



Press Release

Immediate Release

19 February 2024

### **Gloucester Mental Health Hospital Welcomes Visit from MP**

A hospital in Gloucester which supports women struggling with their mental health welcomed a visit from the local MP who wanted to learn more about the services on offer and later called the hospital a "remarkable asset" for Gloucester.

Cygnnet Alders Clinic, part of the Cygnnet Health Care division, is a 20 bed rehabilitation service providing assessment, treatment and rehabilitation for women with personality disorder and complex needs.

The service, on Podsmead Road, was visited by Gloucester MP Richard Graham who toured the facility and spoke to staff and service users during his visit to find out more about the treatment offered on site and what a typical recovery journey looks like for the women benefitting from the service.

Hospital Manager Alison Woods said: "It was wonderful to welcome Richard for the first time to Cygnnet Alders Clinic and to be given an opportunity to demonstrate to him how we are making a difference in his constituency by supporting women who are in need of mental health support.

"We wanted him to see first-hand how the service is dedicated to providing a high quality environment for promoting long-term recovery."

Cygnnet Alders Clinic provides a service across three wards; Severn, for assessment and stabilisation; Avon, where service users move as they engage and progress with their treatment pathway; and Coln, which focuses on transitioning to the community.

Richard toured all three wards, guided by Cygnnet Health Care Consultant Psychiatrist Dr Mark Luffingham, who explained the treatment pathways for the women on each ward.

Alison added: "He was very impressed with our pathway and thought we had a fantastic service here in Gloucester and said he was proud to have such an excellent specialist service in his constituency.

"We take great pride in what we achieve here and it meant a lot to staff that Richard took the time to really listen to us and that we were given an opportunity to share our work with him.

“Richard was very interested to learn about the different therapies we offer and asked many insightful questions about our length of stay and outcomes for our patients. He spent time listening to patients talk about their experience at Alders Clinic and was very interested to hear what therapies they find beneficial and the activities they particularly enjoy.”

Commenting after the visit, Mr Graham said: “I was delighted to visit Cygnet Alders Clinic, a remarkable Gloucester asset providing important 24 hour support for women struggling with their mental health.

“It was great to meet some of the caring staff and those being treated and I'm grateful for all the good work Cygnet is doing here.”

Throughout the visit, Richard spent time meeting with staff and talking to them about their jobs.

“He thanked staff for the job they do to help patients and spoke of his own voluntary experience of working in the local NHS Trust as a Cleaner,” Alison explained.

“He's aware of how hard some of our roles are and thanked staff for their dedication and care of patients. He also recognised that staff need enormous resilience to work in health care services and acknowledged how demanding it can be.

“He was clearly passionate about ensuring patients get the right treatment in a specialist service in a timely way. It was a pleasure to demonstrate to him how we put that into place at Cygnet Alders Clinic.”

Following the visit, a service user at the hospital said: “It's really good to see an MP interested in mental health services, especially a female mental health hospital.

“I've never met an MP before who's interested in listening to me and what my plans are for the future, after I leave Alders Clinic.”