



**Government of South Australia**

SA Health

Country Health SA Local Health Network Inc

**Bordertown & District Health Advisory Committee**  
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Note: The August Regional Health Service Report has just arrived and the BMHHAC is pleased to read that individual HACs will remain, however, the 'reclassification' has not been defined and until it is, there remains a degree of uncertainty on the future role of HACs.

Mick O'Connell  
Presiding Member  
Bordertown Memorial Hospital HAC



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**SUBMISSION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH, Honourable Jack Snelling, MP responding to the letter from the Premier, Honourable Jay Weatherill MP, dated 8 July 2014 regarding the proposed abolition of all Statutory Boards and Committees.**

Bordertown Memorial Hospital Health Advisory Council Inc (BMHHAC) changed from the Bordertown Memorial Hospital as a result of the new Health Act introduced in 2008. As a result of this change the accountability of the hospital through Board representation on various committees, including Finance, Leadership and Medical, was reduced resulting in the resignation of a number of long standing members. The support of the community for the hospital was challenged and the BMHHAC has worked diligently to re-establish community confidence. The Premier's proposed abolition of the BMHHAC is extremely disappointing given the hours the members on the council volunteer to improve the health and welfare of the community.

There are many reasons why the current model for HAC's should not only be retained, but expanded. All members of the BMHHAC give freely of their time to ensure, the community has a place to voice commendations and concerns.

A number of years ago there was a conflict with the medical practitioners and the hospital resulting in a shortage of doctors in the town. The HAC worked closely with the hospital DON to recruit extra doctors. The resultant combined effort has resulted in four doctors currently servicing the community.

Bordertown has an increasingly become a multicultural community. Many have English as a Learning Dialect. As a measure to ensure signage in the hospital was appropriate the HAC has worked with the hospital to engage residents, from a wide cross section of the community, to review the current situation.

Feedback to the BMHHAC members indicated that the women in the community would prefer to see a female for women's clinics, for example, PAP smears. Given that our four doctors are male, in consultation with the Medical Clinic and the hospital, three trained nurses now work in the medical clinic specifically to conduct the women's clinics.

The HAC has supported the purchase of up-to-date medical equipment to maintain the support of visiting specialists and continue to investigate the recruitment of others.

The HAC works with the DON to use money raised and donated to purchase required items, including air conditioners, specialised equipment and upgrading chairs in acute wards. Currently under investigation are the building of an outdoor area and upgrading of the kitchen and dining area for Charla Lodge.

The BMHHAC represents a wide cross section of the community and includes representatives from Community Health, Tatiara District Council and Ladies Auxillary. Staff from the hospital present to the HAC each meeting and discuss a range of topics, including mental health, hygiene and Advance Care Directives, to keep the HAC informed. HAC members are great ambassadors for community health and help maintain the confidence the community has with the hospital. The community readily donates money to the hospital

including some bequests from people, which resulted from the excellent care they received while suffering from illness.

The BMHHAC provides the most cost effective way to carry out the ascertaining of health needs and attitudes of the community, advising on local and wider health issues and advocating on behalf of the community. Holding assets and funds locally is vital for maintaining the trust of the community. Many assets were built or maintained over the years from the donation of money, volunteer time and in kind support. Removal of assets and funds would be detrimental to the future of community support for local and aged care facilities.

National Safety and Quality Health Service Standard 2 - Partnering with Consumers - has become the core for accreditation of health service providers. Consumer and community involvement and empowerment are inherent in the standards. The BMHHAC believes it is ideally suited to be part of the implementation of Standard 2 with independence, experience in the use of video conferencing and community trust. Many HACs have sought greater involvement and empowerment in their operations and are a well-placed and cost effective way to demonstrate achievement against all sections of Standard 2.

The BMH HAC requests that the Minister for Health strongly recommend that the BMHHAC be exempt from the Premier's intended list of Boards and Committees to be abolished. Abolishing HAC's will not allow effective community voice on health matters, something that is vital given the already poorer health outcomes for country residents compared to those in the city. There has been a suggestion of combining HACs. This option will be met by firm community resistance as it would reduce their voice in ensuring their health care needs are being met. Further, the BMHHAC, to support and improve accountability and transparency, requests the re-establishment of oversight of the hospital finances and active representation on various hospital committees.

Yours sincerely



Mick O'Connell  
Presiding Member  
Bordertown Memorial Hospital Health Advisory Council Inc  
C/- Bordertown Memorial Hospital  
South Terrace  
Bordertown SA 5268

29 September 2014

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Hon Jay Weatherill MP  
Premier of South Australia

Mr Mick O'Connell  
Presiding Member  
Bordertown Memorial Hospital  
SA Health  
Country Health SA Local Network Inc  
PO Box 196  
BORDERTOWN SA 5268

Dear Mr O'Connell

Thank you for your letter of 29 September 2014 to the Premier of South Australia, the Hon Jay Weatherill MP, about the Boards and Committees Reform.

Your letter has been sent to the Minister for Health, the Hon Jack Snelling MP, as this matter falls within his portfolio responsibility.

Should you have any queries about your letter, please contact the Minister's office on telephone 8463 6270.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Weatherill', written in a cursive style.

**Premier's Correspondence Unit  
Office of the Premier**

7 October 2014

*cc: Office of the Hon Jack Snelling MP, Minister for Health*