



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Cygnet Hospital Maidstone Praised By Service User

A former patient at Cygnet Hospital Maidstone has shared her mental health journey and praised the service for giving her life back after suffering from mental health problems for more than 20 years.

Rachael Lamb, 38, is a former service user at Cygnet Hospital Maidstone, on Gidds Pond Way, and she has shared her journey on Roseacre Ward, the hospital's specialised personality disorder service.

Her mental health issues began 24 years ago when she was just 14 years old. She began self-harming as a way of coping.

She explained: *"I spent many years in and out of mental health hospitals. I had my first child at 23 and the second at 24, I felt better but it was smoke and mirrors. I was sent to a hospital and then they gave me the chance to go to Cygnet Hospital Maidstone, Roseacre Ward.*

"I accepted and finally took the dive into the unknown."

Rachael talks about how the ward team were able to support her, as well as her own determination to make her stay on the ward a success.

"When I got to Roseacre Ward I was putting everything into being mentally stable," she said. "I felt I deserved the chance and others had faith in me so I wanted to give it my best shot. It was nerve wracking. The first few weeks were a blur. I was in an unfamiliar environment but I kept busy and talked to staff when needed.

"I was scared to open up but I gave it time and having staff available 24/7 to talk to or use distraction techniques that were offered, like art or my own craft bits, helped."

Rachel undertook a variety of therapy sessions whilst on the ward, including one-to-one and group therapy. She praised the impact the kind and compassionate staff had on her recovery.

She said: *"The staff were always on hand if I needed to talk with them or just vent. They were amazing, especially when I was having a bad day. It may seem scary walking into a new environment but reach out and do what you need to stay safe. They also do mindfulness, craft, sports, yoga and many more things."*

Now discharged, Rachael is back living in her community and praised the team at Cygnet Hospital Maidstone for helping her turn her life around.

*“Today I am living life to the full, I manage my anxiety and mental health so much better,” she said.
“I go for a walk most days and am looking to volunteer.”*

“Roseacre has given me so much, without it, I feel I would not be here today. Thank you so much again Roseacre Ward for giving my family their relative back.”

Ends

Notes to Editors

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

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