



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Cygnet Colleagues Take On Epic Challenge for Autism Charity

Five colleagues from a hospital in Harrow which supports those with mental health difficulties will take on the challenge of their lives by walking the Camino de Santiago in Spain, covering 114km in three days.

The Camino de Santiago (translated as the Way of St. James) is one of the most ancient walking routes in the world, building to a spectacular finale at Santiago de Compostela's majestic Baroque Cathedral, the last resting place of St James the apostle.

Five members of staff from Cygnet Hospital Harrow will take on the epic feat to raise funds for charity, the National Autistic Society. They are hoping to raise £1,000 for the charity which provides support, guidance and advice to families affected by autism.

Organiser of the challenge is Will Anderson-White, Cygnet Operational Improvement Lead. The 31-year-old said: "This will be the biggest challenge of my life to date.

"Working in this sector has opened my eyes to daily challenges that autistic people face in our communities. As such, this has spurred me on to embark on a challenge to fly the flag and attempt to raise money for the National Autistic Society to support those who need it most.

"The National Autistic Society tirelessly works towards understanding, acceptance, and support for those affected by autism. Through advocacy, research, and services, they aim to create a more inclusive society, providing valuable resources and empowering individuals with autism to thrive."

Will is taking on the challenge alongside Hospital Director Ricky Mugwagwa, Ward Manager Alex Constantinescu, Occupational Therapist Michéle Van Vuren and Mental Health Act Lead Tulsi Patel. The 40-bed hospital, on London Road, Harrow on the Hill, is run by leading health and social care company, Cygnet, and provides support to those with mental health needs and autism.

The team are already training hard for the challenge, which will take place between 29 – 31 March, regularly taking early morning and evening walks and gradually

building the distances during the weekends. The team plan to meet at the end of the month for a long walk together at Box Hill, Surrey.

Will added: "We explored other options but felt we wanted to choose something that really challenged our abilities, and 114km in three days should do that.

"We hope to complete 50km on the first day, which we thought might be the hardest part of the challenge, although we think the second day will be the toughest as recovery will be a challenge in itself.

"The sense of achievement of completing a challenge of this magnitude along with raising awareness and showing support for a charity which is aligned with the work and care we provide for our services users here at Cygnet Hospital Harrow is our biggest motivation."

To donate, go to: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/william-anderson-white-1706884908743>

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Notes to Editors:

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