

Getting your voice heard – Scotland

Your Member of Scottish Parliament (MSP) or Member of Parliament (MP)

Why not write, email, tweet or meet your local representative? As healthcare in Scotland is devolved, this means decisions about this are made by the Scottish Parliament. To discuss issues relating to health in Scotland you will need to contact your Member of Scottish Parliament (MSP). It is your right to tell them what matters to you, and their job to listen. You can tell them about your experience of waiting for treatment, highlight Beat's campaigns and ask them to make a difference for those in your area. You will also have a Member of Parliament (MP) who has been elected to represent you in the Houses of Parliament.

[Find your MSP and get in touch.](#)

[Find your MP and get in touch.](#)

Beat have a helpful guide for writing to your MSP and MP. You can download this from the website, or get a copy by emailing the team campaigning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk.

NHS Boards

In Scotland there are 14 regional NHS Boards which are responsible for the delivery of healthcare services. They are also responsible for the protection and the improvement of their population's health, meaning they need to listen to local people and meet their needs. You can contact your local NHS Board to discuss services in your area and tell them about your experiences. [Find your local NHS Board and get in touch.](#)

Beat have a helpful guide for writing to your NHS Board. You can download this from the website, or get a copy by emailing the team campaigning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org

Healthcare Improvement Scotland work with patients, carers, the community and the public to enable them to have a meaningful say in how services are designed, delivered and experienced. They regulate independent hospitals and clinics, providing independent quality assurance that gives people confidence in the quality of services and helps providers to improve. They also support providers to redesign services so that they are delivering the best quality of care to their patients. You can search their website for inspections reports [here](#).

You can get involved with them as a volunteer to provide a public perspective to their work, participate in inspections to ensure they focus on things that matter most to patients and take part in focus groups and surveys to assist with consultations. You can find out more about this [here](#).

Patient Focus and Public Involvement (PFPI)

All NHS Boards are expected to take a proactive and positive approach to public involvement, and will have groups that you can join to share your views. In fact, Patient Focus and Public Involvement (PFPI) are responsibilities outlined in Scottish Government legislation.

Different NHS Boards might use different names for the groups, some examples of what they might be called include: Patient Participation Group, Patient Engagement Group, Public Partnership Forum and Public Involvement Network. You can find further details about the groups in your area on your NHS Board's website found [here](#). Why not get in touch with them to find out how you can get involved? Anyone can join a patient group, but taking part does require enthusiasm, input and time commitment.

The Scottish Health Council www.scottishhealthcouncil.org

The Scottish Health Council is a committee of [Healthcare Improvement Scotland](#) but has a distinct identity. They promote Patient Focus and Public Involvement (PFPI) in the NHS and work to ensure NHS Boards listen and take account of people's views.

They want to see an NHS which has a patient-centred approach to care, based on an understanding of patients' needs, life circumstances and experiences; and which ensures that patients, carers and the public are able to influence the planning and delivery of NHS services.

They have a local office in each of the 14 NHS Boards across Scotland. You can find details of them and how you can get involved [here](#).

Advocacy

Advocacy services help you to get support from another person, called an Advocate. An Advocate can help you express your views and wishes, and make sure your voice is heard. Advocacy is about supporting, enabling, and empowering you to express your views and concerns and access information and services where needed.

What specific advocacy services will be able to help with might vary slightly, but if you are eligible for their service you can expect them to:

- provide an independent and confidential service.
- support you in relation to your rights and options.
- enable you to have your say in your treatment and care.
- provide information to help you understand what options might be available.
- not decide or advise which options to take.
- not judge your wishes or look to seek to persuade you into a particular course of action.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance www.siaa.org.uk

East Lothian and Midlothian – CAPS www.capsadvocacy.org

VOX – Voices Of Experience www.voxscotland.org.uk

Scotland's national voice on mental health, they make sure Scotland's laws and mental health services reflect service user needs and interests. VOX is Scotland's only national mental health advocacy organisation run by service users for service users. VOX don't offer individual advocacy or provide specialist mental health services. They represent VOX members' views to Government, Parliament, the NHS and wider society and they support and enable VOX members to express their views in their own words. You can find out more and join them [here](#).

Organise a local awareness event

Help to focus the spotlight on eating disorders in your local area by holding an event. This could take place at your local health centre, or in a community space. Beat can provide resources and advice about planning your event. The Beat Tips campaign would provide a great focus for raising awareness and helping people to understand the issue. You can find out more about the [Tips campaign](#) and request resources by emailing campaigning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk.