



Press Release

Immediate Release

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Cygnet Hospital Stevenage unveils new Social Hub

Cygnet Hospital Stevenage has officially unveiled its brand-new Social Hub, a vibrant space designed to support patient wellbeing, recovery and social interaction for those hospitalised with mental health struggles.

The [82-bed hospital](#), which provides a range of secure, PICU and acute mental health services for men and women, marked the opening with a special ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by staff and service users.

The newly launched Social Hub offers a mix of relaxation and recreation facilities. These include comfortable seating areas, arcade machines, massage chairs, table tennis, TV screens, and immersive LED lighting.

Across its health and social care services, Cygnet has been investing in the development of "social hubs", dedicated communal spaces designed in collaboration with service users to promote engagement, independence and meaningful activity away from the wards.

Unused spaces in hospitals have been given a stunning makeover in an effort to provide service users with a safe space where they could relax and socialise together. The social hubs came about following feedback from patients who said they would benefit from having non-clinical rooms to wind down in. They have all been co-produced, designed and installed by staff and patients working together.

The new social hub at the Graveley Road hospital has been entirely co-produced with the service users who played a central role in designing the space. They helped select the colour scheme, furniture and decorations, as well as choosing the activities and equipment available.

Alice Zimba, Hospital Manager, said: "The opening of this Social Hub is a transformative moment for our hospital; it is a perfect blend of tranquil relaxation and vibrant activity that breaks down the boundaries of a clinical environment.

"This space is even more bespoke and advanced than we imagined, featuring integrated sensory lighting and sound to help our service users feel truly at home. By providing a non-clinical sanctuary that was hand-picked by our service users, we are fostering an environment where people feel empowered, equal, and proud. Seeing

the delight on everyone's faces at the ribbon cutting shows just how essential this is for long-term recovery and well-being.

"I have no doubt it is going to be a really positive addition to our hospital, the feedback already has been incredible and it's been wonderful seeing patients relax and socialise, it has really brought them together. It is a space designed to promote connection, wellbeing and meaningful engagement and already it is having the impact we hoped it would.

"I would like to recognise the invaluable input of our service users and staff. Their ideas, honesty and contributions have played a vital role in shaping this social hub. I must thank them for their hard work and engagement, the social hub truly reflects their voice and vision."

Haley Williams, Co-production, Recovery & Innovation Manager, added: "You can tell co-production is at the heart of our Social Hubs because every single one is unique, from the colours and furniture to the activities, all handpicked by our service users.

"Creating a space that isn't clinical allows for socialising and helps people feel equal. Stevenage's hub is one of the largest to date within Cygnet and it is helping to break down barriers you often see in a mental health service.

"Eight months in the making, it's been a true labour of love. Seeing service users engaged, happy and proud of their space is always the most rewarding part."

Cygnet's Social Hubs have received national recognition for their innovative, co-produced approach to improving patient experience and recovery environments. The project has been shortlisted for the Patient Engagement and Experience Initiative of the Year at the HSJ Partnership Awards 2026.

In addition, the Social Hubs have been recognised within the healthcare design community, winning the Low Cost-High Impact award at the 2025 Design in Mental Health Awards.