



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Cygnet Colleagues Complete Epic Challenge for Autism Charity

Five colleagues from a hospital in Harrow which supports those with mental health difficulties have completed the challenge of their lives by trekking 122km in 55 hours, tripling their fundraising target in support of individuals with autism.

A team of workers from Cygnet Hospital Harrow had hoped to raise £1,000 for the National Autistic Society by trekking The Camino de Santiago in Spain, one of the most ancient walking routes in the world.

Instead, they smashed their fundraising target and have so far raised more than £3,100 for the charity which provides support, guidance and advice to families affected by autism.

The three-day epic feat ended with a spectacular finale at Santiago de Compostela's majestic Baroque Cathedral, the last resting place of St James the apostle.

Organiser of the challenge was Will Anderson-White, Cygnet Health Care Operational Improvement Lead. He said the whole team have a huge sense of accomplishment for completing the trek.

The 31-year-old said: "I feel privileged to have shared this unique experience with such an amazing group of individuals. Everyone gave their all and left absolutely nothing on the table.

"Top tier team work was our secret weapon and boy did we utilise it. From carrying each other's bags, sharing snacks to singing every RnB song we could think of - the momentum carried us through the dark testing times.

"Most importantly we were able to do it in the aid of raising money for the National Autistic Society. A massive thank you to Cygnet for making this happen, it wouldn't have been possible without their continued support."

Will took 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.

Will added: "We wanted to choose something which would really challenge our abilities.

"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 was our biggest motivation.

"We all agreed it was the most difficult challenge any of us have ever experienced. There were significant moments where we had to support each other and push through the pain.

"The biggest challenge was definitely the tiredness and recovery each day, our bodies were pushed to the limit. Mentally we remained strong but the physical aspects were very tough.

"We learned so much through this challenge and we know now that we can conquer anything. The mind is stronger than we know."

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

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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.