



Press Release

For Immediate Release

Young service users find confidence through a music therapy programme at Cygnet Hospital Bury

(2 September 2022) Young people struggling with their mental health are using music as a tool for recovery in a new initiative at Cygnet Hospital Bury with one service user describing the life-changing impact it is having on her recovery.

The hospital on Buller Street, Bury, is run by Cygnet Health Care and offers a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). It has recently introduced a programme called 'Music 2 Empower' to provide music sessions for service users and give them studio time to record their own music.

For young service user Allie, a keen acoustic guitarist, the initiative has been life-changing. Growing up in a musical family where her mum sings classical opera and her dad studied the harpsichord, she self-taught how to play the guitar and said it became a "passion project".

She explained the impact the programme was having on service users like herself. *"Coming to a psych ward, it's scary and new,"* she said. *"It seems so alien. Listening to music, sharing it and playing it, it bridges a gap and allows you to bond over something."*

"Music is so important, if you look on any patient safety plan they'll have listening to music as a distraction at least."

Allie also explained the personal impact Music 2 Empower was having on her recovery.

"One of my go to distractions if I'm struggling is to play my guitar," she said. *"It brings people together. It allows you to be creative. Just free time where you can escape, go with the flow and forget about everything else."*

"A lot of the times it's hard to put yourself out there – it's really anxiety inducing. But when someone gives you that opportunity it opens up a door that wouldn't happen if projects like this didn't exist."

Cygnet Health Care launched the 'Music 2 Empower' initiative on World Mental Health Day 2019 and has since rolled out the programme across its hospitals, supporting music therapy-related projects throughout the organisation and allowing service users like Allie to showcase their abilities, give hope, inspire others and benefit from this well-established psychological approach.

Staff at the hospital have often collaborated with the young people through the initiative by playing musical instruments together and joining in with the singing. Lead CAMHS consultant at Cygnet Health Care, Dr Laurie Van Niekerk, said discussing music tastes and finding common ground through music helps staff to make connections with the young patients. He explained: *"Music is a great unifier and healer. It is really important to embrace those talents in the young people we support."*

“When they’re involved with the music, they can’t stop smiling. They had lost that side of things and it’s reminding them of their talent.

“It is so enjoyable to do something different together. There’s clear growing evidence music can help with anxiety so it should absolutely form part of the range of therapies that we offer.”

Dr Tony Romero, CEO of Cygnet Health Care, added that he was proud to see the impact Music 2 Empower is having across Cygnet’s services. He said: *“Music can be a powerful agent for change. Being creative and expressing yourself through music is an important outlet for many of our service users. Although our connection to music can be incredibly personal, projects like Music 2 Empower allow our service users who have shared experiences to come together and experience the benefits of being around like-minded individuals.*

“Music is an important tool which can bring a renewed sense of purpose, achievement and motivation to reach personal recovery goals and ultimately this can have a hugely positive impact on mental wellbeing.

Hearing from directly from service users about the life-changing impact this initiative is having on them and their recovery is very inspiring and I look forward to seeing more services benefit from the project.”

A video which showcases the work done at Cygnet Hospital Bury is available to listen and watch [here](#).

More information about the service can be found at:

<https://www.cygnethealth.co.uk/locations/cygnet-hospital-bury/>

Ends.

Notes to editors

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About Cygnet Health Care

Cygnet Health Care has been providing a national network of high-quality, specialised mental health services for the NHS and local authorities for the past 30 years.

Cygnet Health Care’s pioneering services support people with complex and acute mental health needs across the UK.

As one of the best quality providers in mental health services in the country, Cygnet Health Care’s focus is always on the best outcomes for those who use or commission its services. 85% of Cygnet’s facilities are rated as good or outstanding, which is above the national average.

www.cygnethealth.co.uk