



Press Release

For Immediate Release

Crewe Mental Health Worker Shares Appreciation during National Apprenticeship Week

A member of staff at a Crewe hospital has spoken of his pride after an apprenticeship program has enabled him to better support women with mental health difficulties.

This week it is National Apprenticeship Week, which aims to highlight the exceptional work being done by apprentices and employers across the UK.

Joshua Clarke is a Nurse Associate at Cygnet Nield House on Bradfield Road, Crewe, a 29-bed mental health hospital for women. He is currently on the apprenticeship pathway to become a Registered Mental Health Nurse.

He explained: *"I wanted to complete it as an apprenticeship so that I continue to be more ward based rather than all lectures and paperwork."*

"Also this helps with family dynamics as I have two young children. The best thing about being an apprentice is that you can manage your time around life and work."

"It makes me feel proud that I am able to complete my nursing degree and help pave the way for future students. I'm working for a company that is willing to give back to staff and help support them in their education."

The Cygnet Health Care Nursing Pathway Apprentice Programme addresses an industry-wide shortage of nurses, as recruitment and retention of staff remains a key concern for the sector.

Cygnet, a leading provider of services for individuals with mental health needs, learning disabilities and autism, is leading the sector on the employment of nurse associates and the development of nurse apprenticeships to help overcome these challenges. It offers opportunities ranging from nursing, healthcare, management, HR, IT and finance to help people grow their skills and embrace new challenges.

"For what Cygnet have invested in me, I feel like I am able to give that back to our service users," said Joshua. *"It has enriched my ability to help."*

The training is free to the apprentices because Cygnet Health Care funded the programme through levy, introduced by the government in 2017.

To date, more than 600 Cygnet Health Care staff have completed an apprenticeship pathway.

Suzanne Smith, Apprenticeship Manager at Cygnet, said: *"We want our existing staff to feel invested in, and able to recognise that we support career progression, empowering them to forge their own path and take every opportunity to create a clearly defined career pathway."*

“The passion and drive to succeed exhibited by our apprentices like Joshua has been awe inspiring. He has flowered and grown. I couldn’t be prouder seeing him take their place in our services, using his expertise and skills to support our service users.”

“Offering clear pathways that enable people to enter the profession, pursue their career goals and in turn retain their talent is the ultimate goal for us.”

Ends

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