

Eglinton House  
Ailsa Hospital  
Dalmellington Road  
AYR  
KA6 6AB



Mr Andrew Howlett  
Assistant Clerk to the  
Public Petitions Committee  
T3.40  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Date 4 April 2013  
Your Ref  
Our Ref FMcQ/CF  
Enquiries to Christine Fleming  
Extension 13674  
Direct line 01292 513674  
E-mail [Christine.fleming@aaaht.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Christine.fleming@aaaht.scot.nhs.uk)

Dear Sir

Thank you for the opportunity to consider Petition PE1471 entitled Young People's Hospital Wards, name of Petitioner Rachael McCully MSYP, on behalf of Scottish Youth Parliament.

The main points discussed within the petition are fully supported by the staff that young people between the ages of 13 and 16 years, 16 to 21 years and 16 to 25 years would benefit from age appropriate hospital accommodation and being cared for by staff who have been trained in the needs and specific care of adolescents, especially in relation to mental and emotional health needs.

The petitioner has cited important studies and reports spanning many decades which support the strong argument for specific, age appropriate adolescent care provision. Where young people are admitted to Children's Wards there may be few or no staff skilled or trained to deliver appropriate medical and nursing management for adolescent conditions and conversely, where young people are admitted to Adult Wards, the distinct needs and emotional aspects of pre adult status may not be fully understood or catered for. Young People may feel patronised in ward environments mainly decorated with the younger child in mind and isolated and uncared for in adult and older adult environments. The points made are supported by staff within NHS Ayrshire & Arran.

It is important to note that NHS Boards and professional bodies, such as the Royal Colleges of Nursing, Paediatrics and Child Health, have recognised the value to treatment, compliance with care regimes and recovery in adolescent care of providing age appropriate environments and suitably skilled and trained staff. This care provision has resource implications especially where there are remote and rural issues and lack of critical mass of age and condition specificity.

The branches of registered nurse training do not specifically prepare nurses to care especially for the adolescent age group and there are few educational courses designed purposely for the care of adolescents. Practitioners have highlighted that there are



insufficient care modules currently available, particularly relating to young people's mental and emotional health.

Educational providers have tried to address the training needs gap by producing stand alone modules in adolescent care.

A welcome resource has been published and is available on the Managed Knowledge Network <http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/child-services/communities-of-practice/adolescent-health-care.aspx>

Within NHS Ayrshire & Arran we believe that further modules and practical, clinical courses relating to care specialities would be beneficial to the provision and improvement of person centred, safe and effective services for young people.

I trust the comments provided are helpful.

Yours faithfully

**Fiona McQueen (Mrs)**  
**Executive Nurse Director**