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Module code: LCHS4009

Module: Professional Development within Health and social care

Lecturer: Zarah Ahmed

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PERSONAL PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

Chosen Job vacancy

Job Title: Mental Health Support Worker

Employer: Cygnet Health Care

Location: Birmingham, West Midlands

Salary: £13.15 to £13.70 an hour

Hours: Full-time

Contract Type: Permanent

Live vacancy link: [https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0233-26-1386?country=GB-ENG&searchFormType=main&keyword=Mentalj%20health%20support%20worker&location=Birmingham&language=en](https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0233-26-1386?country=GB-ENG&searchFormType=main&keyword=Mental%20health%20support%20worker&location=Birmingham&language=en)

Cygnet Health Care

Mental Health Support Worker

The closing date is 02 August 2026

Job summary

Cygnet Group are currently recruiting experienced Mental Health Support Workers with a passion for delivering outstanding care to join our team at Cygnet Hospital Oldbury. At Cygnet Hospital Oldbury you will be working 42 hours per week including dayshifts and weekends. Cygnet Hospital Oldbury is our new state-of-the-art PCU & Acute hospital for women, in the West Midlands. The service features two wards: a 12-bed PCU ward and a 15-bed Acute ward. Cygnet Hospital Oldbury has a full multi-disciplinary team (MDT) and supports the acute needs of adults requiring rapid access to mental health services, including those who may need an intensive care environment.

Main duties of the job

At Cygnet, we support our people to grow their careers, gain new skills and keep stepping up. Apply now to enjoy excellent career prospects while reaping the rewards of making a difference to others.

For questions about the job, contact:

Recruiter
James Cooper
V59143125.126@nhs.uk
0800 000 000
0121 5288111

Date posted

03 July 2025

Pay scheme

Other

Requirements:

Contracted hours:42 hours per week including dayshifts and weekends.

Please note: successful candidates will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

This vacancy may close prior to this date if a large number of applications are received.

What next?

If you are about making a difference we want to talk to you. Click the button to apply

Person Specification

General Requirements

Essential

• Please refer to job description above

Desirable

• Please refer to job description above

Disclosure and Barring Service Check

This post is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions Order) 1975 and as such it will be necessary for a submission for Disclosure to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly known as CRB) to check for any previous criminal convictions.

Employer details

Employer name

Cygnet Health Care

Address

Oldbury
B68 3AG
United Kingdom

Employer's website

<https://www.cygnethealth.co.uk/careers>

CV

AUDREY GOLDING

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Personal Profile

I am a compassionate, reliable and dedicated Care Assistant and Support Worker with over nine years of experience supporting vulnerable adults in residential care settings. I am currently a first-year mature student studying, which is helping me develop my academic knowledge and understanding of evidence-based, person-centred practice. I am now seeking a Mental Health Support Worker position where I can build upon my experience in care while developing specialist knowledge in mental health support. I am enthusiastic about supporting individuals to improve their wellbeing, maintain independence, access community opportunities and achieve positive outcomes. I can work flexibly, including evenings, weekends and sleep-in shifts, and I am available for approximately 36 to 40 hours per week.

Personal Statement

I am applying for the Mental Health Support Worker position with Creative Support because I would like to use my care experience, personal qualities and university learning to support adults experiencing mental health challenges. I have worked in care for more than nine years and have supported vulnerable adults with a range of physical, emotional and social care needs. I am also a first-year mature student studying Health and Social Care. Returning to education at the age of 46 has been an important achievement for me, as it has increased my confidence, strengthened my motivation and helped me work towards a career in mental health services. In my care roles, I have gained strong experience in providing personal care while maintaining dignity, privacy, respect and choice. I understand the importance of treating every person as an individual and supporting them in a way that reflects their preferences, routines and needs. I am confident in observing changes in a person's physical health, behaviour, emotional wellbeing and mood. If I notice any concerns, I understand the importance of recording information clearly and reporting it promptly to the appropriate senior member of staff or professional. Building positive relationships is an important part of

care work. I understand that some individuals may feel anxious, distressed, frightened, withdrawn or unwilling to communicate. In these situations, I remain calm, listen carefully and avoid making judgements. I try to understand what the person may be feeling and give them time and space to express themselves. I believe that patience, empathy and respectful communication are essential when supporting people with mental health needs. I have completed training in safeguarding adults, moving and handling, risk assessment, health and safety, infection control, PPE and COSHH. This training has helped me understand my responsibilities as a care worker. I know that safeguarding means protecting people from abuse, neglect, exploitation and avoidable harm. I would always follow policies and procedures, report concerns and maintain professional boundaries. I am particularly interested in mental health support because I have seen how loneliness, low mood, loss of independence and reduced confidence can affect people's daily lives. I would like to support individuals to build routines, access community services, develop confidence, make choices and work towards personal goals. I understand that recovery is not always about removing every difficulty. It can also mean helping a person manage their condition, feel valued and live a meaningful life. My main strengths are empathy, patience, reliability, maturity and commitment. I work well as part of a team, but I can also carry out responsibilities independently when required. My long-term aim is to build a career in mental health services, beginning as a Mental Health Support Worker and gradually developing my knowledge and responsibilities. Joining Creative Support would give me the opportunity to learn from experienced colleagues while supporting individuals in a respectful, recovery-focused and person-centred way. I would bring practical care experience, a willingness to learn and genuine respect for every individual.

Employment History

Support Worker

Edgeview Homes, Birmingham

June 2020 – Present

In my current role as a Support Worker, I provide person-centred care to individuals with a range of physical, mental health and social care needs. My responsibilities include supporting people with personal care, mobility, nutrition, daily routines and independence. I promote dignity, choice and respect by adapting support to each individual's care plan, preferences and changing needs. I build trusting professional relationships with residents, families and colleagues. I observe residents' physical health, emotional wellbeing, behaviour and mood, and I report any concerns to senior staff. I also maintain accurate documentation, follow safeguarding procedures and work within infection prevention, health and safety and risk assessment policies. This

role has strengthened my ability to communicate effectively, respond calmly to challenging situations and work as part of a multidisciplinary team.

Care Assistant

Cole Valley Nursing Home,

Birmingham

August 2014 – May 2019

As a Care Assistant at Cole Valley Nursing Home, I provided high-quality care to elderly residents in a residential setting. I supported residents with daily living activities, including washing, dressing, eating, mobility and maintaining independence where possible. I followed individual care plans and risk assessments to ensure care was safe, consistent and person-centred. I monitored changes in residents' health, behaviour and emotional wellbeing, reporting concerns promptly to senior staff. I maintained accurate and confidential records and supported a clean, safe and comfortable environment by following infection prevention, safeguarding and health and safety procedures. I also developed positive relationships with residents and families by offering reassurance, emotional support and compassionate communication.

Education and Qualifications

NVQ Level 2 in Health and Social Care

CSEC Qualifications

Tacius Golding Secondary School, Jamaica

- English – Grade 5
- Mathematics – Grade 4
- Science – Grade 4
- Physical Education – Grade 4
- Religious Studies – Grade 5

Training Completed

- Health and Safety
- Fire Safety
- Safeguarding Adults
- Moving and Handling

- Personal Protective Equipment
- Risk Assessment
- COSHH
- Infection Prevention and Control

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

One of my main strengths is my experience. I have worked in care for more than nine years and have supported many individuals with different needs. I have developed skills in personal care, observation, record-keeping, safeguarding, communication, infection control and teamwork. I am patient, reliable and able to remain calm under pressure. Another strength is that I combine practical experience with academic learning. I have an NVQ Level 2 in Health and Social Care, and I am currently studying towards a degree. As a mature student and experienced care worker, I have developed a responsible attitude towards work. I understand the importance of confidentiality, professional boundaries, equality, dignity and respect.

Weaknesses

Although I have many years of experience in elderly care and residential support, I have limited direct experience in a specialist mental health service. I am also still developing my academic confidence as a first-year university student. Academic writing, referencing and presentations can sometimes feel challenging. In addition, I can feel nervous when speaking in front of groups, which may affect presentations or professional discussions.

Opportunities

My university course gives me the opportunity to increase my knowledge of health and social care practice, mental health, legislation and professional standards. There is also demand for care and support workers in Birmingham, which may help me enter mental health support work. Creative Support offers training and development, and starting as a support worker could lead to more senior roles in the future. I can also complete additional training through organisations such as Mind, the Social Care Institute for Excellence and Mental Health First Aid providers.

Threats

Mental health support work can be emotionally demanding. Without appropriate professional boundaries and self-care, there may be a risk of stress or burnout. Balancing employment, university study and family responsibilities may also be difficult at times. Other applicants may have more direct experience in mental health services,

and changes in staffing, funding or service demand may affect employment opportunities and workloads.

Personal Development Plan

Goal 1: Gain Direct Experience in Mental Health Support

Aim: To develop practical experience within a mental health setting and improve my confidence in supporting individuals with mental health needs.

Actions: I will apply for suitable Mental Health Support Worker roles where I can build on my existing health and social care experience. I will prepare for interviews by researching each organisation, understanding the role and learning about relevant values and expectations. Once employed, I will complete induction training, shadow experienced colleagues and use supervision to ask questions, reflect and identify areas for improvement. I will also keep a reflective diary to record learning and progress.

Monitoring and Evaluation: I will monitor progress through applications submitted, interview feedback, supervision discussions, reflective diary entries and feedback from colleagues and managers.

Goal 2: Develop Knowledge of Mental Health and Legislation

Aim: To expand my knowledge of mental health conditions, legislation and evidence-based approaches to support.

Actions: I will attend university lectures, seminars and skills sessions to strengthen my academic understanding. I will complete independent reading on common mental health conditions and key legislation, including the Mental Health Act 1983, amended 2007, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, safeguarding legislation and equality legislation. I will also complete additional learning through reputable organisations such as Mind and the Social Care Institute for Excellence. This supports the expectation that healthcare workers should maintain competence and continue developing knowledge and skills (NMC, 2018).

Monitoring and Evaluation: I will assess progress through academic grades, tutor feedback, training certificates and my ability to discuss mental health concepts confidently in professional and academic settings.

Goal 3: Improve Academic Writing and Presentation Skills

Aim: To improve academic and professional communication skills.

Actions: I will attend university study-skills workshops to improve academic writing, assignment planning, critical analysis and Harvard referencing. I will seek tutor feedback and use it to improve my written work. In practice, I will focus on producing clear, accurate and professional care documentation. I will improve presentation skills

by preparing earlier, rehearsing aloud, using a timer and contributing more during seminars.

Monitoring and Evaluation: I will monitor progress through assignment grades, tutor feedback, workplace feedback and my own reflection on confidence levels.

Critical Reflection

As part of my university course, I prepared and delivered a presentation called “Critical Thinking in Health and Social Care Practice”. The presentation explained the meaning of critical thinking and how it supports decision-making in care settings. I included the ideas of Paul and Elder (2006), focusing on analysing, evaluating and reflecting. I also discussed patient safety and the importance of making decisions based on evidence rather than assumptions. The presentation included a case study about a fictional service user called Mrs Ahmed. The case study involved concerns about her wellbeing, home environment and possible safeguarding risks. I explained that a care worker should gather information, listen to the service user, consider different explanations, speak to relevant professionals and record concerns accurately. Before the presentation, I felt very nervous. I worried that I might forget what to say, lose my place or struggle to answer questions. I also worried that I would read too much from my notes. However, I felt proud that I had completed the work because the topic connected to my care experience. Once I began discussing the case study, I felt more confident because I could relate it to situations I had experienced at work. Several parts of the presentation went well. The case study was realistic and easy to understand. My practical experience helped me explain how critical thinking is used in daily care. For example, if a resident becomes quieter than usual, refuses food or appears confused, I would not assume they are simply having a bad day. I would observe, ask appropriate questions, check records and report concerns. Possible causes could include pain, infection, anxiety, medication changes or bereavement. This shows critical thinking because it involves gathering information and considering different explanations. However, some areas could be improved. I looked down at my notes too often and spoke faster when I became nervous. I also rushed the final section because I was running out of time. In future, I need to connect theory more clearly to professional standards, legislation and practice guidance. This experience taught me that my practical knowledge is valuable, but I need to express it more confidently using academic language and evidence.

Critical thinking will be important in mental health support because behaviour can have many possible causes. Staff must avoid judgement and consider the person’s history, communication needs, current situation and risks. For future presentations, I will prepare at least two weeks in advance, use clear slides, practise aloud, time myself, ask someone to listen to me, make more eye contact and speak more slowly. I will also continue using Gibbs’ reflective cycle to reflect on presentations and challenging work

situations. Overall, this presentation increased my confidence and showed me that my care experience can support my academic and professional development.

Reference list

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NHS England (2024) *Culture of care standards for mental health inpatient services*. Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/culture-of-care-standards-for-mental-health-inpatient-services/>

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Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019) *Research methods for business students*. 8th edn. Harlow: Pearson.