



Press Release

Immediate Release

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### **The Fields Becomes First Social Care Service to Benefit from a 'Social Hub'**

A Sheffield care service has become the first social care site to benefit from a 'social hub' as part a unique collaboration between residents and staff.

The Fields, on Spa Lane, Woodhouse, is a specialist residential service which cares for adults with learning disabilities. It is part of the Cygnet Social Care division.

A space at the service has been given a stunning makeover and converted into a 'social hub', which has been named in memory of former staff member Angela Hakki, known as Ange, who was an Activity Co-ordinator at the service before she passed away.

Working from a wish list of items provided by the residents, a team of staff and Experts by Experience (those with lived experience of inpatient settings) worked together to spend a day at The Fields, transforming the space into an area which reflects the needs and preferences of the residents.

The social hub now includes multiple arcade machines, a hairdressing set up, a nail bar, and a sensory hideaway.

Home manager Anne-Marie Williams explained: "Ange was a great Activity Co-Ordinator whose main aim was to provide service users with activities which brought them fun and interest. Ange always had a smile on her face. She was very person centred in her approach and was a hugely popular member of staff.

"It was a great loss to all of us when Ange passed away. We wanted to remember her and what she brought to the team and residents through her activities. Having her name in lights means she will be forever with us."

The Social Hubs have been designed and installed across more than 15 Cygnet Health Care services so far and all have been co-produced between staff and patients.

The ambition is for every Cygnet service to have a social hub in due course and The Fields represents the first hub to be installed at a social care site.

Tom Beasley is the Expert by Experience at the hospital who helped kit out the social hub.

Explaining what made this social hub unique, he said: "As this was the first time we had kitted out a hub for a social care service, we made a consideration to have a heavy sensory aspect in this one.

"A lot of the residents have different needs and we were really keen and focused to ensure everybody had their various needs met. A lot of the residents have physical disabilities and in wheelchairs so it was important to make sure the different facilities in the hub are accessible to all.

"One of the residents is a trained hairdresser so we made sure he had a space where he could continue his passion. We also purchased crash mats in order for residents to sit comfortably on the floor if they wished."

He added: "It has been a pleasure to work with the team, to bring a social hub to The Fields. This is a milestone in the growth of the social hub project, as this is the first install we have done within the social care division.

"Most importantly this social hub has enabled the service to continue the legacy of a much loved staff member, Ange, who sadly passed away earlier this year.

"She was a passionate member of the activities team, spreading happiness and joy to all of the residents within the service.

"It was great to see the residents and staff engaging with the space following our opening ceremony and I look forward to hearing the incredible feedback."

Amenities in the social hubs also typically include arcade games, sensory lighting, music facilities, TV screens, electronic goods, inspirational artwork, board games, comfortable seating and much more to ensure service users and residents have a safe space where they can relax and socialise together.

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

"The new social hubs are a great place for residents to relax and socialise, particularly on evenings and weekends. We strive to make our services "homes away from homes" and the social hubs have been hugely beneficial and 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."