



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Cygnet Oaks Achieves Carer Accreditation

A mental health hospital for men in Barnsley has been awarded an accreditation following its commitment to working in partnership with carers and families, with one carer describing the hospital as "the best place my son has been in".

Cygnet Oaks, a 35-bed rehabilitation Cygnet Health Care hospital for men on Upper Sheffield Road, has been awarded Carers Trust Triangle of Care Star 1 Accreditation. The Triangle of Care accreditation scheme encourages good practice in carer engagement, promoting an environment where carers are listened to, informed and involved appropriately in care planning and decision-making.

Richard Griffiths, Hospital Manager at Cygnet Oaks, said: "We are delighted to have achieved the Triangle of Care Accreditation, recognising our commitment to working in partnership with carers and families.

"The Triangle of Care highlights the importance of strong collaboration between service users, carers and professionals. Achieving this accreditation reflects the hard work of our staff to ensure carers are listened to, informed and involved appropriately in care planning and decision-making. It also reinforces our belief that carers' knowledge and experience are vital to delivering safe, effective and compassionate care.

"We would like to thank the carers who have shared their experiences and feedback, helping us to improve our practice, and our staff whose dedication and commitment made this achievement possible. Whilst we are proud of this milestone, we see it as a foundation for continued learning and improvement as we strive for excellence."

The Carers Trust assessment highlighted strong progress across the Triangle of Care standards, with particular praise for the service's in-person carer awareness training, delivered by a Carer Ambassador. This training has led to a meaningful shift in staff attitudes and everyday practice, improving understanding of the carer role and strengthening partnership working.

Feedback from carers reflected a positive and inclusive culture at Cygnet Oaks. One carer described their experience as extremely positive, saying: "I think this is the best place that my son has been in. The staff try to involve you in the monthly

meetings - every month you can participate in person or via Teams, which is fantastic as it's normally on a day that I work. They really do listen."

The carer also highlighted how their feedback directly led to personalised support and meaningful activities, including swimming, hiking and sensory resources on the ward.

The Carers Trust peer review panel noted: "This reflects a positive culture in which carers are listened to, and demonstrates how their contributions can lead to personalised, responsive care and improved outcomes for patients.

"There is good evidence that staff help carers understand the value of their role, build confidence, explain available support, and link to peer support groups.

"Cygnet Oaks demonstrates a strong and developing culture of carer involvement, supported by clear processes and a committed multidisciplinary Carers Team."

Other positive areas of practice recognised by Carers Trust included:

- Good evidence of a common-sense approach to consent and confidentiality, with communication agreements reviewed regularly and staff confidence steadily increasing in communicating with carers when consent is not in place.
- Carers benefit from early contact at admission, receiving information packs, a dedicated visiting room, and consistent signposting to advocacy and local support services such as Black Belt Advocacy and Barnsley Carers Service.
- Staff were praised for helping carers understand the value of their role, build confidence and access appropriate support.
- Training was a particular strength, with impactful face-to-face carer awareness sessions driving a notable shift in staff attitudes.
- The service demonstrated proactive MDT coordination, evidence of strong involvement in discharge planning, and emerging partnership work with local organisations.

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.

Over 80 mental health providers, including NHS Trusts, charities and private hospitals serving NHS patients, are Triangle of Care members and Carers Trust is gradually opening the scheme to new health and social care sectors. The Triangle of Care is recognised by Care Quality Commission inspectors and supports the NICE recommendations for 'Supporting Adult Carers'.