

SIX DEGREES SOCIAL ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Dear Community members,

"To err is human, to cover up is unforgivable, to fail to learn is inexcusable",

The Mid staff review author, Sir Robert Francis

Self-referral portal pause

Inherent in all change and improvement initiatives are errors, mistakes, glitches, and difficulties. It's in the acknowledging and working through that improves and moves us in the direction of where we want and need to be. I'd like to acknowledge good practice in the collective responsiveness, collaboration, and voicing of initial difficulties the self-referral portal has had on patient experience and service delivery.

Self-referral context

The self-referral route is a national initiative derived from NHS England and a requirement of all NHS Talking therapies services to ensure 'good access' to services and to mitigate against health professionals being a barrier as is the case in some communities.

Six Degrees has always operated some form of self-referral, mainly for our underrepresented communities, where discretion and cultural sensitivity are required, these were few and the majority were e-referrals or letters posted to us (in the old days!). The patient was offered the next available appointment at the convenience of Six Degrees. In 2016, in response to feedback from our patients in the form of complaints from our communities, and partners, we listened and looked deeper into this issue. We found did not attend and cancelled appointments (DNA & CNA) were high and averaged 50 to 55% a month. It told us our patients had only 45% chance of attending the appointments we sent. There was no contact between the service and the person. There were many times people attended and were unsure why they were referred or wondered who Six Degrees were? Imagine this situation, already feeling vulnerable and uncertain.

This led to us developing the 'supported referral route', an addition to (*not instead of*) the referral route in, as we know some find it difficult to find the courage or motivation to be able to pick up the phone to make an appointment. We developed referral slips for GPs who shared with those who were able to call us direct and speak to a warm and friendly person (our administrative team members) to book their appointment and help them navigate this first experience with us. This enabled those who had uncertainties to ask additional questions that could help to manage the first appointment. As with the self-referral portal, the journey rolling this out had its obstacles that were worked through by learning. The learning enabled us to find a much more effective change. The change saw an expanded administration team to facilitate additional phone contact, improved patient experience, DNA and CNA rates that reduced to between 17-25% and cost savings in the postage of letters out.

At this time the self-referral portal initiative has shown us that patients aren't able to make that first appointment, holding up an initial appointment being booked. Our staff voiced, this is not patient centred and causing glitches in our delivery model. It is this learning that we take into the next iterations to move us closer to the goal. The next few months require us to work through together, problem solve and at all times keep the experience of the people we serve at the heart of what we do. It's okay to make mistakes, to make errors, to keep quiet and to fail to learn is inexcusable. The core finding of any patient safety or serious event tends to be themed in poor communication between and within teams and failures to truly learn from incidents as was found in a recent independent review of mental health services locally.

Best wishes

Kelly

FEEDBACK

All services continue to receive good feedback, below are some examples.



TALKING THERAPIES SILVER CLOUD PATIENT FEEDBACK

Very comprehensive, helped me to gain a lot of insight into my current problems, and gave me the tools and techniques to help me achieve my goals. My therapist has been extremely helpful too.

GREATER MANCHESTER BEREAVEMENT SERVICE (GMBS) SERVICE USER FEEDBACK



GREATER
MANCHESTER
BEREAVEMENT
SERVICE

GMBS aim to gather feedback via Care Opinion and recent stories from our service users really highlight the value of the service and the positive impact of having someone to talk to. The feedback received is a true credit to work of the team and it's wonderful to read!

'I contacted GM bereavement services after the death of my twin brother. They signposted me to an organisation who provide support services. They also kept regular contact with me prior to sessions starting and at various points during.

The person I spoke to was really supportive and helpful, sometimes just listening was enough. She also validated how I was feeling and that my thoughts and feelings were not unusual. Really good service'



SALFORD LIVING WELL - SERVICE USER FEEDBACK

"For the last 15 years, I have believed that I didn't deserve to live and that I was on a timeline to die, by my own hands. This had made everything so difficult - pressure, anxiety, doubt - trying to make something of myself before the day I finally succeeded. Working with a therapist has made me see that there is no one that deserves to die, especially not me. I can and will have a full life and this has meant that I feel more hopeful, present and I can take more time for me, building up the life I want and will get to love. At 50, being able to have this mindset I know will have a knock-on effect on the rest of my life. I'm excited for the next 50 years!"

SALFORD BEREAVEMENT THERAPY SERVICE (SBTS) FEEDBACK

SBTS continue to receive positive patient feedback and start the New Year in January 2024 with the following story posted on Care Opinion:

Bereavement
Therapy
Service
Salford



Growing up was hard , i suffered mental abuse and physical abuse from a young age till i was an adult, not wanting to tell no one what happened to me, always locking everything bad up in the back of my head, i use to tell myself not to think about it, but then i would get a memory about something , i would get a panic attack, it took a while to get control back again, i tried talking about it to people nothing came out , i did not feel i could trust anyone ,i didn't want anyone knowing what i went through, i didn't want them looking at me talking to me about it , ,then i found somethings happened to three people close to me , i did tell my mum when i was in my 40s, it was a relief to to open that door a little, then i had a new partner i felt i could open that door a little bit more

I went to therapy after my stepdad died, my emotions were something i couldn't understand, the back of my head was hurting, i couldn't cope anymore. My therapist was fantastic, he listened to me and spoke so softly, he helped me understand my life from then and now, explaining what the feelings i was having , the thoughts i had about what happened to me , the back of my head was emptying and i felt more at ease the more i understood what i went through and the feelings i had felt, i was much lighter and happier , i don't let my past torment me anymore, i feel free to enjoy my life with the people i love.

It took a long time, i am glad had my therapy when i did and want to thank him for all his help with listening and helping me understand, i still will not talk about it to my family but i feel i don't need to bring the past up, i feel i have laid it to rest.

My therapist gave me my life back by just being there when i needed it, i can't thank him enough, it was the best thing i ever done, i am a different person now, i would recommend if anyone is going through anything and struggling is to get therapy.

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

Health watch recently posted two great examples of collaborative working on their Instagram page.

Monton Medical Centre & Six Degrees

"Excellent. Felt supported by my GP about my mental health. I didn't know where to go, or who to talk to and contacted my GP after 3 weeks of suffering. Referred for Therapy and also to Wellbeing Matters. Which has changed my life."

Anonymous



healthwatch
Salford



Liked by [salfordnownews](#) and 4 others

[hwsalford](#) 🙌 More great feedback for Six Degrees and Monton Medical Centre.

Share your feedback here: <https://www.healthwatchesalford.co.uk/share-your-views>

St Andrews Medical Practice & Six Degrees

"My GP has been amazing after I had burnout and work related stress he has made sure to keep track of my progress and made regular appointments for catch ups, he referred me to Six Degrees who arranged 8 sessions of counselling and CBT there was no waiting time."

Anonymous

healthwatch
Salford



1 like

[hwsalford](#) 🙌 We received great feedback about St Andrews Medical Practice and Six Degrees. Share your feedback here: <https://www.healthwatchesalford.co.uk/share-your-views>

six degrees social enterprise
supporting your mental health



CHANGES WITHIN THE BOARD

Martin Patrick has stepped down as chair of the board due to a recurrence of ill health. Our thoughts and prayers are with him at this difficult time. To allow Martin the time he needs to focus on his health, Dr Tom Tasker has been appointed Clinical Chair of the Six Degrees Board.

We were delighted to welcome Tom back to Six Degrees as a Non-Executive Director in June 2023, and we are thrilled to congratulate Tom on becoming Chair.

Tom is GP partner at St Andrews in Eccles and has a special interest in mental health. He has always had a close link to Six Degrees as an original founder of the service in 2006 (when it was known as Salford Primary Care Mental Health Service). He was Chair of the Board from 2011 – 2016 before stepping down to concentrate on his work as Clinical Chair of NHS Salford CCG. His vast experience and expertise will be invaluable to us.

Tom has an abundance of clinical leadership experience having worked in Salford and across Greater Manchester for several years. He also brings his background expertise from Primary Care and will continue to support Six Degrees through the changes which are arising within the ICB.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Through significant events pertaining to information breaches and safeguarding learning to mitigate the risks to patient safety Six Degrees, with the help of commissioners are now piloting access to EMIS to ensure:

1. Information access and sharing is strengthened.
2. Patient information is protected.
3. Integrated working in Primary Care.

Training has now been completed and the use of web access to EMIS has now commenced within the Sides Surgery. There is work to be done to ensure we use the system in a consistent and safe way. A task and finish group has commenced to work through teething issues and standards.

So far, the information sharing impact has significantly impacted on safer working practices in relation to safeguarding and risk. The other improvements are time efficiencies when writing notes and mitigating against patient data being sent to the wrong place.

PATIENT EXPERIENCE AUDIT

We have recently completed our annual Patient Experience Audit and would like to share the highlights. Overall, all three services have demonstrated a high level of patient satisfaction.

There are strong themes in all three services linked to the therapeutic relationship, including patients / service users being able to talk freely and express themselves as well as the services being supportive and knowledgeable. For SBTS, the qualitative data specifically highlighted that patients had an increased self-awareness after therapy and for GMBS contact with a practitioner made a difference to their experience of loss.

For Talking Therapies, a continued focus on increasing the response rate of the PEQ in line with the ICB target is needed. An increase in patients feeling like therapy ended before they were ready is also a theme that should be explored further.

Going forward we will continue to work and consolidate the great work that everyone is doing across all our services.

SELF-MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

From January 2024, the Talking Therapies Service have rolled out the Self-Management Toolkit to all patients referred into the service.

This is an online platform provided by SilverCloud that supports patients to reflect on and explore their current needs and provides some tips and techniques while they are waiting for their assessment appointment.

After 6 months of the Self-Management Toolkit being available, an evaluation will be completed, and the results will be shared.

VACANCIES

Our current vacancies can be found on our website:

<https://six-degrees.org.uk/work-for-us/>



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

I am delighted to say that Six Degrees has achieved its Diversity for Small Charities award. The award is from the National Centre for Diversity, who have produced for us a report on the findings of the equality, diversity and inclusion survey that took place towards the end of last year.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the survey. We will use this report as the basis of our two-year cycle of continuous improvement and I look forward to keeping you updated on developments.

WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

NATIONAL GRIEF AWARENESS WEEK

It was National Grief Awareness Week 2nd – 8th December, and the theme was 'Better Together'; encouraging people, communities and professionals to connect with each other and raise awareness of support available, so no one feels alone.

GMBS Service facilitated a drop-in session at House of Books and Friends on Thursday 7th December, 10am – 2pm. We gave members of the public, service users and professionals the opportunity to pop down and speak to someone.

House of Books and Friends is an independent bookshop and cafe with an important mission - to combat loneliness through bringing people together. It was the perfect venue to host GMBS first drop-in session and we are hoping to work with them together on future events this year.

GMBS took part in other events across Grief Awareness Week, raising awareness of the service and providing support to individuals and organisations in the community.

Bereavement Coffee Morning at Autotrader - talking to staff in their workplace about the impact of bereavement and tools for managing this, as well as sharing information on GMBS and how we can support individuals or teams.

'Sing Their Name Choir' evening in Manchester city centre. The Sing Their Name Choir was formed in early 2023 and is a choir for those across Greater Manchester bereaved by suicide. GMBS attended this event to offer to support to those who needed it and promote the support available.



WINTER WELLBEING FAIR

To improve the health and wellbeing of Salford community, Six Degrees Talking Therapy Service and Greater Manchester Bereavement Service took part in the Winter Wellbeing Fair. We had an information stall for the public and we had the opportunity to connect with some of the local communities.

COMMUNITY LEADERS' DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, LED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPROVEMENT

We have continued to be part of a collaboration project with Salford City Council where we make connections with community leaders to understand the barriers and facilitators to accessing talking therapies.

"Storytelling Day" event was the third stage of the Community Leaders Development Programme (CLDP) which involved communities coming together to share experiences and insights gathered at the Discovery Visits, to help explore opportunities for action. (Jody and Anna previously hosted leaders at Six Degrees back in September for the first stage) some discussions were around:

- Creating further awareness
- Scoping opportunities to form action
- Supporting each other with common issues
- Building wider knowledge of what else is happening

The event was held on 4th Dec.

This work is entering part four which is Community Experiments –a series of different experiments are co-designed and planned to be run in different communities.

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND'S BETTER MENTAL HEALTH FUND

In 2021 Six Degrees was granted funding from Public Health England's Better Mental Health Fund to support communities impacted disproportionately by the Covid pandemic as well as pre-existing health inequalities.

As part of this funding, we have been working in partnership with 42nd Street to deliver several sessions for youth workers in the Orthodox Jewish Community to support young people with their mental health needs. Three sessions took place between January-November 2023 and focused on safeguarding, groupwork and action planning. The feedback we received from the Course Leader and the participants was extremely positive with comments including

'[thank you for] a really informative and thought provoking session at the course yesterday'

'all the sessions were very helpful'

'[it helped me to] keep balanced with personal emotions and caring for the young person'.

This piece of work required joint working and commitment across the Talking Therapies team and I would like to thank Tanya, Gabby and Rochel for their excellent work!

SUPPORTING THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY

CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

A huge thank you to everyone who was able to contribute to the Christmas donations box before Christmas.

The donations were split between Loaves and Fishes and Salford Food Bank, both places were extremely grateful and it is fantastic to be able to help people in our community.

Face masks, toiletries, slippers, nappies, baby toiletries, children's games and selection boxes were donated to Loaves and Fishes.

Selection boxes, face masks, toiletries, chocolate coins, and various other food was donated to Salford food bank.

