



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

INTERNATIONAL NURSE SPEAKS OUT ABOUT LIFE IN THE UK

A ZIMBABWEAN nurse now working in a Kewstoke mental health hospital has spoken about adjusting to life in the UK and how proud she feels to contribute to the UK healthcare community as part of International Nurses Day.

Edith Gwata, of Zimbabwe, has been with Cygnet Health Care since April 2021 after initially training in one of Zimbabwe's biggest hospitals, Parirenyatwa. She is based at Cygnet Hospital Kewstoke, on Beach Road, which provides emergency admissions services for men and women, and a pathway for women to rehabilitation including a specialist service for personality disorder.

Talking about what inspired her into a nursing career Edith explained: *"I have had good examples to aspire to. My aunt was a Matron and used to carry herself in a professional manner even at home or family gatherings, and I envied her uniform when we visited the hospital. That made me feel determined that I really wanted to be a nurse and be a symbol of hope and authority.*

"Then when my mum died in 2003, I vowed to help and save other people's mums. Her death made me become compassionate and understanding and these qualities added to my desires of being a nurse and helped me to be the nurse that I am today."

As part of Cygnet's international recruitment policy, nurses will have a minimum of 2 years current psychiatric nursing experience. All are registered nurses in their country of origin. This could be a diploma in nursing or a bachelor of nursing dependent on the country.

Any nurse put forward to a site will have a minimum score of 7 in the IELTS (International English Language Test) and all nurses will have had Occupational Health Checks during the screening process.

International nurses enjoy a benefits package including a £2,000 welcome bonus at the end of their first week, Visa, Immigration Health Surcharge & Certificate of Sponsorship for 3 years paid for, as well as flights and transfers from the UK airport to accommodation paid for. Additionally, a house deposit and their first month rent paid is paid for, as well as their OSCE training and exam.

Cygnnet sponsor international nurses for three years with the option to apply for another two. After five years a nurse can be eligible for indefinite leave to remain.

Edith admitted that adjusting to a new country can be difficult and brings certain challenges.

She added: *"Clearing the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) was a bit of a challenge. I feared the OSCEs. It created an immense fear of thinking if I go back home today how will I be perceived."*

"In my case the biggest challenge was separating with my kids. I would sometimes break down and cry on bad days just by looking at their pictures. I was scared of making any mistake or saying the wrong things. The amount of new systems that I had to know within a short space of time felt overwhelming."

Talking about the biggest differences between working as a nurse in the UK and Zimbabwe, Edith said biggest surprise was the cultural differences. She explained: *"There is a lot of difference in the way things are done here. Time keeping is of the essence here, everything seems to start on time unlike back home. In most places, the respect and politeness is remarkable."*

"A big difference is the system, although care remains care and has same principles, the systems we have to navigate here are more complex. Not only are we practical nurses, but we also do administrative roles which might be a challenge for hands-on nurses. Etiquette is a bit different here too. You don't need to be standing for seniors and everyone gets addressed with their first names no matter their position."

Offering her advice for anyone considering relocating to another country for their career, Edith added: *"I would encourage anyone to keep an open and positive mind while adjusting to a new culture. Accept any support which is available to you."*

"It is such a rewarding career and you get to go home knowing that you have done your best and the patients in your care are satisfied. Having a patient recover and get discharged after a long hospital stay gives a great sense of achievement."

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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