



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Former Teacher Praises Care from Smethwick Mental Health Service

A former teacher now receiving care from a Smethwick mental health service has spoken of how the treatment and support she has received is giving her hope for the future.

Lisa was a qualified teacher when her mental health declined to the point of needing inpatient care. For over 12 years, she was in and out of hospitals. She found herself stuck in a repeating pattern of; going into a hospital, undergoing treatment, getting discharged, getting a job, becoming stressed, and then having to go back into hospital, where the cycle would repeat again.

She had lost the confidence to go out into the community and could no longer see a future for herself.

Cygnet Raglan House, part of the Cygnet Health Care division, is a 25 bed high support inpatient rehabilitation (level 2) service for women on Raglan Road, Smethwick. When Lisa arrived at Cygnet Raglan House, she admitted that she felt she had lost her identity.

Lisa had chosen to end her career in teaching as she no longer felt she could associate herself with being a teacher – she didn't know who to be anymore. She struggled to cope with her mental illness, had lost confidence, and didn't have the tools to stay well living her life in the community.

The staff at Cygnet Raglan House supported Lisa through an integrated approach, working together with her to find the correct medications and therapies to support her recovery. She was encouraged by the occupational therapist to join the works programme, alongside the other groups and activities on offer. The programme helps individuals use the skills they've got and get paid to do it, promoting independence and a sense of achievement.

Lisa said: "My jobs are to do the display boards, which I really enjoy, and the minutes for the community meetings every Friday. After the meeting, I will then use the computer to type them up. Putting the display boards up and changing them gets

me out of bed and gives me a purpose. Having these jobs makes me feel valued and worthwhile.

"The Occupational Therapists do group activities, which I enjoy. At the moment we are doing health and wellbeing, including facemasks, mindfulness groups and community outings.

"It's given me the confidence to go back out into the community. I go shopping most days, but it's built my confidence back up for me to do these things and see a future."

The Cygnet Raglan House team supported Lisa to re-discover her identity and setting goals for the future with a realistic timeline. They spent time ensuring that Lisa had coping mechanisms in place to get through difficult times, in a safe place. Staff supported Lisa in maintaining regular contact with her family. She enjoyed the visits and felt happy that her parents could see her well again.

Lisa has praised the staff at Cygnet Raglan House for helping her during her time. She said: "The staff at Raglan have really helped me. They have been kind and caring and they understand me. If I am having a bad day, they will encourage me to play a game or go for a walk and they just make you feel safe."

"Then you have all the other support and activities going on that encourage you to want to understand what's going on with yourself and just get better."

With the support of Cygnet Raglan House, Lisa says she finally feels in a place where she understands her illness, can work with it and is now looking forward to living in the community.

"Cygnet Raglan House has absolutely, one hundred per cent, changed my life," Lisa said.

"I don't think I'd be here if it wasn't for Raglan House, I just wouldn't have lasted. Now for my future, I am excited to go into supported living, which I haven't done before. The staff have made me feel that I don't need to go straight into a job, I need to recuperate, look after myself and build it up.

"The plan is to have my own space and access to communal areas, and I'm looking forward to it. This could be a whole new Lisa.

"I have more of an identity, so I am really looking forward to my future, and I wouldn't be in that position if it wasn't for Raglan House."

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