



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Cygnet Unites Leaders at Westminster to Tackle Domestic Abuse in Health and Social Care

A landmark roundtable discussion, led by Cygnet Group and hosted by Lord Patel of Bradford, brought together leading voices from across health, social care and the third sector at the Palace of Westminster on Wednesday 21 May, to tackle the pressing issue of domestic abuse.

The meeting marked a pivotal step in shaping a national response to domestic abuse within health and care settings. The event formed part of Cygnet Group's ongoing Domestic Abuse Quality Improvement (QI) project, aimed at enhancing how domestic abuse is recognised and addressed by staff, both for service users and within the workforce.

Chaired by Phil Winterbottom, Cygnet's Head of Safeguarding and Protection, the discussion opened with keynote contributions from Dame Nicole Jacobs, Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales, and Susan Bright, CEO of the Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse (EIDA).

Dame Nicole Jacobs said: "We are not nearly where we need to be in our health response to domestic abuse. I am really thankful to Cygnet for bringing us all together, it's important to have people with different experiences and perspectives to help build on what's already happening. We have a shared endeavour to bring the best information to the fore."

The event brought together an esteemed group of organisations including the Royal Colleges of Nursing, Psychiatry, and GPs, NHS England, Kings College London, Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse, Mankind Initiative, and the Social Care Institute for Excellence, among others. Their collective aim was to identify the gold standard for domestic abuse response, address existing challenges, and share learning for national dissemination.

Lord Patel, Non-Executive Director at Cygnet, emphasised the importance of the discussion. He said: "Today is an opportunity for some really meaningful and

productive discussions. Hosting this roundtable in the House of Lords reflects the gravity of the issue. It is a place of responsibility and there is no issue more deserving of our energy and collective commitment for how we as a society identify and respond to domestic abuse.

"With 12.6 million adults having experienced abusive behaviours, we must ask the difficult questions and confront the gaps in our systems. Today is about aligning our efforts toward real change."

Susan Bright highlighted the alignment between EIDA's mission and Cygnet's initiative. She said: "It is a real pleasure to be here today to hear the discussions that will take place on this imperative issue. Our vision is very aligned to what Cygnet is trying to achieve; we want every employer in the UK to take action on domestic abuse. It's about raising awareness, creating tools to help employers to support their people impacted by domestic abuse and bringing businesses together to share learnings."

Discussion topics included improving staff training, the role of HR mechanisms in responding to abuse involving employees, and systemic changes needed both internally and nationally to strengthen responses.

Reflecting on the discussions, Phil said: "It is vital we highlight the importance of this issue and come together to learn from one another."

"Domestic abuse can impact anyone - service users, colleagues, carers - and the consequences can be profound and long-lasting. Today's discussion allowed us to look honestly at how we currently respond, where the gaps lie, and what gold-standard practice could look like. Whether it's small ideas, big ideas or systemic change, these moments of collaboration, especially when grounded in lived experience, can inspire the kind of meaningful progress that truly changes lives."

"It is our responsibility as care providers to create environments where safety, understanding and support are embedded into everything we do."

Insights from the roundtable will directly inform Cygnet's QI project and be shared through national safeguarding and domestic violence networks.