



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Coventry Head Teacher who Supports Children with Mental Health Needs Scoops Award

A head teacher from Coventry who oversees the education of children with mental health needs spoke of her pride after winning an award at a leading healthcare company's inaugural achievement awards.

This year, Cygnet Health Care launched the first ever Cygnet Staff Achievement Awards, open to all staff across Healthcare, Social Care and Support Services, to celebrate its caring, dedicated and hard-working colleagues. Cygnet Health Care supports individuals with mental health needs, learning disabilities and autism and employs nearly 11,000 staff across the UK.

Held at the Botanical Gardens in Birmingham, the inaugural awards recognised the individuals and teams who made outstanding contributions towards ensuring service users receive the highest standard of care.

Aisling McClelland is the head teacher at the Summit School in Joyce Parker Hospital, a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) hospital in Coventry. The service supports young people aged between 12 and 18 with mental health needs in low secure, psychiatric intensive care and acute environments.

She won the Trust, Helping Hand award which recognised an individual who has shown how they work flexibly together with a clear commitment to co-production, overcoming barriers and innovating to make Cygnet services even better. Judges looked for evidence of a collaborative approach to improving care and services and how they have engaged others to develop new initiatives, ways of working or delivering care. They also wanted examples of how their work is inspiring others through sharing learning, best practice and experience.

She was presented with her award by BBC presenter JJ Chalmers who was guest of honour at the event.

When Aisling became head teacher she had a vision to improve the educational experience for the young people. Her plan included revamping all the teaching rooms, transforming the spaces to make them much more appealing and practical to the young people and for the staff.

Stephen Firn, CEO of Healthcare at Cygnet Health Care, said: *"When Aisling became head teacher her vision and passion to improve the educational experience for young people shone through. She has put an excellent team together with a really positive approach which is inspiring.*

"It's Aisling's passion that brings everyone on this journey, including the Joyce Parker maintenance team who made this nomination because they were compelled by her enthusiasm. They have been

proud to play a part in making her vision a reality and most importantly to make a difference for children and young people at the hospital."

Upon receiving the award, Aisling said: *"I am so surprised, I am really honoured and I didn't expect to win at all. The best thing about my job is the children and sharing their journey, from admission to discharge and seeing the difference we can make. The team I work with are incredible and I feel truly blessed to do the job I do."*

Colleagues were able to nominate one another and there was almost 1,000 nominations across 12 categories, all judged by different, independent panels recognising the range of skills across the Cygnet Health Care workforce – including support workers, clinicians, chefs, IT, nursing and all the other vital roles.

Dr Tony Romero, CEO of Cygnet Health Care, said: *"The most important part of any organisation is its' people. They are the engine, the magic ingredient behind all of what makes Cygnet Health Care the special organisation that it is. The hard work, commitment and dedication that they pour into their roles every day means we are able to change lives for the better. These awards recognise the achievements and difference that our motivated, compassionate and value-driven staff make for our services users and colleagues."*

"Through the nominations process we saw so many wonderful examples of how our staff go above and beyond and step up to work outside of their role, sacrificing their time and dedication for the benefit of the individuals in their care. Aisling is the embodiment of this and I congratulate her for all she has achieved. Her passion helps to embed the positive culture at Cygnet Health Care and she constantly goes above and beyond, putting service users at the heart of all she does."

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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.

www.cygnethealth.co.uk