



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

CYGNET HEALTH CARE LAUNCHES NEW CARERS PASSPORT

Cygnet Health Care, one of the UK's largest independent providers of inpatient mental health care, has launched a new carers' passport to improve the experience for carers looking after adults with mental health and learning disabilities

The carers' passport, a record which identifies a person as a carer and sets out an offer of support, will help to improve and embed identification, recognition and support for carers across Cygnet Health Care services.

It was officially launched at the company's first Regional Carers Network event held at Cygnet Churchill on Thursday 24 November. The event was a celebration of Carer Rights Day and featured presentations from a range of expert speakers.

David Wilmott, Group Executive Director of Nursing said: *"Cygnet Health Care is making a commitment to carers to recognise and value the support they provide. We put service users at the heart of what we do but we also understand this can be a stressful time for families and carers in particular.*

"We want to work in partnership with carers and we want to make carers visible across our services. Carers are essential partners in the care of the people they support, so across Cygnet we wish to involve them and support them wherever possible. That is why we are very excited to be launching Cygnet's first ever Carers Passport."

The family and friend Carer Passport will not only help individuals identify themselves as a carer, it will allow Cygnet Health Care staff to immediately recognise a carer. The card is a credit card size and can be carried in your purse, wallet or bag.

The passport is part of a commitment made by Cygnet Health Care to involve carers in the "Triangle of Care" whereby carers, service users and staff work collaboratively to promote recovery and wellbeing. Carers and the essential role they play will be identified at first contact with services or as soon as possible after and staff will be trained to engage with carers more effectively.

David added: *"By introducing a Carers Passport, we are better able to involve them in discussions about the care, treatment and discharge of the patient or service user. Carers should be involved with staff to devise care plans for their loved one and across the board, staff are making a commitment to share information with carers in a timely manner. That is why it is so important we are introducing a way for carers to readily identify themselves to staff."*

Cygnet also recently launched its Carers Network, a new initiative aimed at offering an increased level of support to carers involved with Cygnet's national services.

Through the network, carers will be able to access practical support and advice from Cygnet professionals on the management and support of people with a learning disability and behaviour that challenges, as well as on managing their own health and wellbeing. Carers will also be able to help shape the design and improvement of Cygnet services.

David added: *“From a carers point of view, it’s important to have your voice heard, particularly when it comes to improving and accessing services, and in the long-term, we hope the network can also contribute to the wider debate on the future of mental health care so that it effects real change for those carers looking after an adult with an enduring mental health condition or learning difficulty.”*

More information about the network, how to register for meetings and useful information about caring and carer’s rights can be found at www.cygnethealth.co.uk/service-users-carers/. Or you can email Family&Friends@cygnethealth.co.uk

Ends

Notes to Editors

For interviews, please contact Gemma Attew, External Communications Manager, at gemmaattew@cygnethealth.co.uk

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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