



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Chesterfield Mental Health Patient Describes 'Life-Changing' Care

A woman receiving care at a Chesterfield mental health hospital has described the "life-changing" care which is enabling her to return to living in the community after six years of inpatient treatment.

Cygnet Acer Clinic, a specialist 28-bed service providing assessment, treatment and rehabilitation for women with mental health needs, is sharing the recovery journey of Megan, who is preparing for discharge after years of inpatient care.

Megan, now 24, first began experiencing significant mental health challenges in her teenage years. Following referral to CAMHS and several years spent across acute and high-dependency inpatient services, she transitioned into adult services at 18. For years, she was moved across acute wards, Psychiatric Intensive Care Units and rehabilitation units across the country, leaving her feeling destabilised, isolated and unable to build trust.

"I'd been on countless wards where I felt so alone," Megan said. "I struggled to trust staff because I moved around so often. I was labelled 'complex', and I never stayed anywhere long enough to do the work that needed to be done."

Her journey changed when she was admitted to Cygnet Acer Clinic on Worksop Road in Chesterfield. The service is part of the Cygnet Health Care division.

"It was the first hospital that didn't give up on me," she said. "They made me believe I could be whoever I wanted to be, regardless of my struggles."

During her time at Cygnet Acer Clinic, Megan engaged in Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), developing skills that helped her manage emotions and build resilience.

"I'd given up on myself, because it felt like everyone else had given up on me. I now have the right tools to be able to cope with the bad days but also allow myself to enjoy the good," she added.

"The consistent support from the staff helped me build independence. I even took on a volunteer job, something I never thought I'd be stable enough to do."

Rebuilding trust was another defining moment in Megan's journey.

"I've learnt it's okay to trust people," she said. "Staff supported me every step of the way. Their confidence in me helped me find confidence in myself."

Now preparing for discharge, Megan said she is looking to the future with hope and optimism.

"I never thought I'd have goals, because I didn't think I'd be here," she shared. "But now I want to be an expert by experience, using my lived experience to help others, and one day become a mental health nurse. I want to travel. I just want to be happy and I now know I can achieve anything I set my mind to."

She hopes her story encourages others starting their recovery journey.

"My advice is to throw yourself into everything you're offered. It might feel hard, but it's worth it. It's okay not to be okay, it's about managing emotions and accepting support. Most importantly, it's never too late to choose recovery and live a life you deserve."

Reflecting on her time at Cygnet Acer Clinic, Megan added: "I've conquered most of my demons here. I will always be grateful to the staff at Acer because they gave me my life back."