

# SIX DEGREES SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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Annual Report

# 2024/25

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## Our Vision

Is to build emotionally resilient communities across Salford and Greater Manchester, where people feel supported on their unique journey towards better emotional health.

## Our Mission

Is to enable and empower individuals and communities to achieve their optimum wellbeing whilst working in an integrated and inclusive way.

## Our Purpose

Is to improve lives and create an inclusive mental health and bereavement support system, that takes a person-centred approach and aims to prioritise underrepresented groups.

# FOREWORD

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Dear friends and colleagues,

At Six Degrees, connection is at the heart of everything we do. As many of you know, we spun out of the NHS in 2011. Our name originated from the theory of six degrees of separation. This is the idea that any two people, anywhere in the world, are connected by no more than six relationships. And this social science experiment became the heart of our mission. We exist because we believe in the transformative power of human connection, and in 2024/25, we have seen that belief realised in powerful and practical ways. In a time of uncertainty and change across the health and care landscape, our commitment to connectedness has allowed us to remain steady in our purpose, improving the mental health and wellbeing of people in Salford and Greater Manchester. This year we have supported over 15,000 people, in Salford and across Greater Manchester.

Strengthening connection also means improving safety and trust. This year we re-established access to integrated care records in primary care, enabling seamless information sharing between Six Degrees and general practice. This step has been integral to managing safeguarding and risk more effectively, ensuring that care is not only responsive but safe and coordinated, reducing risk of information breaches when sharing information.



Our services continue to demonstrate the power of human connection. In feedback, people told us they felt listened to and believed their condition was taken seriously, felt involved in decisions about their care, and expressed confidence in their therapists. These are not just numbers; they are reflections of the trust people place in us and the relationships our teams build every day.

We cannot ignore the wider context in which we operate. The strategic landscape is shifting, with changes to commissioning structures, national policy, and financial pressures. Pay awards, increased National Insurance contributions, and reduced uplifts to contracts have created real challenges. Meanwhile, the future of NHS England and Integrated Care Boards remains uncertain and turbulent. Despite this, Six Degrees has responded proactively making savings and reducing costs where practicably possible whilst maintaining high standards of care.

We are proud to share our impact for the last year.

*Kelly Hylton*

Managing Director

# ABOUT SIX DEGREES

This timeline illustrates our journey from our NHS origins to becoming Six Degrees, a social enterprise rooted in the community.


- 2008

Salford Primary Care Mental Health team founded

Service established to meet the needs of those with common mental health problems in primary care. Wait times reduced from 18 months to 4 weeks.
- 2009


IAPT Pilot Site

We (Salford) became a first wave pilot site for Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT) – now known as NHS Talking Therapies for Anxiety and Depression.


- 2011

Six Degrees Founded

Established through the NHS Right to Request initiative, Six Degrees is a spin out Social Enterprise (not-for-profit) rooted in the community.


- 2016

Empowered Conversations


A communication skills program developed in partnership with the University of Salford (Knowledge Transfer Partnership) to enhance the quality of life for people who care for individuals with dementia. The program was integrated within Age UK Salford in 2020.
- 2018

Suicide Bereavement Information Service (SBIS)

Project launched to understand and support the needs of the population bereaved by suicide.
- 2019


Living Well Collaboration

A collaboration between Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH) and the VCSE sector to provide mental health support for those who fall between primary and secondary mental health care.


- 2020


Greater Manchester Bereavement Service (GMBS)

The Suicide Bereavement Information service expanded to become GMBS in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, where sadly many lives were lost across Greater Manchester.


- 2020


Beyond (COVID-19 response)

A VCSE-led collaboration which responded to the mental health needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.


- 2021

Salford Bereavement Therapy Service (SBTS)

In response to bereavement needs during COVID-19, this service was established.





# NHS TALKING THERAPIES FOR ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

Six Degrees Social Enterprise delivers NHS commissioned Talking Therapies to individuals aged 16 and over across Salford. Our service is designed to support people experiencing common mental health problems by offering evidence-based brief interventions for those experiencing stress, anxiety, or depression. Therapy sessions are held in GP practices, community venues and via telephone, ensuring flexible and confidential support is tailored to individual needs.

Our focus this year has been on ensuring people are seen quickly, that our workforce remains supported and skilled, and no one feels alone when navigating complex challenges.

This commitment has been evident in our performance, with the target of 75% of people being seen within 6 weeks exceeded consistently throughout 2024/25.

We have also re-established access to integrated care records in primary care, enabling seamless information sharing between Six Degrees and general practice. This step has been integral to managing safeguarding and risk more effectively, ensuring that care is not only responsive but safe and coordinated.

12,457

Referrals 14% more than last year

89%

Of patients were seen in 6 weeks (Target 75%)

53%

Of those receiving treatment were able to move to recovery (Target 50%)

7,483

Face to face appointments in the local community. 26% more than last year.

196

Appointments offered in Polish

123

Veterans offered priority appointments

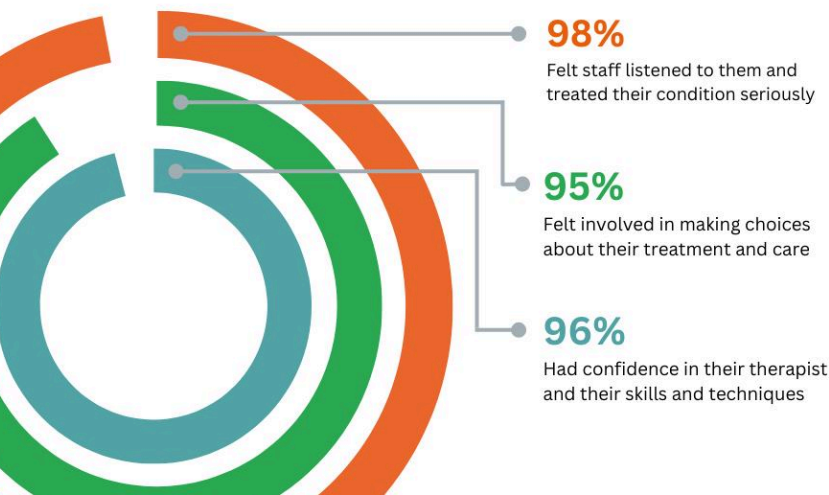
843

SilverCloud sign-ups rose 111% over last year for its online self-help with clinical support.

£3.8 million

is the calculated savings to the wider economy for 2024/25. \*\*

\*\* (Based on Cost benefit Analysis methodology delivered by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) research team)



## Patient Feedback:

“ was a great help to my recovery from anxiety and depression. Therapist had a calm and supportive manner and really helped me to put things in perspective and suggested practical ways for me to overcome my issues.



Talking Therapies

# RESPONDING TO OUR COMMUNITIES

We are proud to be accessible to the diversifying population in Salford. This year we delivered therapy in 39 different languages. The most frequently used languages were Farsi and Arabic. Our aim is to recruit staff from the communities we serve to enable therapy in first language.

## Farsi speaking community

**156** Patients referred from the Farsi speaking community

Our impact from these sessions:

- ✓ Increased trust, engagement and openness.
- ✓ Patients report feeling truly heard and understood for the first time.
- ✓ Better therapeutic outcomes, reduced anxiety and isolation, and greater confidence in navigating their mental health journey.

This year we have also:

- ✓ Delivered workshops and psychoeducational sessions in local colleges and universities. To raise awareness around mental health and reduce stigma within the community.
- ✓ Collaborated with the employment advice service. To support the community with gaining support to CV writing and access to work.
- ✓ Worked in partnership with Doosti and Yaran Northwest.

## Urdu speaking community

**12** Patients supported

We are proud to provide therapy in Urdu.

Our impact from these sessions:

- ✓ Patients expressed relief and comfort speaking directly in Urdu, without an interpreter in the room.
- ✓ Several patients who initially held negative views of therapy have grown in confidence, recognising its value and now feel empowered to seek help in the future.

Practitioner reflection:

“The sessions allowed one patient to really explore their identity and feel truly seen especially in relation to how culture has shaped their challenges.”



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## Supporting women - Menopause group

# 19

Patients  
supported

# 3

Groups  
held

The menopause support group launched in September 2024 and is delivered in collaboration with Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Trust (GMMH). The aim of the groups is to equip our patients with effective tools and techniques to navigate through this transitional stage of life and develop post group peer support.

Feedback:

“The sessions allowed one patient to really explore their identity and feel truly seen especially in relation to how culture has shaped their challenges.

“I now manage my symptoms better by being physically active and have found the confidence to go back to work!

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## Perinatal Parents

# 764

Parents  
supported

We continue to strengthen the support we offer to parents and carers, recognising that the perinatal period carries an increased risk of developing mental health difficulties. We offer priority appointments as we understand that babies can't wait!

The path to parenthood is rarely linear and often layered with complex feelings. We support people with the adjustment to parenthood and the emotional challenges that can arise by offering a safe space to talk.

Our impact reflection:

“helped navigate the emotional complexities of early parenthood, struggles with anxiety and self-doubt, and the feeling I wasn't making the most of parental leave or living up to expectations. Through the support offered, I was able to explore and tolerate these conflicting feelings, identify strengths in the bond with my baby and process the birth experience.

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## Work with the Jewish community

Six Degrees provides talking therapy within the Jewish community and is a trusted organisation due to years of successful and supportive engagement.

We have a solid commitment to empowering our communities, which we achieve for the Jewish community by providing appropriate spaces to explore their issues and offer psychoeducation.

We work closely with several organisations to support the work we do - Broughton Hub, Neshoma, local GP practices, The Helpline, JAMH, Care Concern, The Hershel Wise Centre and The FED.

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## Supporting LGBTQIA+

Six Degrees is a place where LGBTQIA+ patients are supported with respect, knowledge and care.

This year our LGBTQIA+ team have:

- ✓ Delivered training to our professionals to ensure there is understanding of LGBTQIA+ community needs and best practice.
- ✓ Raised awareness of services in the Salford and Manchester area offering specific LGBTQIA+ support our professionals can signpost our patients to.
- ✓ Attended LGBTQIA+ focused trainings on topics such as LGBTQIA+ perinatal mental health and supporting trans / gender non-conforming children.

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## Supporting patients with long term conditions (LTC)

This year we have made valuable connections with several different organisations to support the work we do with people with long term conditions including: Clinical Health Psychology, MacMillan Salford, Being There Limiting Illness, Neuropsychology team, Long Covid & Chronic Fatigue team, Headway, Diabetes Team, COPD Respiratory Team, Wellbeing Matters and Gastroenterology Team.

### Partner feedback

- “ *The Six Degrees service is invaluable to patients facing a cancer diagnosis, providing much needed support during challenging times for patient and their families. This support is vital to patients on their pathways, helping them to navigate their way through this time. The Macmillan Information & Support Service refer patients on a regular basis and the feedback that we receive is always positive.*
- MacMillan Salford

### Partner feedback

- “ *Our partnership with Six Degrees and Wellbeing Matters Social Prescribing programme reflects a shared commitment to delivering accessible, person-centred support within our communities. By integrating social prescribing with high-quality therapeutic services, we ensure individuals receive the right help at the right time, whether they are managing anxiety, depression, bereavement, or other wellbeing challenges. Six Degrees brings a deep understanding of the communities of Salford, and together, we are working to empower people to improve their mental health and live well. We look forward to continuing to work together to serve our communities in Salford.*
- Wellbeing Matters

# GREATER MANCHESTER BEREAVEMENT SERVICE

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The Greater Manchester Bereavement Service (GMBS) is delivered by Six Degrees on behalf of NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care. The service offers a 'front door' to bereavement support across Greater Manchester, ensuring individuals can easily connect with the help they need.

This service represents connection in some of the most difficult circumstances, offering bereavement support, be that emotional and, or practical help to anyone bereaved, including those affected by suicide. In 2024/25, the service supported 1,330 people, 168 of whom were bereaved by suicide. By working closely with coroners and local partners, we ensure that no one has to face loss in isolation. 2024/25 has focused on widening our reach by increasing events and promotional activity across Greater Manchester and to understand cultural adaptations through training and awareness raising through our cultural consultants.

## Service User Feedback:

“ I lost my boyfriend to suicide. I was struggling to make sense of my emotions and to control them due to my loss, my own mental health and my home circumstances. My bereavement therapist has been a safe person to share all of my feelings no matter how extreme, she's been so calm and understanding. I opened up about my feelings of suicidal ideologies and she has helped me to see through this. I felt comfortable to share everything with her and couldn't do that with some of my friends.

“ The support I received also helped me download the issues I found whilst grieving the loss of my husband. I found it was a place I could talk about anything. I wasn't in any way judged.



1,330

Individuals supported,  
4% more than last year.

168

Individuals supported who  
have been bereaved by  
suicide. 7% more than last  
year.

4,859

Engagements with  
individuals. 12% more  
than last year.

84%

Reported they received the  
help that they were looking  
for by contacting GMBS.

6

Community bereavement  
events held in Manchester City  
Centre.

“ Really great service and lots of  
information given out.

12

Introduction to bereavement  
workshops delivered.

“ As an introduction it was  
perfect.

# EXPANDING OUR REACH

## Cultural consultancy project

In November 2023 Greater Manchester Bereavement Service in partnership with Just Psychology began working on a Cultural consultancy project.

The project was developed to explore bereavement rituals and traditions among ethnic minority communities, with the aim of improving access to culturally sensitive, acceptable and effective bereavement and suicide bereavement support.

In addition the project up-skilled the workforce in understanding bereavement across cultures in Greater Manchester.

### Phase 1 (2024/25)

focused on recruiting and training cultural consultants from three communities - Arabic and Chinese speaking and the Traveller community. The Traveller community was unable to engage at this time.

This recruitment phase provided paid opportunities for individuals who were unemployed or working part-time to gain valuable skills and experience in a field they may not have previously had access to.

4

cultural consultants recruited from the Chinese community, with backgrounds from Mainland China and Hong Kong.

8

cultural consultants recruited from Arabic speaking backgrounds, representing a range of countries including Egypt, Libya, Malaysia, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

All participants completed an AQA accredited, six-week training programme, which was complemented by a GMBS led bereavement training day.

### Phase 2 (2024/25)

focused on community engagement through awareness raising sessions, delivered in the local community.

4

awareness sessions delivered.

8

sessions are planned for the coming year.

Reflection on the project and what it has meant to an Arabic speaking cultural consultant:

“ I joined Just Psychology as a Cultural Consultant in May 2024. What I've enjoyed most is working with people from different backgrounds and using my own lived experiences to support them. The training I have done, things like counselling skills, working across cultures, and understanding professional systems, has helped me grow and made me feel more confident in the role. I've learned how to listen better, work with others, and offer support that really fits people's needs.



# SALFORD BEREAVEMENT THERAPY SERVICE

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Salford Bereavement Therapy Service (SBTS) provides specialist talking therapies to those who are experiencing a wide range of difficulties related to bereavement, and loss related to suicide, perinatal loss, and other complex or traumatic forms of grief.

In 2024/25 the service received 320 referrals. Therapy was delivered both face-to-face and remotely from five accessible locations across Salford.

Collaboration with local partner services has continued to strengthen the clinical effectiveness of the service, ensuring joined-up support for patients and enhancing referral pathways. The service also remains committed to workforce development, with trainee and volunteer counsellors playing a key role in service delivery.

## Feedback

“*I started my journey with the service and I had in my mind that I needed a fixing mechanism to be able to deal/cope with grief if this was to happen to me again in my life, realising that there was a magic formula or fix to make me cope/grieve.*

*Just to know it's okay to make time for yourself, it's okay to be sad and it's okay to sometimes not be okay. These session helped me have such a different outlook on my day to day life and made me appreciate me a little more.*

Bereavement  
Therapy  
Service  
Salford



320  
Referrals

92%

of individuals chose face-to-face appointments, reflecting the value placed on in-person contact.

5

Accessible appointments locations across Salford

68%

of individuals received an initial conversation within 6 weeks of referral (Target 60%).

8

Trainee volunteer bereavement therapists.

300+

hours of clinical bereavement support delivered by trainee volunteers adding invaluable community support.

Developed partnerships with local colleges and universities, to support trainees on their journey to become qualified therapists.

# WORKING TOGETHER

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## Salford Neighbourhood Mental Health Team



Salford Mental Health Neighbourhood Team (formerly Salford Living Well) operates based on the innovative Living Well model, which focuses on supporting people to achieve and maintain good mental health within their community settings.

Six Degrees is proud to be a key partner, contributing specialist psychological expertise. Our psychological therapists enhance the team by providing psychological insight, clinical supervision, joint assessments, collaborative clinical support, risk management, and direct group work

The aim of the psychological therapies team is to support staff and patients.

An extensive evaluation (Cordis Bright) was conducted for 2024/25:

**100%**

of service users agreed or strongly agreed that the support they received improved their wellbeing.

**55%**

of service users experienced reliable improvements in their recovery and quality of life.

**91%**

agreed or strongly agreed that the support they received was more helpful than any previous support they had received.

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## Celebrating our partnerships

Over the past year, we've been privileged to work alongside an incredible range of partners. From hosting community events to shaping clinical decision-making and building strategic relationships, their support has been instrumental in helping us serve the Salford community.

We're especially grateful to Salford CVS, Vocal leaders, Salford GPs, Living Well, Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH), The Alternative Provider Collaborative, our commissioners, ICB colleagues, and our valued education partners—including local colleges and universities. Your continued collaboration strengthens our shared mission and makes a real difference to the lives of those we support.

We extend our deepest thanks to the Board, who generously and voluntarily dedicate their time, expertise, and unwavering commitment to Six Degrees. Your guidance has been instrumental in helping us navigate the turbulent landscape, both past and present, and ensuring that we not only survive but continue to thrive.

Thank you for standing with us in uncertain times.



# OUR PROFESSIONALS

## Investors In People

In 2024/25, our Investors in People assessment offered valuable affirmation of the culture we've built together at Six Degrees over the last few years - one of increased clarity, trust, and shared purpose.

We are proud to have achieved the gold accreditation. As part of the accreditation process our professionals were asked to complete an online questionnaire and some were randomly selected to take part in interviews.

Below are some highlights of our accreditation report:

Our professionals reported to feel well-informed, noting a positive shift in communication. This transparency has helped deepen understanding of our strategy and key priorities, creating a sense of alignment across roles and teams.

Leadership was highlighted as a core strength. Our professionals described leaders as visible, open-minded, accessible, and supportive - qualities that foster connection.

The introduction of Professional Standards, co-developed with our professionals, was recognised as a meaningful step in reinforcing a culture of positivity, ownership, and teamwork.

During the Investors in People interviews our professionals spoke of feeling empowered to make decisions, supported through systems like case management supervision, line management supervision, and team meetings.

Our professionals felt well-supported clinically, with access to training and supervision contributing to a sense of professional growth and safety.

These reflections were echoed in our engagement metrics:

**76%**  
of our  
professionals  
responded to the  
online survey

**80%**  
of our professional  
who completed the  
online survey  
agreed Six Degrees  
is a great place to  
work

**86%**  
felt that the  
organisation had a  
plan for the future

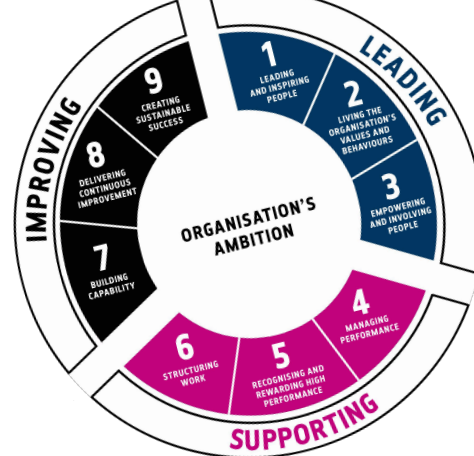
All indicators were  
0.2 – 0.6 above the  
Investors in  
People average

This feedback affirms the strength of our culture and the depth of our commitment to our people. It reflects a workplace where every voice contributes to our shared journey.

**WE'RE  
GOLD**



**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™**  
We invest in people Gold



# Supporting the mental health professionals of tomorrow

We are committed to developing outstanding mental health professionals by striving to provide education, mentorship and opportunities for growth.

We have hosted 3 work experience mornings this year with young people from the local community.

These sessions provided:

- ✓ Insight and exposure into our clinical and operational practices
- ✓ Encouraged open dialogue with staff
- ✓ Offered a realistic view of the challenges and rewards of working in mental health.

Feedback:

“ It gave me an insight of what being a practitioner is really like and left me feeling eager to carry on down this field and hopefully achieving the qualification to do so.

## Investing in our people

This year, we continued to prioritise professional development and progression, ensuring our staff are supported not only in their current roles but also in their future aspirations.

We actively promote from within, recognising the value of organisational knowledge and the dedication our professionals bring to their work. As a result, many team members have stepped into new responsibilities this year.

Training and development remain central to our approach, with staff accessing a wide range of learning opportunities to enhance their skills and grow within the organisation.



Thank you to all our professionals who are dedicated to delivering high standards of safe care to improve the lives of the people and communities we serve.



# FINANCES AND LOOKING AHEAD

## Finances

Profit and loss for the financial years ending 31st March 2023 to 31st March 2025

|  | 2024/25 Draft | 2023/24 Approved | 2022/23 Approved |
|--|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Income                                     | £2,673,227    | £2,744,194       | £2,253,203       |
| Cost of sales                              | (£235,091)    | (£291,570)       | (£304,288)       |
| Administrative expenses                    | (£2,178,316)  | (£2,228,999)     | (£2,013,475)     |
| Operating (deficit) / surplus              | £259,820      | £223,625         | (£64,560)        |
| Tax on (deficit) / surplus                 | (£69,270)     | (£49,757)        | £5,247           |
| (Deficit) / surplus for the financial year | £190,549      | £173,868         | (£59,313)        |

## Looking ahead

Looking ahead, our focus will remain on expanding our reach and deepening our connections. We will continue to work side by side with our communities, partners, and stakeholders, building on the strength of collaboration to deliver sustainable, compassionate, and effective support.

At its core, Six Degrees is more than a provider of mental health services in the community. We are a living network of people connected by values, experience, and bound by the belief that wellbeing grows strongest where connections are nurtured. This Annual Impact Report tells only part of the story of those connections, in numbers, in partnerships, and in lives changed for the better.

