



Cygnet Hospital Harrow

Autistic Spectrum Disorders Service

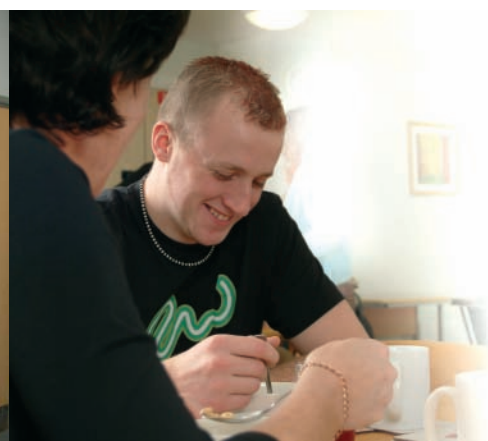
Providing care for male adults who have mental health needs but also have Asperger's Syndrome or High Functioning Autism

Springs Services

www.cygnethealthcare.co.uk

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Philosophy

Introduction

The Springs Unit is a specialist 16 bedded unit for adult males with Autistic Spectrum Disorders who also present with mental health or behavioural problems. The multidisciplinary team (MDT) and Cygnet Health Care aim to provide a person-centred approach to health care in a centre of excellence, providing a low secure environment to facilitate the safe and effective management of clients with behavioural problems.

Patients in the Springs Unit will receive expert care from experienced members of the MDT. Aims of admission include diagnostic assessment, management of mental health and behavioural problems, rehabilitation and optimisation of adaptive living skills, and identification of appropriate long term placements.

The Springs Unit MDT will address the needs of patients by integrating diverse disciplinary perspectives, including psychiatry, psychology, occupational therapy, social work, and nursing. Care will involve family and significant others to facilitate re-integration into the mainstream community. Patients will be empowered to achieve their potential, within a programme that preserves dignity and promotes and protects legal and human rights.

Current evidence-based, patient-centred, non-discriminatory and clear individually planned care will be negotiated with the patient, within the context and confines of National Minimum Standards and The Mental Health Act (1983).

Admission Criteria for The Springs Unit

The Springs Unit offers assessment and treatment for adult males with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder, including those who present with challenging behaviour or a forensic history, and who may be detained under the Mental Health Act. Clients may have a formal diagnosis of Autism or Asperger syndrome, or display autistic traits requiring further assessment in a specialised setting.

Hence, clients will be:

- Males: 18 – 65
- Have a diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome (AS) or High Functioning Autism (HFA), or presents with evidence of autistic traits
- Present severe challenging / disturbed behaviour in the context of a mental disorder or personality disorder and who require the provision of security.
- May be detained under the Mental Health Act 1983
- Require specialised assessment, treatment and rehabilitation within a 'Low Secure Rehabilitative & Recovery Service'
- May have a Forensic History

The Springs Unit Model of Care

The Springs Unit is a specialist service for adult males with Autistic Spectrum Disorders who also present with mental health, personality or behavioural problems. Most patients will be detained under the Mental Health Act, and some will have a forensic background. All are unique individuals who present with diverse difficulties that cause distress to themselves and/or others, and may result in social or legal problems. These 'challenging behaviours' may range from aggression and self-injury to social isolation and inability to work. The aetiology of challenging behaviours is complex. For example, challenging behaviours can be related to autistic disorder, mental illness, selective neuropsychological deficits, difficulties in upbringing, inadequate housing, amongst many other factors.

Determining the relative contribution of possible causative factors to a patient's problems provides a basis for targeted interventions. The first step in devising a treatment programme is for the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) to undertake comprehensive assessment of each patient's difficulties. This involves a full diagnostic assessment (including longitudinal case note review), in addition to using standardised instruments for symptom, risk and needs assessment. We use functional analysis to assess behavioural problems. This involves measurement of the properties of the behaviour at 'baseline', including the times and situations in which problem behaviours occur. This allows us to generate hypotheses relating to the function that the behaviour serves for the individual and identify the maintaining factors.

We then design and test an intervention – whether pharmacological, psychological, rehabilitative, or social – and measure the patient's symptoms or behaviours at intervals to determine whether the intervention is helping to modify the targeted problem. Interventions are then adjusted on the basis of evidence of response to treatment.

This sequential hypothesis-testing approach is based on an extended behavioural modification model, which goes beyond the traditional 'behaviourist' approach to draw on a full range of treatments to address the complex problems of our patients.



Occupational Therapy

Our ultimate goal is to develop and improve performance skills to help each individual to participate fully in society. We work with our clients across a variety of settings to see how adaptive living skills are influenced by changes in the social and physical environment. The spirituality of clients – in other words, the meaning and value they discern in their lives – is fundamental to the work we do. We therefore put the whole person at the centre, working with our clients to help them realise their individual goals. We employ standardised assessment tools to help identify the occupational goals of our clients.

Clients typically address their life, social, leisure skills training through participation in groups and individual sessions on a six day a week programme. A major advantage of the Springs is its location within a village setting, close to a town and 20 minutes from London by tube, which allows for the full array of graded exposure to assess social and travel skills.





We offer an extensive range of activities/interventions, including:

- Life skills, such as cooking, budgeting and healthy eating;
- Anxiety management and relaxation sessions;
- Social skills and social awareness, through groups, individual and community access programmes; this combined approach helps clients to use their social skills in a variety of settings, and also learn how to tolerate more demanding environments as a means of increasing quality of life;
- Coping strategies to improve difficulties with executive function skills e.g. time management and organisation skills;
- Office and administration skills through computer classes and voluntary work;
- Vocational skills and exploration of career pathways. We work closely with Harrow College, Mind and local agencies to secure places on courses and voluntary positions to promote social inclusion and life-long learning;
- Accessing the local community to address needs and difficulties in settings which bring them to light.

Psychological Services

The Springs Services offers detailed psychological assessments of people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASDs), including Asperger Syndrome. Our assessments are based on current research and aim to understand how each client's unique profile of cognitive, emotional, and personality functioning should inform treatment and rehabilitation. We use a range of tests to assess social functioning, memory, attention and executive function, language, perception, emotional intelligence and personality.

We also offer a range of interventions from behaviour modification to psychodynamic approaches depending on individual client need. We are currently in the process of developing psycho-educational interventions specifically for clients with ASDs. We expect that the first of these courses, 'Sexuality and Appropriate Sexual Behaviour' and "All About Me" (a guide to promote self-understanding for people with ASD) will be available in Spring 2008. Our six day programme (Monday to Saturday) gives the clients additional opportunity to benefit from our treatment and rehabilitation programme.

Nursing

We employ a holistic and person-centred approach to coordinate the patient's programme. This includes developing a therapeutic relationship with the patient through one-to-one sessions and collaboration with the patient regarding their individual care plans. We work closely with our psychologists to develop charts for functional analysis of behaviour, the findings of which inform behavioural modification programmes. We also work closely with the Occupational Therapy programme, escorting patients to their community and other activities, so enabling observation of patients in a variety of different settings.

Carers

We recognise the fundamental importance of carers to our clients, and work closely with carers at every stage of the care pathway of our clients.

Diagnostic Assessment Clinic Cygnet Hospital Harrow

Introduction

The Diagnostic Assessment Clinic is run by Dr Quinton Deeley, Consultant Psychiatrist of the Springs Unit, and Lecturer in Social Behaviour and Neurodevelopment in the Section of Brain Maturation, Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London. The aim of the clinic is to provide a comprehensive diagnosis and assessment for adults (18 years and above) who present with suspected features of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and to make recommendations to the patient, family, and referrer about further management as necessary

Assessment Process

- Patients are referred by a Consultant Psychiatrist - either NHS sector consultant, or Dr Lord of Cygnet Hospital Harrow. GP referrals are first seen by Dr Lord. Given the likely cost it is envisaged that most patients will require funding from a Primary Care Trust (PCT) or private insurance.
- The patient arrives at clinic with a relative (the patient's mother if possible to allow an Autism Diagnostic Inventory –Revised (ADI-R) assessment) at 1.45 pm. All clients should be accompanied by someone even if they do not participate directly in the testing or even if they are not a relative.
- A history, mental state examination and physical examination are conducted by the Springs Unit ward psychiatrist. A simultaneous ADI-R assessment is conducted with the parent by a trained member of the Springs Unit staff. If a mother or other informant for the ADI-R is not available or is unable to remember sufficient details, the patient will take a break after the clinical interview, and an Autism Diagnostic



Observation Schedule (ADOS) assessment will be conducted.

- At 6 pm the ward doctor, ADI-R/ ADOS assessor, and Dr Deeley meet to discuss the case. At 7 pm, Dr Deeley interviews the patient with the team and feeds back the results of the assessment.
- Patients with an ASD come back on a subsequent occasion for detailed neuropsychological testing. This is because neuropsychological strengths and difficulties are common in people with an ASD, and accurately measuring them influences treatment recommendations. Measures include tests of intelligence, executive function, and social cognition (using the Test of Social Inference and Awareness, (TASIT)). An ADOS will also be administered on this day if the results of the ADI-R / clinical interview are equivocal. This would require a morning and afternoon testing session.
- A report is prepared by the assessing team. The report will contain results of the assessment, and treatment recommendations for the patient, family, and referrer. We aim for a report preparation time of 4 - 6 weeks.





The Springs Wing

The Springs Wing is a 10-bed step down unit adjacent to the Spring Unit on the first floor of Byron Ward, Cygnet Hospital Harrow. The wing is for adult males with Asperger's Syndrome and High Functioning Autism requiring intensive rehabilitation to optimise their ability to function in the community independently. The service will also be used as a 'move on facility' for patients currently on the Springs Unit to facilitate their transition to more independent living. Suitable clients from other services NHS or Independent providers or direct from the community will be accepted.

The service is staffed 24hrs a day, 7-days a week. Care will be delivered by an experienced multi disciplinary team.

Admission Criteria

The client group for the Springs Wing will be low risk with varying functional needs.

The wing will be for males between the age of 18 and 65 years old who have a diagnosis of AS or HFA (there will be some flexibility regarding the definitive diagnosis as diagnostic confirmation will be part of the role of the service)

Prospective clients may also have complex mental health needs however their risk profile must be low.

There may be a forensic history.

They may be detained under the MHA or informal /voluntary status.

They would be clients that would benefit from a structured, intensive rehabilitation programme.

Clients must also have motivation and the commitment to move to more independence in the community. However it is recognised that a balance between hope and realism in terms of their expectations for their future is necessary.



Cygnets Hospital Harrow Springs Services



How to find us

Cygnets Hospital Harrow,
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Tel: 020 8966 7000
Fax: 020 8864 6092

BY CAR

From A40: follow A4127 Greenford Road north for 2 miles. Turn left at T-junction with lights. We're on the right opposite Mount Park Avenue.

From A406: follow A404 Harrow Road through Wembley for 2.5 miles. Take 3rd exit at 1st roundabout & 1st exit at the next. Go straight ahead at lights, up Sudbury Hill. We're on the right opposite Mount Park Avenue.

BY TRAIN

We are 5 mins from Harrow on the Hill Station (Metropolitan line) & 10 mins from South Harrow (Piccadilly line). Harrow on the Hill station is also serviced by regular landline trains from Marylebone.

BY BUS

From Harrow bus station, take the H17 up the hill. Alight at the first stop after the junction onto London road. The hospital is a minute walk on the left.

Contact:

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Mr Gerald Mhlanga Springs Services Ward Manager
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Cygnets Hospital Harrow is part of Cygnets Health Care, a leading provider of psychiatric care and addiction detoxification services.