



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Cygnet Transforms Clinical Space Into 'Homely' Social Hub for North Wales Patients

Arcade games, sensory lighting, neon signs and pool tables are just some of the equipment which has helped to transform a clinical space at two Flintshire mental health services as part of a unique collaboration between patients and staff.

Service users at Cygnet Delfryn House and Lodge, a high support inpatient rehabilitation service for men and women who have severe mental illness, now have access to homely environments – named 'Social Hubs' - away from the wards after unused spaces in the hospital were given a stunning makeover in an effort to provide service users with a safe space where they could relax and socialise together.

The Social Hubs have been designed and installed across more than a dozen Cygnet Health Care services so far and all have been co-produced between staff and patients, with more to come.

Co-production is an integral part of the culture at Cygnet and the social hubs came about following feedback from patients who said they would benefit from having non-clinical rooms to wind down in.

Working from a wish list of items provided by service users, a team of staff and Experts by Experience (those with lived experience of inpatient settings) worked together to spend a day at the Cygnet Health Care services on Argoed Hall Lane, Mold, Flintshire, transforming an otherwise empty room into a brand new space featuring games consoles, arcade machines, sensory lighting and a newly clothed pool table.

The idea is that the social hubs offer a non-clinical, homely space for service users to relax and engage in fun activities and peer support sessions, giving them a safe space away from the wards.

Service users were placed at the heart of the project from the very beginning and were escorted to a local shopping centre so they could be directly involved in choosing the items that were bought for the hub, giving them a further sense of ownership of the project.

Raf Hamaizia, Cygnet Health Care Expert by Experience Lead, explained: "This co-produced project demonstrates how staff and service users can enhance both the built environment and engagement through working together.

"The new social hubs are a great place for service users to get off the wards to relax and socialise, particularly on evenings and weekends. Feedback from the community meetings at services has been really positive with one service user saying that the room "gives a positive and relaxing energy" and another remarking that it is "stunning and helps us to stay chilled."

"We strive to make our services "homes away from homes" and the social hubs have been hugely beneficial for the service users, reducing incidents and providing them with a non-clinical, homely environment to enhance off-ward activities. It is refreshing to see how quickly the hubs are growing and the amazing feedback we are getting from both service users and staff alike."

Social hubs at the services typically include items including TVs, immersive sound systems, Playstation, inspirational artwork, comic figurines & posters, arcade machines, board games, bean bags and adjustable sensory lighting.

Raf said the plan is now to expand the social hubs across more Cygnet services, with the ambition for all Cygnet services to have a social hub in place.

He added: "It has been a real journey of co-production and sharing best practice between sites to enhance therapeutic environments and meaningful activity to support recovery.

"The ultimate benefit is the service user who has a place to do what they want to do, that they feel invested in from co-creating, that doesn't feel clinical or hospital like. It helps them in working back towards creating a sense of self, connectedness and ultimately recovery. It also provides reassurance to families when seeing this space and knowing their loved one is not in an institution but a place that they even rate themselves.

"For service users, social hubs are a reflection of their voice being heard; we've listen and we've acted on it.

"It is fun and relaxing not only for service users but everyone, staff and managers are over the moon too, we all feel invested in this space and are excited to see how this space will make a positive difference on so many levels, from enhancing engagement on evenings and weekend, to having a place where service users can relax and socialise.

"Seeing the reaction on people's faces has been priceless, both service users and staff alike."

Nikki Martin, Therapy Coordinator at Cygnet Delfryn House, said: "A lot of the patients like the retro style of the arcade games, saying that they remind them of their youth and everyone is pleased with the colour scheme. Everyone really likes the wall lights and lights which go around the ceilings. A few of the patients have

already stated that they would like to hold FIFA tournament's on the PS5 console. All in all it has gone down a blast."

Cygnet is a health and social care company which provides services for young people and adults with mental health needs, acquired brain injuries, eating disorders, autism and learning disabilities.

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