships to develop and test new approaches in practice to bring about safer care for mothers and their babies.

Views on the inquiry into maternity services

» It was important to have a panel of inquiry that was more objective. People who work on the wards can be too familiar with the problems, so it is good to have a fresh pair of eyes.⁰³

03
Jill Howcroft
Midwife
York General Hospital



More highlights

Seeing the person in the patient

There is some concern that as the health care system attempts to become more productive and as patients move more quickly through the system, the humanity of care may be lost. Over the past year, we have been pulling together existing research and innovative practice here and overseas to help address this major challenge to all areas of health care. The aim is to launch a new programme in autumn 2008, focused on service improvement at the front line, working with staff to transform patients' experience of care.

Improving care at end of life

We have a strong and close partnership with Marie Curie Cancer Care. Our main role has been to work alongside and evaluate their Delivering Choice programme⁰⁴, a major project that helps patients exercise choice about where they die. The objective assessment of Marie Curie's work with doctors and nurses in hospitals, hospices and community services in Lincolnshire concluded that with the right support more people are able to exercise choice – and crucially at no greater cost to the NHS.

Supporting clinicians in policy implementation

Originally commissioned by the Department of Health and later supported by Eli Lilly and Company Limited and Sanofi Aventis, we have developed a leadership programme to help specialist doctors understand the new national policy on diabetes care, including the National Service Framework, and what it means for their practice. The scheme broke expectations by engaging with more than a quarter of all consultant diabetologists, helping to translate policy into practice and, ultimately, improve patient care.

04
Tim Brown
Delivering Choice Programme



2007 financial summary

The King's Fund is a relatively small organisation employing around 100 staff. Our income comes in part from an endowment fund that was built up during the earlier part of our history and also from income we generate ourselves. Both income and expenditure in 2007 were up on 2006, to £10.3 million (from £9.1 million) and £13.4 million (from £11.9 million) respectively. One half of the income in 2007 was generated by charitable activities – such as leadership programmes, conferences and research – and the other half is a mixture of mainly investment income, tenancies and venue hire fees. The gap – £3.1 million – was met by planned drawings from our capital assets in line with our financial strategy, which aims to retain the real value of the endowment over time.

The leadership and policy teams brought in more funds through commissioned work and successful tenders and, consequently, were able to increase their capacity significantly. Our Enhancing the Healing Environment programme also continued to expand, supported by a major award from the Department of Health. Our conference facilities also had a good year.

Investment management costs were reduced, and the costs of providing venue hire and tenancies increased only slightly, while income in all of these areas increased significantly.

Year to 31 December 2007 Income

Income from investments and other activities



Income from charitable activities



Total £10.3 million
(£9.1 million 2006)

Expenditure

Research and policy development



Leadership and organisational development



Service improvement



Investment management, governance and other activities



The full audited accounts are available on our website.

Total £13.4 million
(£11.9 million 2006)

Our impact in 2007

Number of health and social care staff who took part in our leadership activities including open programmes and networks

» 1,800

Number of different individuals who visited our website each month, on average

» 23,000

Number of times the eight reports and 11 briefings we published during the year were downloaded from our website

» 86,000

Number of times NHS staff searched our library database each month, on average

» 36,000

Number of people working in health and social care who were signed up to receive our news bulletins

» 15,000

Number of people who visited our central London building to take part in meetings or conferences organised by others

» 60,000

Number of people who attended one of the nine conferences on topical health issues we ran during the year

» 1,000

The King's Fund >

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