

PE1568/JJ

Tom Whitmarsh Email of 20 September 2016

I write to express strong appreciation of the support given to the CIC at Glasgow homeopathic hospital, as shown in the recent articles in the Herald. I feel very strongly that the plan of the health board to close the beds is extremely short-sighted and seems to be born of lack of intimate knowledge of the clinical benefits brought by possibility of admission and by a need to use any easy excuse to cut the budget. There is also the dubious substitution of this successful service (a health board service) by a newly created chronic pain facility (a nationally funded service), in premises built from the contributions of the public over the years to a new homeopathic hospital.

I have to admit a very personal interest and a fairly unique perspective, as I was consultant physician at the homeopathic hospital (and Western Infirmary) from 1995 to my retirement on medical grounds (I have MS) in Oct 2011. The service as it stands needs to be preserved, as the possibility of admission I always found crucial to clinical success. The health board are just wrong and speaking from lack of clinical knowledge if they characterise closing the beds as 'minor'. In fact it would clinically be a major change and at least deserves proper discussion by clinicians and all involved. There have been other pleas over the years for this extraordinary facility to be declared as a national service and centrally funded, taking it out of the inappropriate control of a single health board. There used to be referrals from all over Scotland and it was also seen as a good place to refer to by clinicians in the North of England. It is a beacon of hope for the many who attend, a sign of the uniqueness of the Scottish NHS and should be available to all patients and clinicians. I agree therefore that it needs to be centrally funded and a new special service of 'integrative medicine' created.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Tom Whitmarsh MA FRCP