



## Press Release

### Immediate Release

7 December 2023

#### Four Cygnet services gain Triangle of Care accreditation

Four Cygnet Health Care services which provide support to those with mental health needs have been recognised by the Carers Trust Triangle of Care programme, making them the first independent providers of health and social care services to be accredited.

Cygnet Hospital Sheffield, Cygnet Appletree, Cygnet Fountains and Cygnet Hospital Hexham have all been recognised for their continued efforts and commitment to improving the way the services work with carers and families.

The services, all part of the Cygnet Health Care division, have now achieved the one-star accreditation, meaning staff have successfully demonstrated their commitment to making a difference to the lives of carers. Cygnet joins NHS Trusts and local authority providers in being recognised under the Triangle of Care initiative.

The teams have undertaken rigorous self-assessments to demonstrate how they are embedding the Triangle of Care standards and their commitment to ongoing improvements and clear carer involvement.

The Triangle of Care is an alliance between carers, service users and health professionals. It aims to promote safety and recovery and to sustain wellbeing in mental health by including and supporting carers.



There are an estimated seven million unpaid carers in the UK, 13% of whom support people with mental health conditions. These carers can provide vital insight into the treatment and condition of those they care for. Carers Trust's Triangle of Care partnership plans to harness that knowledge in an alliance between unpaid carers, those receiving care, services and mental health professionals.

David Wilmott, Director of Nursing at Cygnet Health Care, said the organisation has shown a strong commitment to transform the lives of carers and keep them at the heart of service delivery.

He added: "We are very proud that these four separate Cygnet Health Care services have been acknowledged by Carers Trust through this accreditation. It is testament to the work being done by our teams to recognise and value the contribution of carers.

"It is our mission to make a positive difference in the lives of the individuals we care for, their loved ones and all those who work with us. Carers are a big part of the Cygnet family and play an integral role in the wellbeing and long-term recovery of those in our care.

"We strive to provide a compassionate and safe environment for our carers where they feel informed, engaged and supported as much as possible.

"We want to build on this achievement and moving forward we are committed to ensuring more Cygnet services gain the Triangle of Care accreditation in 2024."

The Triangle of Care was initially developed to improve mental health acute services by adopting these six principles:

- Carers and the essential role they play are identified at first contact or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Staff are 'carer aware' and trained in carer engagement strategies.
- Policy and practice protocols regarding confidentiality and sharing information, are in place.
- Defined post(s) responsible for carers are in place.
- A carer introduction to the service and staff is available, with a relevant range of information across the care pathway.
- A range of carer support services are available.

On awarding four Cygnet Health Care services the accreditation, Triangle of Care Programme Lead at Carers Trust, Sharon Spurling, commended the work and effort being done at the four hospitals to improve the lives of carers.

"Undertaking the Triangle of Care requires commitment from all levels of an organisation to honestly report how the standards are met and to acknowledge where improvements are needed. The four Cygnet hospitals have shown that their work supports wider system change for how carers are recognised and supported as equal and expert partners in care".

The Triangle of Care accreditation is one of many initiatives Cygnet has worked on to support families and carers as they deal with the range of emotions and questions they experience when a loved one is in need of mental health care.

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.

The organisation 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.