

PE1438/H

## NHS Borders

Chair & Chief Executive's Office

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Andrew Howlett  
Assistant Clerk  
Public Petitions Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH

Date 7 February 2013  
Your Ref  
Our Ref CC/IB

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Dear Mr Howlett

### **Scottish Parliament Public Petition PE1438 on Improving services for people with mental illness**

NHS Borders fully supports the aspirations contained within the petition.

The original philosophy which underpinned the integration of Mental Health services locally was to *work in a strong and effective partnership to continually and substantially improve the mental health and well being of the people of the Scottish Borders.*

*This still holds today.*

In respect of the specific focus on improved in-patient and community services, examples of development over recent years have included:

- A whole system redesign of Rehabilitation Mental Health Services resulting in a more focussed in-patient service and a significant increase in the amount and range of community based services including a new supported accommodation service.
- A whole system redesign of Older Adult Mental Health Services again resulting in a more focussed in-patient service and the further development of community services based on a successful trial of new approaches in the Eastern Borders.
- Adopting a standard across the whole Mental Health Service of a follow up visit for anyone who has had an in-patient stay within 7 days of their discharge from hospital. This has been evidenced as a period which can often be of concern for people and where additional support can be useful.

These are examples of development which have allowed a greater focus on support closer to home and an emphasis on particularly supporting people who have recently been discharged from hospital.

In respect of addressing the stigma that exists around mental health needs and illness, NHS Borders uses any available opportunity to promote positive messages about mental health and actively aims to promote this through the delivery of non-stigmatising services.

The philosophy described at the start of this submission has a clear focus on improvement of health and well being. It is recognised that to achieve both demands that our services do not simply reduce ill health but also promote the attainment, improvement and maintenance of positive mental health.

Yours sincerely

Calum Campbell  
Chief Executive