



Press Release
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For Immediate Release

Cygnnet Hospital Wyke Patient Launches New Support group

A patient from a hospital near Bradford who suffers with schizophrenia and depression has launched a new therapy group aimed at encouraging men to open up about their mental health and improve their mood.

Danny Cole is a service user on Adarna Ward, the Autism and Mental Health Specialist Ward at Cygnnet Hospital Wyke.

He has worked with the psychology team to start new group therapy sessions for service users – known as 'Cheer you up' - aimed at improving their mood and managing their symptoms of depression.

Danny created posters to promote the group on the ward and sessions are now held weekly.

The group sessions have included 'music and mood', scents, positive quotes, and goal setting. Many service users attend the group regularly, alongside staff, and some of the positivity created is displayed on the ward to help keep the good mood going.

Danny, who has a diagnosis of Paranoid Schizophrenia, said: *"I have brain damage and have been suicidal. I have been in hospital a long time. I would say I am now 75% well.*

"A few years ago I started a mindfulness book to help me with my chess. I was still having 'impossible' days so started a philosophy book to try and learn more about how to cope with those days.

"I then had the idea of sharing things with other people to get well, to help them take on the battle against mental health.

"I think attending as many groups as you can helps people to get better. Rather than just reading a book about it, the group helps support you with your mental health difficulties. It uses common sense and layman's terms to help people cope with any problem they might face, to help people feel more comfortable with life. To help people overcome hurdles.

"You don't have to worry about it, you can listen, look and observe. There will be information about how to get well. We have listened to music, eaten chocolate, and shared positive quotes."

Caroline Clare, Consultant Forensic Psychologist, explained: "Danny knows that talking is an important part of people's recovery.

"He wanted people to feel less lonely and share different ways of coping. Danny developed the idea of a 'cheer you up' group that would help people manage their feelings of low mood and symptoms of depression, after recognising this was something both he and his peers could often struggle with."

Mental Health Awareness Week takes place 13 – 19 May and this year focuses on the theme 'Movement: Moving more for our mental health'.

Offering his advice to anybody who may be struggling with their mental health, Danny said: "Keep going and don't give up until you get well.

"Do as many groups as you can to get well, that's the end product and always have that goal in your mind.

"Focus on what you need and it's important to take one day at a time."

Describing the impact of the 'cheer you up' group, Assistant Psychologist Nadia Khan said: "The cheer you up group has been a wonderful positive change to the ward environment.

"Delivering the group gives us both the creativity and flexibility in what would be useful to the ward that week. Usually, Danny will suggest an idea in his session and my role will be to think of creative ways to bring it to life.

"The group has contributed to increased engagement on Adarna from not only service users but also staff who will ask "what's on this week?"

"It has become embedded into the ward routine and created some great co-produced pieces of work. Most importantly, it's got people talking and smiling like Danny wanted."

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