

## Hospital Maidstone

January 2024

### *Hello and welcome to our Winter edition of our Newsletter*

I hope this newsletter finds you well. We at Cygnet Maidstone want to send you best wishes for the year ahead. You might find it a little bit late but this is our first Carer Support Newsletter this year.

So here we are in 2024 and January is nearly gone. I cannot quite believe it.

Writing this newsletter there is a lot to consider:

- ⇒ Is the information relevant to our readers -friends, family, carers?
- ⇒ Will it make our Family Friends and Carers want to contact us when they need help?
- ⇒ Have we covered any recent legislation for carers?
- ⇒ Will it make you as reader valued and supported?
- ⇒ Are there any news within the hospital or the Cygnet group we would love to share with you?

I hope that you enjoy reading our "winter newsletter"

Please feel free to send any feedback about our newsletter to:  
familyfriendscarersMaidstone@cygnethealth.co.uk.

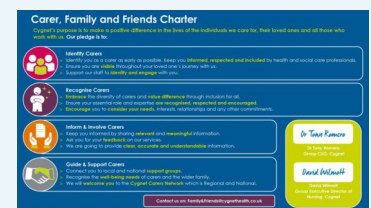
*Jutta Neumann and the Carer Support Team*



**Cygnet** recently partnered with Black Belt Advocacy to provide a new innovative service to support carers with access to an independent advocate. This is available to any carer who has a loved one staying in a Cygnet mental health hospital, specifically those within Cygnet's Health Care division. An advocate will help the carer to express their views and make sure their voice, opinions and experiences are properly heard.



Cygnet also recently launched the **Cygnet Carer, Family and Friends Charter**, making its pledge to support carers in the best way possible. The pledge, co-produced by members of the Cygnet Carers Network and members of the Cygnet Senior Management Team, sets out the priorities on how it will work with carers moving forwards.



**Carer Ambassador** Matthew McKenzie Awarded British Empire Medal  
Congratulations to our Carer Ambassador Matthew McKenzie who has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the New Year's Honours in recognition for his work with carers.

<https://www.cygnetgroup.com/service-users-carers/information-for-family-carers/>



## Caring Confidently Course

The **Caring Confidently course** is a 4 week programme developed with and for carers. The course is designed to help increase resilience, improve wellbeing, and develop knowledge and strategies to enable carers to be more resourceful in their caring role.

Carers First are offering the course for carers in the early part of their caring journey, to give the tools to empower carers to live their lives to the fullest whilst also being confident in their caring journey.

The Caring Confidently course will be held quarterly. The sessions will also allow carers to connect with others during a scheduled break to talk in smaller groups using breakout rooms, where carers can share and learn from others experiences.

Caring Confidently is delivered online via Zoom and out in the community in some areas.

<https://www.carersfirst.org.uk/local-support/caring-confidently-course/>

**Everyday Mental Health'** is a brand-new, one-hour training session which focuses on the key areas of mental health. This course aims to empower people with the knowledge to recognise the impact that negative stressors can have on people's mental health – especially in the current climate.

This new type of session aims to help people understand their own mental health and wellbeing, and how the current challenges around finances may have a detrimental impact on mental health. We also explore how to proactively support other people, and look at the wealth of support services available across Kent and Medway.

Everyday Mental Health is designed to provide an engaging and thought-provoking bite-sized look at mental health in the 'here and now' – empowering people to confidently have conversations around supporting themselves and others.

The brand-new Everyday Mental Health training will be available right now – with a limited number of spaces available on each session. We hope that by making this training just one hour long, we will help to ensure accessibility for anyone who cannot commit to one of our three-and-a-half hour sessions. It is also a great refresher for anyone who has taken more in-depth training in the past!

For more details on this training, please visit [www.maidstonemind.org/everyday-mental-health-training/](http://www.maidstonemind.org/everyday-mental-health-training/) or e-or email: [training@midkentmind.org.uk](mailto:training@midkentmind.org.uk).

**Web-links...**  
Useful websites for Carers

### Everyday Mental Health

A condensed training session looking at mental health in the 'here and now'.



## Physical activity for health and wellbeing in the caring role

This free course, endorsed by [Carers Trust](https://www.carersfirst.org.uk), is delivered by the [Open University](https://www.open.ac.uk). It gives an insight into the demands of caring and looks at how taking part in physical activity can offer benefits to the health and wellbeing of unpaid carers.

### Caring for adults

Caring for adults is an introductory course for anyone in a caring role, either paid or unpaid. It builds on what you already know to give you a better understanding of your role as a carer. It also supports your own wellbeing by giving you some ideas and information about looking after yourself and dealing with stress. Find out more about the Caring for adults course on the [OpenLearn](https://www.open.ac.uk) website.

## Digital courses - using computers, tablets, the internet, social media and mobile phones

Find lots of free courses on [TechBoomers](https://www.techboomers.com).

[Learn My Way](https://www.learnmyway.com) offers free online courses on using a computer, browsing the web, sending an email and finding work online.

**The Expert Patients Programme (EPP)** is a free six week course for people who live with one or more long term health conditions – or who have personal experience of someone living with one or more long term health conditions. Living with a long-term condition? We know just how you feel.

Managing your long-term condition doesn't have to be hard. The Expert Patients Programme, run by people like you and supported by NHS professionals, can help you to regain your independence, manage everyday situations and boost your mental and emotional wellbeing.

More information:

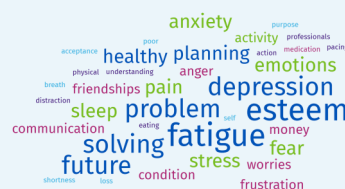
0300 013 2045, select option three

07944 935 047

[kcht.epp@nhs.net](mailto:kcht.epp@nhs.net)



Kent Community Health  
NHS Foundation Trust





## COULD YOU BE A CARER AMBASSADOR?

Do you have a few hours to spare? We are looking for volunteers to support our work with carers.

- Help us to deliver our "Carer Awareness Training",
- Providing a listening ear to carers
- Help us to develop our work with carers at Cygnet Hospital Maidstone
- Be a "voice" of our carers
- ....



Please get in touch with us!  
Call our Carer Lead :01622 580 330  
or email: [jutta-neumann@cygnethealth.co.uk](mailto:jutta-neumann@cygnethealth.co.uk)

## This space is for you!

This space in our newsletter has been created especially for you. If you have a top tip, a story, a book recommendation or anything else you would love to share with other carers then please do !!!  
Send us an email:

[ffcmaidstone@cygnethealth.co.uk](mailto:ffcmaidstone@cygnethealth.co.uk)

We are always grateful for suggestions of topics for the newsletter and for carers' stories! We love to hear from you!



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## Lasting power of Attorney

It's important that people have someone they can trust to make decisions about their health and finances if they are no longer able to make these decisions for themselves.

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document that allows someone you trust to make decisions on your behalf and in your best interests. LPAs give you more control over what happens to you if you lack the 'mental capacity' to make decisions for yourself or you want someone to make certain decisions for you.

There are two types of LPAs: one covers property and financial decisions and the other deals with decisions about your health and welfare.

Find out more:

These guide also provides answers to frequently asked questions about an LPA. To download a copy visit

[https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/information-guides/ageukig21\\_powers\\_of\\_attorney\\_inf.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/information-guides/ageukig21_powers_of_attorney_inf.pdf)

<https://www.scie.org.uk/files/mca/directory/wales-easy-guide-lpa.pdf?res=true>

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-03/Appointees%20deputies%20and%20power%20or%20attorneys.pdf>

## Appointeeship

If your relative does not have the mental capacity to manage their own benefits or finds it difficult to do so (for example because they find it hard to fill in forms or manage financial information) then you can apply to the DWP to become their appointee. As an appointee you are authorised to deal with benefit affairs on another person's behalf (usually due to their mental incapacity). To become an appointee you should make a request to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). To find out more visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/getting-help-with-your-tax-credits-claim/appointees>

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-03/Appointees%20deputies%20and%20power%20or%20attorneys.pdf>

<https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/becoming-an-appointee/>

## Carer Support Group via zoom

**Cygnet Hospitals**

**Godden Green, Maidstone & Woking**



What those who attend have to say about the group:

- Being able to discuss problems and listen to others
- Opportunity to meet professionals from the hospital
- Finding different solutions to issues.
- Lovely group of like minded people who are willing to listen and support you
- .Next meeting: **21 February 6.00 pm**
- Are you joining?!

**Wednesday**  
**21 February @18:00**

Speaker:  
Caitlin Lane  
(Mental Health Advocate)

Topic: Role of Advocacy in Mental health

**Please ask for the link and our leaflet if you haven't received it yet!**





Saturday, 20th of April 2024

## "Cygnet Maidstone cares for Carers"

Cygnet Hospital Maidstone warmly invites you to our Carers event.  
More information to be followed shortly!

Keep hope alive

Shared vision chosen by the People's Council, residents & staff

Meet our  
**TEAM**

Hospital Food isn't really even about the food, it's about the feeling of being cared for. It's an invitation to be humble and grateful in the face of kindness.  
Luke Escombe

Food and meal times are important to our patients and providing an opportunity to connect with each other

Our amazing **Catering Team** consists of 6 staff members: two chefs and 4 kitchen assistants who cater for our patients and staff.

Together with our Dietitian Martyna they promote healthy eating and have put together a balanced healthy menu.

**The patients have 8 choices for lunch Monday – Friday over a 4 week cycle:** Soup of the Day, Main, Veggie/Vegan Main, Salad, Baguette of the week, Meat Pasty or Sausage Roll (Both of these alternate weekly), Vegan Pasty or Vegan Sausage Roll (both of these alternate weekly) and Jacket Potato with Baked Beans and the weekly filling.

**And there are 3 choices for patients at supper time:** Soup of the day, Main, Veggie main, plus salads, Jacket Potatoes and baguettes if patients require them.

The feedback our kitchen receives is full of praise. They always going the extra mile to cater for all kind of needs and dietary requirements. Besides the daily menu they support the hospital in all kind of functions and meetings we need to cater for.

We are lucky to have such a great team at Cygnet Maidstone



Lee – Head Chef  
Sophie – Sous Chef  
Yulia – Catering Assistant  
Mandy – Catering Assistant  
Bisall – Catering Assistant  
Delia – Catering Assistant

### Carer Support Leads Maidstone Hospital

#### Carer Lead

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Connect with us

