



## **Press Release**

### **Immediate Release**

**13 August 2024**

### **My Journey from India to Bristol**

**Between 18th July to 17th August 2024 it is South Asian Heritage Month. The theme for 2024 is "Free to Be Me". Poonam is a Lead Physiotherapist at Cygnet Brunel, a neuropsychiatric hospital run by Cygnet Health Care. She shares her experience of moving to the UK from India to join the team at Cygnet Brunel.**

I come from a city called Gurugram, which is a cosmopolitan metropolis located in North India. Gurugram is India's second largest information technology hub and third largest financial and banking hub. Outside work I love photography, socialising, and making new friends.

"Free to be me" is more than just a phrase; it embodies the essence of self-acceptance and authenticity. Being true to myself and embracing my South Asian identity while adapting to a new culture has been empowering.

Relocating to a new country is a significant life change, and starting a new job adds another layer of excitement and challenge. Leaving behind familiar surroundings, loved ones, and the comfort of my cultural norms was daunting. However, I viewed this move as a chance to grow, learn, and broaden my horizons. As a South Asian who recently moved from India to Bristol, UK, this experience has been a profound journey of self-discovery, cultural integration, and professional growth.

Leaving India and moving to the UK was both thrilling and daunting. Bristol, with its rich history and vibrant culture, became my new home. The anticipation of starting my first job in this dynamic city was coupled with the inevitable apprehensions of adapting to a new environment and workplace.

From the moment I arrived in Bristol, I was struck by the city's welcoming nature and its blend of cultures. However, stepping into my new job was a different challenge. The healthcare environment at Cygnet Brunel was new to me, with different protocols, practices, and a diverse workforce. I wondered if I would be able to keep up and if my skills and experiences from India would be valued here.

To my relief, I found that my new workplace embraced diversity with open arms. My colleagues were not only interested in my professional background but also curious about my cultural heritage. They valued the different perspectives I brought to the table, which helped me feel more confident and included.

Cygnnet Health Care's inclusive environment encouraged me to share my traditions and practices. To start with, introducing them to Indian cuisine, and sharing with them my cultural beliefs helped build strong bonds and mutual respect. These experiences highlighted the beauty of diversity and how it enriches our lives and workplaces.

At Cygnnet, where compassion and empathy are paramount, bringing my authentic self to work has allowed me to connect with service users and colleagues on a deeper level. My diverse background has provided me with unique insights and perspectives, enhancing my ability to provide holistic care and support to those in need.

The journey wasn't without its challenges. Adapting to a new healthcare system, understanding different accents, and adjusting to the British way of life required time and patience. However, these challenges were opportunities for growth. Each obstacle I overcame boosted my confidence and reinforced my belief in my abilities.

In my role, I have found that my cultural background offers unique insights, enhancing my ability to support and care for service users from diverse backgrounds. My journey from India to Cygnnet has taught me that authenticity and diversity are strengths that can drive personal and professional success. From MDT to medics and managers, all have been a great support to me.

As I continue my career in the UK, I am grateful for the experiences and opportunities that have shaped me and are still happening. My journey is a testament to the resilience and strength found in embracing one's identity in a new environment. It is a reminder that diversity enriches our communities and that being free to be oneself is vital for a thriving, inclusive workplace.

To anyone embarking on a similar journey, I encourage you to embrace your heritage, celebrate your uniqueness, and remain true to yourself. By doing so, you will not only find your place but also contribute to the rich tapestry of diversity that makes our world a better place.

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

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