

Press Release



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End of an era at Borders General Hospital

September marked the end of an era at the Borders General Hospital (BGH) when Ann Purvis retired from her position as Chair of the BGH Participation Group.

To celebrate the contribution that Ann has made to the BGH over the past ten years, a farewell event was organised by the group at which colleagues and fellow volunteers recognised the significant influence that Ann's work has had on the delivery of person-centred care at the BGH.

Thanking her for all she has done, Chair of NHS Borders, John Raine said: "Ann is well known for her straightforward style and her desire to make the BGH the best hospital in Scotland, and she has been a pleasure to work with. She is dedicated, honest and has a great talent to identify the little things that can make a big difference. It was my great pleasure to witness Ann and the BGH Participation Group receive well deserved recognition at NHS Borders 'Celebrating Excellence' awards ceremony earlier this year, when the team won the Volunteer of the Year category. It has also been a joy to host this farewell event, particularly because I know that Ann will be continuing to work with us in the future on other projects!"

Explaining the reasons behind her motivation to get involved with the NHS, Ann said: "health is everyone's business. After working with the Scottish Health Council for three years I was approached by the Involving People Network to attend a number of groups including one with the responsibility for inspecting cleaning and infection control, and this was many years before the creation of the Healthcare Environment Inspectorate!"

"I firmly believe that the way to make a difference is to get involved. There is no point sitting in a room and complaining – do something about it."

It is this attitude that has enabled Ann to spearhead significant initiatives at the BGH, such as the introduction of the 'Nurse in Charge' badges, which help patients and their carers clearly identify who is in charge of the ward; and the award winning 'noise at night' project which has greatly improved the environment for patients who require an overnight stay by making seemingly simple changes such as nurses wearing soft shoes and carrying pulsating bleeps rather than the traditional more noisy ones.

Reflecting on the past four years as Chair of the Participation Group Ann says; "It makes me proud to think that, in partnership with staff at the BGH and my fellow volunteers, I have accomplished something. I have been very impressed with how accessible NHS Borders board members are – they always make themselves available to speak at meetings when invited, which helps voluntary groups understand the sometimes complex issues that are being discussed."

And communication is very important to Ann. "The whole point of the BGH Participation Group is to work in partnership with staff and patients to continually improve patient care", she explains. "The

current focus on leadership and quality across healthcare in Scotland can only work when people communicate effectively, and simple things, such as advising people of roughly how long they will have to wait when they are in Accident and Emergency can make a big difference to their perception of their hospital experience.”

Originally from Musselburgh, Ann has lived in Hawick for 51 years, and has been married to George Purvis for 53 years. She is now looking forward to spending more time with him in their garden – although her involvement with the NHS is not over. “It feels like the right time to finish at the BGH, and I am delighted to hand over to the new Chair of the BGH Participation Group, George Anderson. I will be concentrating on projects that focus on the healthcare needs of the people of Hawick, and I am very excited about taking on a new challenge.”

Ends

For further information on volunteering for NHS Borders please contact Amie Blackaby on 01896 827470 or email amie.blackaby@borders.scot.nhs.uk