

# Benjamin's Journey\*

## Cygnnet Cedars, Birmingham

High dependency complex care service for men with learning disabilities, associated complex needs and who may have behaviours that challenge



### Benjamin's history

Benjamin grew up in his family home and attended mainstream school. He was diagnosed with a mild learning disability from a young age with associated abnormally aggressive and seriously irresponsible conduct. He navigated some difficult family dynamics as members of the household had issues with alcohol and some relationships could be volatile at times. He found schooling difficult and would often truant, on the days he did attend he required 1:1 support as he struggled to concentrate.

Benjamin became known to the police at a young age and the severity of the incidents escalated as he got older, he spent time in prison and was homeless on his most recent release. Unwilling to access any support, Benjamin turned to illicit drugs and self-harm.

The local community team stepped in and explored all avenues to support Benjamin to find suitable housing and stop his drug use. Benjamin presented with noncompliance, continued his drug use and was aggressive towards other vulnerable individuals. This led to Benjamin having a mental health assessment and being placed on a section to find crisis care.

### When he came to us

Benjamin was admitted as a crisis referral and was admitted to Cygnnet Cedars within 24 hours of the referral being reviewed. He was very scared and anxious as he had never been sectioned under the Mental Health Act before.

Benjamin expressed an intense hatred for specific groups of individuals, including those who

had committed crimes of a certain nature. He was unable to control these emotions and assaulted staff and peers.

Benjamin was vulnerable to exploitation and could be easily misled by others, there were occasions of absconding, suicide attempts and attempting to access illicit substances. Due to these incidents, Benjamin needed 3:1 support.



To make a referral or for more information about **Cygnnet Cedars** please call **0808 164 4450**/email [chcl.referrals@nhs.net](mailto:chcl.referrals@nhs.net) or contact your regional Business Relationship Manager



## Benjamin's care

On admission, the team supported Benjamin by offering reassurance, explaining the process and assisting him to understand his rights. They needed to establish his difficulties and needs and so he was assessed, diagnosed and prescribed medication for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). This new diagnosis was added to his already diagnosed learning disability.

With the correct medications in place, Benjamin's incidents reduced both in frequency and severity, his mental state had stabilised and he began to engage with the in-house psychology programmes. Benjamin worked with the team on relapse prevention and engaged with substance misuse sessions. Benjamin worked with the team to revise his positive behaviour support plan, his motivation was improving and he began to become more proactive.

The staff at Cygnet Cedars assessed Benjamin's daily living skills to establish his ability levels. Following this, he was then able to start cooking simple meals for himself and engaged with travel training for future access to the community with the occupational therapy (OT) team. Benjamin also started taking part in more in-house activities such as arts and crafts sessions.

The team supported Benjamin to create his own plan for the year with personal goals he would like to achieve, including learning new skills to get a job.



## Benjamin today

Benjamin's life has completely turned around since arriving at Cygnet Cedars, he is now optimistic for the future. He is planning to study English and Maths as part of his targets for the year and has also been successful in applying for a therapy job that involves leading the community meetings with other service users.

Benjamin has been able to spend time with his family again who are proud of his progress, a family member commented on how they didn't recognise the person he is now compared to how he used to be.

He is currently accessing a community support group for those with addictions in order to build a positive support network ready for when he is discharged closer to home.

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[www.cygnethealth.co.uk](http://www.cygnethealth.co.uk)

\*Name has been changed to protect his identity

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