

Hospital Maidstone

August 2025

Hello and welcome to our August edition of our Newsletter

We had a very busy Carer Week in June. Hope some of you were able to join in on some activities.

It was wonderful to see so many Carers and Carer Leads engaging in conversations with professionals and Carers around the country and at Cygnet at the different sites.

Raising awareness of the emotional, financial and physical challenges carers face on a daily base is so important. In the Carer Week – and not only at this week of the year – we recognize the invisible work of unpaid carers who support their loved ones every day. We wanted to make sure that our Carers are know that we are here to support them. They are not alone. And we celebrate their resilience, their compassion and ongoing contribution to the communities and our health system.

It's already end of August when you will receive this newsletter. Usually a quieter period of the year due to holidays and term breaks. Trusting you all are having a great summer, either you are working or had a break from it.

We hope you will find our newsletter an enjoyable and informative read, packed full of hopefully useful information and news.

Your Cygnet Hospital Maidstone Carer Support Team

"Hope" is the thing with feathers

BY [EMILY DICKINSON](#)

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.



Our recent **Carer Event**, held on the **14th of June 2025**, was thoughtfully centred around the theme of spreading Hope. It was a truly inspiring day, bringing together carers, professionals, and individuals with lived experience.

Kerry White, Head of Psychology at Cygnet Hospital Godden Green, opened the day by sharing a powerful poem and speaking about the vital role of hope—both for the person receiving care and for those who care for them. Her words resonated deeply, reminding us of the importance of compassion, resilience, and mutual support.

Throughout the day, we explored how to support safe and well-prepared discharges from hospital, taking time to reflect on our own thoughts and feelings without judgement. It was a valuable opportunity to share perspectives, gain insight, and reinforce that no carer is ever alone—support is always available.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our experts by experience, Gemma and Justin, who shared their powerful stories with honesty and courage. Their journeys—marked by challenges, growth, and hope—left a lasting impact on us all because they spoke purely from lived experience as a service user, not as a professional. We are grateful to everyone who joined us and contributed to making the day such a meaningful experience.

We look forward to welcoming you to one of our upcoming Carer Events.



A “**Young Carer**” is someone under 18 who helps look after a family member who is ill, disabled, has a mental health condition, or struggles with drug or alcohol use. They may also help care for siblings or take on other responsibilities when parents or guardians are unable to.

Being a young carer often means juggling adult responsibilities like picking up medication, helping a parent get dressed, or taking a younger sibling to school—all while trying to stay on top of schoolwork, take care of themselves, and hold onto their dreams for the future.

Life as a young carer can be especially challenging when extra pressures are involved, such as the rising cost of living or having family overseas. These young people are often expected to carry a heavy emotional and physical load, even though they are still children themselves.

Because of their caring role, young carers may miss school more often and have fewer chances to relax or spend time with friends. Their childhood can feel like it's put on pause. That's why it's so important **to identify and support young carers**. To help them to find balance—giving them time to enjoy being young while also preparing them for a positive future beyond their caring role.

The **Carers Trust** writes on its homepage:

“There are around one million young carers aged 17 or under in the UK. And there are a further 600,000 young adult carers aged 18-25.

Caring for a family member can have a huge impact on a child's mental health and wellbeing, as well as their ability to learn and future life chances. Shockingly, 50,000 young carers are spending as many as 50 hours a week on their caring role. Many young carers feel they are missing out on large parts of their childhood and education. Others feel overwhelmed by the level of responsibility.”

Every young carer has the right to a Young Carer's Needs Assessment. This is a chance for them to talk about the care they provide and how it affects their life. The assessment looks at whether it's appropriate for them to keep providing care and identifies what support they—and their family—may need. Importantly, the assessment considers the needs of the whole family, not just the young carer. A plan may be created to support different family members and can include help from a range of services, such as:

- Children's services
- Adult social services
- school or college
- doctors or nurses
- support workers

Getting the right help can make a big difference—making sure young carers aren't left to manage alone and can look forward to a full and bright future.

For more information go to the Carer Trust website: <https://carers.org/>



<https://www.youngcarersillustrations.com/>

“Young Carers in Bunnyland”

This gentle and heartfelt picture book follows the story of Honey, a young carer, and her friends—who are magically turned into bunnies! As they hop through their day, they learn to share their feelings, support each other, and discover they're not alone in the challenges they face.

Through Honey's eyes, young readers are introduced to the everyday realities of being a young carer—like helping family members, feeling worried, or missing out on playtime—but also the

strength, kindness, and bravery it takes to care for others.

Created especially for younger children, this story helps young carers feel seen, supported, and understood, while gently opening up conversations about their own experiences.

Part of a wider initiative by Kingston Carers' Network, this book is designed to raise awareness, spark empathy, and offer comfort to young carers and the people who support them.

More books for young carers:

<https://www.honeypot.org.uk/news/news/books-for-young-carers-527j7>

<https://kent.connecttosupport.org/>

- General Information
- Support for Carers
- Checklist for Carers
- Community Navigator
- Supporting Working Carer
- Health and Wellbeing

Kent Connect to Support



https://news.motability.co.uk/accessible_guide/index.html#page=1

This resource provides over 200 ideas for accessible days out across the UK, offering detailed information on accessibility features of various attractions. The guide is free to access online and can be downloaded.



Caring Craftivists

Can craft tell the untold stories of carers? Welcome to Caring Craftivists the podcast where craftivism and caring intertwine to create powerful stories of resilience, advocacy, and hope. Hosted by Vanessa, a researcher and lecturer at the University of Brighton, and Katy, an unpaid carer and founder of the We Care Campaign, this pod-

cast stitches together carers' experiences who use craft as a tool for change. In 2023, we invited unpaid carers from across Wales to embroider their experiences of caring onto a yellow duster. These dusters were presented to MPs at the Welsh Parliament, calling for improved rights. Caring Craftivists is our shared story. Each episode uncovers the stories behind the stitches, introducing you to carers who have transformed simple dusters into works of activism, amplifying their voices and making their invisible labour visible. From powerful messages displayed in the Senedd to personal tales of strength and struggle, we explore how creativity can spark conversations, challenge perceptions, and inspire

This is the RSS feed for Caring Craftivists, a podcast hosted on [Captivate.fm](https://www.captivate.fm). Paste this RSS feed's URL from your address bar in to your podcast app or search for the podcast in Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts or the podcast app that you prefer.

Supporting working carers



<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/care-and-support/caring-for-other-people/supporting->



<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/pat-guid-give-another-person-access.pdf>

Did you know that you can choose to give another person access to your GP online services on your behalf?

You don't need to know how to use these services or have a computer yourself to give another person access. Your surgery will give them their own login details, which will be separate from our own. Your surgery will give you details on how this can be set up.

This booklet is designed to highlight a wide range of support available to carers across the UK and Kent County, where we as Cygnet Hospital Maidstone are based. Caring for someone can be challenging, but no one should face this alone.

This guide is here to provide helpful and informative resources, offering useful first points of contact for carers seeking assistance, support and help.

Whether you need support for the person you care for or for yourself, or you looking for advice on various issues, or simply you need someone to talk to.

Help and information are available from various amazing organisations and charities to ensure that carers receive the support they need.

Please make use of this resources. Support is only a call or a click away.

And don't forget we are here for you as well!

Your

Carer Support Team at Cygnet Hospital Maidstone



You will find it enclosed with this newsletter

Retaining Triangle of Carer Star 1 Accreditation Cygnet Hospital Maidstone Triangle of Care, Annual Report Submission Response 2025.

The annual report provides excellent evidence of the progress being made against all 6 of the Triangle of Care Standards against a challenging context. Carers Trust can see that there has been a real effort made and that this report demonstrates an ethos of continual improvement and team effort. Congratulations to all concerned.

I can confirm that Cygnet Hospital Maidstone retain the Triangle of Care Star 1

Debbie Hustings
Joint Triangle of Care Programme Lead
Date: 31.07.25

CELEBRATE!

Improving lives together

Cygnet



Have your say!

Cygnet wants to know how well we are supporting you or your loved one in our services. Your feedback will help Cygnet understand what we do well and what we need to do better.

Support with completing surveys

You can use the advocacy service to help you complete feedback surveys.

If you need an interpreter or translator, please speak to a member of the staff team.

You can use electronic devices available in your service to complete surveys online via the Cygnet website: www.cygnetgroup.com/surveys

You also have the option to complete surveys on paper.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please email family&friends@cygnethealth.co.uk

Scan the QR Codes to complete the surveys

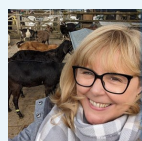
Cygnet's Family Friends and Carers Satisfaction Survey for PICU & Acute Wards



Cygnet's Family Friends and Carers Satisfaction Survey for Hospitals



Farewell and Welcome to our dedicated Carer Lead Team



We had to say Goodbye to **Paula Tappenden**, our Head of Social Work and Safeguarding Lead as well as Carer Lead for Saltwood Ward.

We welcome **Innocent Mudingo** in our Team. He is the new Social Worker and Carer Lead for Bearsted Ward.

Perri Osborne will be our new Head of Social Work and Safeguarding Lead for Cygnet Hospital Maidstone as well as the Social Worker for Saltwood Ward.

Carer Support Team

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