Press Release

Immediate Release

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Recovery Takes Flight at Cygnet Hospital Kidsgrove

A mental health hospital in Stoke-on-Trent is taking a more feathered approach after the introduction of three new staff members, whose waddling has already charmed patients.

Cygnet Hospital Kidsgrove has hatched and raised three runner ducks to aid in the recovery journeys of service users.

Burleigh Ward, one of the two wards at the Cygnet Health Care service, offers highly specialised care for women with personality disorders.

The individuals supported on the ward have taken responsibility for the ducks since they fittingly hatched on the hospital's first birthday.

Jessica Elsley, Occupational Therapy Assistant at Cygnet Hospital Kidsgrove, said: "Our service users have raised the ducks from eggs and will do so to adulthood. This process builds anticipation, especially during incubation, and has fostered a deep connection between our service users and the ducks."

The individuals supported at the service have embraced the duties of daily care, making sure the ducks are well-fed and cleaned up after. Inspired by breakfast foods, service users named the trio Sausage, Pancake and Toast.

"It has been very therapeutic for their recovery and offers them a sense of responsibility. It has motivated our service users to get involved, with an increase in communal activity and social connection since the ducks hatched," explained Jessica.

"Also, the ducks really enjoy hanging out with our service users. If they're not doing that, they're swimming in their pool, watching the fish and even joining in with some therapy sessions."

The three ducks have been waddling through the corridors of the service for over a month now and have quickly become hospital favourites.

One individual supported at the Cygnet Health Care service said: "I love them. As the ducks are our responsibility, we have communicated better amongst patients and have a shared responsibility. They are also very cute."