



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Middlesbrough Support Worker Wins National Award

A support worker from Middlesbrough who supports women affected by brain injuries spoke of her pride after winning a national award for turning her own personal health journey into a source of inspiration for staff and patients.

Chisom Onyebilama is a support worker at Cygnet Newham House, a 20-bed neuropsychiatric care and treatment facility providing rehabilitation for women affected by acquired brain injuries (ABI). Based on Hemlington Village Road, it is part of the Cygnet Social Care division.

Shee scooped one of the top prizes at the Cygnet Group achievement awards, a day of celebration for caring, dedicated and hard-working colleagues across the health and social care sector.

She won the Empower; Mover & Shaker Award which recognises a person that has helped to empower others by inspiring, motivating and making things happen.

After achieving a significant lifestyle transformation herself, she took on the role of Healthy Weight Coach and developed initiatives to encourage healthier living among patients and staff.

She created health promotion materials, delivered one-to-one support around nutrition, hydration and physical activity, and introduced practical initiatives such as step tracking and hydration goals. Chisom also worked closely with colleagues across different teams, including catering and Speech and Language Therapy, to provide joined-up support. Her approachable and encouraging nature has helped create a positive culture around wellbeing, motivating patients and colleagues alike to make sustainable changes and take greater control of their health.

Nominated by 12 of her colleagues, judges said: "Chisom demonstrates grassroots empowerment through lived experience, coaching and health leadership. By transforming her own personal journey into a sustainable programme that supports others, she has become a role model who influences both staff and service users.

"Through collaboration, practical action and authentic leadership, Chisom has created accessible and repeatable wellbeing opportunities that empower people to make lasting positive changes."

The awards, now in their fourth year, were held at Edgbaston Cricket Ground in Birmingham, on Thursday 25 June They were hosted by TV Presenter, Alexander Armstrong.

Upon receiving the award, Chisom said: "I was truly delighted to receive this award. I honestly wasn't expecting to win, so it came as a complete shock and a wonderful surprise.

"This award means so much to me, and I am incredibly grateful to be recognised by such a wonderful team It motivates me to continue supporting and encouraging a healthy lifestyle for all my patients while inspiring my colleagues to do the same.

"I would like to give special thanks to my amazing Cygnet Hospital Manager, Joanna Yarker, for giving me this opportunity and for her continuous support. I also want to thank the entire management team for creating such a positive, supportive, and encouraging environment for both patients and staff.

"I am truly grateful to the entire Newham House team. I have been working with Cygnet for over three years, and it has been one of the best places I have ever worked. Cygnet genuinely invests in its staff, encourages career development, and fosters a positive culture where both patients and employees are valued and supported.

"It is an honour to be part of such an outstanding organisation, and I look forward to continuing to make a positive difference every day."

Dr Tony Romero, Cygnet CEO, said: "It is always a genuine pleasure for me to hear how Cygnet staff are making an incredible difference to some of society's most vulnerable people. The work they are doing, and the care they are providing, is having a positive impact on so many lives.

"The awards are about recognising and honouring the dedication, compassion and sheer hard work shown by staff who, no matter their role, play a vital part in the provision of patient and resident care."

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Notes to Editors:

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About Cygnet Health Care

Cygnet Health Care has been providing a national network of high-quality, specialised mental health services for the NHS and local authorities for the past 30 years.

Cygnnet Health Care's pioneering services support people with complex and acute mental health needs across the UK.

As one of the best quality providers in mental health services in the country, Cygnnet Health Care's focus is always on the best outcomes for those who use or commission its services. 85% of Cygnnet's facilities are rated as good or outstanding, which is above the national average.

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