



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Cygnet Appletree Retains Triangle of Care Accreditation

A Durham hospital which supports women with mental health needs has retained its accreditation for the work it does to involve carers in the support of their loved ones.

Cygnet Appletree, a 25-bed hospital for women, has been recognised for its continued efforts and commitment to improving the way the service works with carers and families. The service includes Pippin Ward, a specialist PICU service and Bramley Ward, an acute service for women.

In 2023, Cygnet became the first independent provider of health and social care services to be accredited by the Carers Trust Triangle of Care programme. Now the hospital, on Frederick Street, Meadowfield, has retained the one-star accreditation, meaning staff have successfully demonstrated their commitment to making a difference to the lives of carers.

More than 60 staff at the Cygnet Health Care-run hospital completed Carer Awareness training between January and December 2024.

The hospital has embedded many practices which were praised by assessors including the fact family, friends and carers are invited to participate in ward rounds, the service has five Carer Leads who help to support and involve carers, carers drop-in events are held monthly, the hospital has a designated family room and ample information is shared with carers whilst their loved one is admitted.

Assessors were also impressed that at Cygnet Appletree, carers are given information about locally available carers support, how they can access a carers' assessment and referral to an independent advocacy service.

On receiving the accreditation, Hospital Manager Rosie Hodgson-Whittle said: "I am exceptionally proud of the team at Cygnet Appletree in retaining our one star accreditation with the Triangle of Care; with a special shout out to the sites Carer Lead – Diane Maughan.

"We are driven to ensure that family and carers are made to feel welcome, involved and that their voices are heard and their experiences are understood. There has been really positive feedback from family and carers stating that this has been the first time they have been offered support and how much it has meant to them.

"This is vital to the journey of our patients, as carers provide dynamic insight into the treatment and condition of those they care for. By supporting carers we are providing better patient care."

Mary Patel, Carer's Trust's Triangle of Care Programme Lead, said: "It's great to see Cygnet Appletree reaffirm its commitment to supporting and involving unpaid carers. The dedication of Carer Leads at Appletree is clear to see and there has been a sustained effort to train staff and encourage a 'carer aware' culture.

"Cygnet Appletree is on a firm footing to further develop carer support and continue the Triangle of Care improvement journey."

Triangle of Care is a quality improvement scheme for health and social care providers that promotes safety, recovery and wellbeing by including and supporting unpaid carers. Originally developed by carers, the scheme is run by Carers Trust and recognises healthcare providers that have committed to continuous improvement according to six key 'carers included' standards.

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