



Press Release

13 July 2022

For Immediate Release

Stephen Firn OBE appointed to new Executive leadership role at Cygnet Health Care

Cygnet Health Care, one of the UK's leading and largest independent mental health care providers, is looking to the future as it further strengthens its Executive Management Team with the appointment of Stephen Firn OBE to a new senior position leading its healthcare division.

Group CEO of Cygnet Health Care, Dr Tony Romero, will welcome Stephen as *CEO of Healthcare* in a move that will bring additional Executive-level, strategic focus to quality, performance and growth across its hospitals.

Reporting to Dr Romero, Stephen will be responsible for the group's *healthcare division* whilst Gareth Williams will continue to lead Cygnet's *social care division* as *CEO of Social Care*.

In the last five years Cygnet has steadily expanded through acquisitions and organic growth - investing in services, improving performance ratings and increasing its workforce to become a leading employer and provider of mental health, learning disability and autism services.

With a clear vision to always provide high quality care to service users and their loved ones, Cygnet's five year strategy sets out its priorities to deliver excellence by investing in people and facilities that enable services, and those who stay there, to thrive.

Stephen Firn's appointment follows the recent announcement that Cygnet's Chief Operating Officer, Mike McQuaid, will retire from the COO position in February 2023 after more than twenty years leading mental health and social care services across the UK.

The two new CEO roles for each division will replace the one Chief Operating Officer position, recognising the unique offering of each portfolio and signalling Cygnet's commitment to invest in its UK services according to sector needs.

Stephen will step aside from his current Non-Executive Director roles *at Cygnet and Surrey and Borders NHS Foundation Trust* where he is also Deputy Chair. He will take up his new role this autumn.

Dr Tony Romero said: "We have already benefitted considerably from Stephen's knowledge and oversight as a Non-Executive Director and I am delighted that he will further strengthen our senior executive team with his expertise and leadership.

"Cygnet has grown over recent years and this appointment and new structure represents our absolute focus on quality across all facilities. Stephen is well-respected and brings a wealth of

experience in all aspects of mental health which will be extremely valuable as we continually strive to offer the highest standards for those we are privileged to look after.

“With his strong values and passion for providing exceptional care, I warmly welcome Stephen to lead the healthcare services within Cygnet’s portfolio in this immensely important role.”

Stephen Firn OBE said: “I have been hugely impressed by the determination of everyone at Cygnet to provide high quality and safe care for people using mental health services. Each one of whom is a patient of the NHS.

“I’m very pleased to have the opportunity to draw upon my 40 years of experience working in NHS mental health services to ensure users of Cygnet services receive treatment and care that is the equal or better of any in the country.”

Ends

Notes to Editors

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

Biography: Stephen Firn OBE

Stephen joined Cygnet Health Care as an Independent Non-Executive Director in January 2021. He has provided independent scrutiny and oversight of quality, safety and improvement as a valued and highly respected member of the group’s Advisory Board.

Stephen has over 20 years’ experience of NHS Trust Boards in clinical, strategic and chief executive positions, including as CEO of Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, a mental health and community services provider. Until October 2020, he was programme director at NHS England and NHS Improvement, leading a national initiative to support provider collaboratives, and has held policy advisor roles at both the Department for Health and at the Royal College of Nursing.

During a varied career in health care which began when he joined the NHS as a Health Care Assistant before training as a psychiatric nurse, Stephen is the recipient of a number of honours, including an Honorary Doctorate from Canterbury Christ Church University for outstanding contribution to public life and an OBE for services to healthcare, particularly mental health.

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