



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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North East Supported Living service rated 'Good' following first CQC inspection

Staff from a service supporting adults with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs are “over the moon” after achieving a Good rating from the Care Quality Commission in its first ever inspection.

North East Supported Living, based on Woodland Road, Darlington opened in late 2021 and supports adults with learning disabilities, autism, mental health needs and behaviours that challenge.

The service, run by Cygnet Health Care, offers individuals the opportunity to be active members of their local community whilst holding their own tenancy agreement with a registered housing association.

The rating follows an inspection carried out over several days in July and August 2022 which resulted in a ‘Good’ rating in all five key lines of enquiry ‘Safe’, ‘Effective’, ‘Caring’, ‘Responsive’ and ‘Well Led’.

The report particularly praised the level of care provided by staff. It said: *“Individuals received kind, respectful and compassionate care from staff who used positive, respectful language which individuals understood and responded well to. One individual said, “The staff are really kind, caring and really treat me well.”*

“People felt valued by staff who showed genuine interest in their well-being and quality of life. People had the opportunity to try new experiences, develop new skills and gain independence. Staff shared information about activities in the local community and encouraged people to try these. One person said, “I’m much more independent and staff have really helped me to learn the skills.”

Louise Vollans, Cygnet Health Care Service Manager, said: *“Myself and the staff team are over the moon with our first ‘Good’ rating.*

“We have worked really hard over the last year to ensure we could provide a service to meet the tenants’ needs and our hard work has now been worthwhile. We are keen to move onto our next journey to continually improve the service that we provide.”

Following the inspection, the CQC also highlighted that staff had good awareness, skills and understanding of individual communication needs. They knew how to facilitate communication and when individuals were trying to tell them something. The report said staff also understood and implemented the principles of STOMP (stopping over-medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both) and ensured that people’s medicines were reviewed by prescribers in line with these principles.

It added that residents were supported to develop and maintain relationships to avoid social isolation; and were able to follow interests and to take part in activities. *“People told us they could go shopping when they wanted, to the community centre, pubs and to other local facilities. People were being supported to join in local events and participate in local community activities,”* it read.

It added: *“Staff empowered individuals to make their own decisions about their care and support. Individuals were supported by staff who had received relevant and good quality training in evidence-based practice. Staff took the time to understand individual’s communication styles and develop a rapport with them.”*

Tony Romero, CEO of Cygnet Health Care, said he was proud of the recognition his team received from the CQC.

He said: *“The team work diligently to ensure all residents can fulfil their potential. To achieve a positive outcome along with such encouraging comments in just its first ever inspection is testament to the hard work, commitment and dedication of all of the staff at North East Supported Living.*

“At Cygnet Health Care, we strive to provide care of the highest quality and standard of care and always put our service users at the heart of what we do. It is evident from this CQC report that this is being achieved here and I am delighted the CQC has recognised the fantastic work being delivered at our service.”

The full report can be found on the CQC website [here](#).

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Notes to Editors:

For more information, please contact Gemma Attew, External Communications Manager, on gemmaattew@cygnethealth.co.uk or 07718 244811.

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.

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