



## Priory Hospital Burgess Hill

# Jenny's story

**Jenny\*, aged 39, was transferred to Priory Hospital Burgess Hill, from her local acute inpatient unit where she was detained under section 3 of the Mental Health Act. She had struggled to engage with the community personality disorder team and was considered a 'revolving door' patient, with frequent admissions which did not appear to change her presentation.**

Her problem behaviours included self-harm (mostly through overdosing on prescribed medication and cutting), shoplifting and putting herself in risky situations when intoxicated. She had lost custody of her two children as a result of her historical difficulties and had needed admissions for alcohol detox in the past.

Jenny joined the 12-month dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) programme on Amy Johnson Ward at Burgess Hill and although she found the approach difficult at first and was unwilling initially to face her problems, she was able to develop good relationships with her one-to-one therapist and consultant. This helped her to start controlling her impulses to shoplift and made significant steps to reduce self-harming. Jenny also committed to abstinence from alcohol.

She participated fully in the group-work programme and the individual; her progress meant she became an informal patient after seven months of being at this hospital.

Jenny was therefore able to take increasing periods of leave (including overnight leave) to the community and to spend more time developing her ability to be a mother to her children. Towards the end of the programme, she was helping to facilitate the delivery of DBT skills groups to newer patients.

Regular three-monthly Care Programme Approach (CPA) meetings attended by her local services enabled Jenny's smooth transition back to the community at the end of the programme and she continues to do well with no relapse to alcohol.

She is now holding down part-time work and living close to her children, whose lives she is more involved in.

Jenny was extremely grateful for the chance to face up to her personality problems and with help from an experienced and compassionate team, she turned her life around.