

**Peter Old**  
**Assistant Team Manager**  
**NHS Borders**

I am employed by NHS Borders as assistant team manager (East) in the learning disability team which is an integrated social care and health service. I qualified in 1998 as RNLD/dip HE. I have completed further training in autism including the use of diagnostic tools such as ADOS and DISCO.

I was working as a support worker for people with learning disabilities when student nurses came on placement. Whilst I enjoyed the role in many ways, I also knew I wanted to be better trained and able to provide a wider more comprehensive level of support to both people with learning disabilities and their families and carers. Learning Disability Nursing seemed to me to be the way forward. I found out about training as a Learning Disability Nurse and enrolled in the Project 2000 training at Northumbria University (Newcastle upon Tyne) 1995 cohort. My career has been varied and interesting and there is always more to learn and scope to develop continuously.

Initially I worked in third sector as home manager, then as a staff nurse in learning disability hospital, Children's CLDN in integrated SC&H service and then as a therapist in CAMHS working with autism and ADHD. I joined NHS Borders in 2009 as charge nurse, then senior charge nurse and now Assistant Team Manager (East).

People with undiagnosed autism often struggle to get the right support and environment. I am trained and experienced in assessing and diagnosing autism and work as part of the adult autism assessment service. I also provide training where required and provide advice to families and support services.

I work with music therapy delivering reflective sessions for support staff experiencing difficulty in understanding and meeting the needs of the person they support. These sessions help staff to understand how they think, feel and behave, and how the person's life story impacts on their own thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Staff are helped to reframe the interactions between them and the person they support improving their understanding of the person's support needs.

I introduced the Health Equalities Framework (HEF) to the team and was involved in the MCN project to roll out the HEF to the 4 boards. The HEF is designed to identify exposure to the determinants of ill health allowing these to be addressed and exposure reduced.