



# You said, they did – Salford Adolescent Minds (S.A.M) Report

Project Impact Summary

**healthwatch**  
Salford

Here are the recommendations which came out of the S.A.M report and the actions that have taken place since then.

<b>We said:</b>	<b>They did / They plan to:</b>
<p><b>1. Ensure clear communication on the criteria to access the various young people's mental health services, what the pathway looks like, and the likely waiting times. Information must be easily accessible, and increased use of social media and texting could facilitate this. The current rumours about waiting lists are deterring people who need services from accessing them.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Added CAMHS guidance on thresholds and criteria to the <a href="#">Salford Thrive directory</a> and <a href="#">Local Offer webpages</a>.</li><li>• Additional administrative member recruited to increase capacity for a communications approach.</li><li>• Regular updates on the CYP mental health offer as well as the Thrive directory are now shared via GP comms, school comms and the Thrive Network (for professionals).</li><li>• Ongoing review and update of the ND communication plan.</li><li>• Ongoing expansion of the Thrive in Education mental health support teams in schools. Since the report was published the team has expanded to cover 63 Salford schools including Worsley College and provides advice &amp; consultation for various education projects and services.</li><li>• <a href="#">Dedicated webpages</a> for information on the Salford Neurodevelopmental approach and offer. Link for the webpage is also sent out with outcome letters to referrers from Neurodevelopment triage.</li><li>• A Salford Thrive Communications plan has been developed through a task and finish group – this includes a focus on information and advice as well as how digital and social media are used in comms.</li><li>• Neurodiversity Network sessions have commenced in the community, where early help and guidance will be offered to all families, regardless of where they are in the assessment process. The first session took place in October. Feedback is being obtained from each session to inform future sessions. A year long schedule for Neurodiversity events has been scheduled.</li></ul>

## We said:

**1. Ensure clear communication on the criteria to access the various young people's mental health services, what the pathway looks like, and the likely waiting times. Information must be easily accessible, and increased use of social media and texting could facilitate this. The current rumours about waiting lists are deterring people who need services from accessing them.**

## They did / They plan to:

### They also plan to:

- Expansion of mental health support teams to all the GM school-age population by December 2029 (A Government priority). Recruitment plans are underway with 8 new teams / up to 64 additional MHST staff expected to be recruited by January 2027, and ambitions to reach 70% + of schools and colleges in GM by March 2027.
- We will be expanding the Salford Thrive in Education offer to more pupils and education settings in 2026-27 with a focus on Post 16 and Secondary schools initially.

**2. Improve signposting both before and immediately after a referral, and carry out analysis of the role of the THRIVE directory – is it widely available in schools and other settings, and do people find it user-friendly?**

**They did:**

- A monthly Thrive newsletter has been established for the Thrive Partnership and the children's and young people's professionals' network. This routinely includes news, training and development and links to the Thrive webpages.
- S-thrive are now fully embedded in Central Salford and co-located with the Early Help Family Hub.
- The Salford Thrive Assessment and Referral Hub pilot has now gone live for phase 1. Children and young people's mental health referrals from GPs are triaged by a multi-disciplinary team to ensure young people are directed to the most appropriate service in a timely manner, without the need for redirection or rejection.
- CAMHS have published a [new website](#) with information on all the different services.
- Initial links have been made with VCSE organisations to support the Neurodiversity Networks.

**2. Improve signposting both before and immediately after a referral, and carry out analysis of the role of the THRIVE directory – is it widely available in schools and other settings, and do people find it user-friendly?**

**They plan to:**

- Recommendations for the expansion of the S-Thrive to all neighbourhoods across Salford have been put forward as part of the 'Empowering Salford Children and Young People to Thrive' (subject to funding).
- Exploration for S-Thrive to also provide sessions within one of the family hubs.
- Expand the Salford Thrive Assessment and Referral hub so that referrals are accepted from other services, including self-referrals, and that can also provide information and advice for parents.
- CAMHS Participation Leads are in the process of developing the videos for all of our CAMHS services. The videos will also be shared with other services outside CAMHS for shared learning.
- Ongoing discussions with CVS for a VCSE ND Community Connector role
- Have an identified lead within the locality to manage referrals, review needs, and connect families with relevant resources.
- Have a coordinated approach to ensure timely early support, including roles for existing services (e.g., Thrive teams, Early Help, Mental Health Support) and new roles like SEND and ND Navigators.

**3. Increase promotion of existing peer support groups/buddy systems and explore the need for further groups. Both CYP and parents report that these are extremely beneficial – they highly value having someone else to talk to who is in a similar position and can empathise.**

**They did:**

- Group work has started to be delivered by some of our Mental Health Support Teams providers and through the Greater Manchester funded Neurodevelopment in Schools pilots.
- The Thrive In Education Mental Health Support team has worked with the Youth Service to deliver Summer Transitions group projects.

**They plan to:**

- The Greater Manchester Mental Health Support Teams Programme has been reviewed and will be expanding up to 100% coverage by December 2029. This continued expansion will provide the opportunity to develop and grow the group work and peer support offer over time.
- GM Commissioning Intentions includes increased investment in the GM children's mental health community Thrive offer, which will mean improved access to VCSE advice and support closer to home.
- We are already in discussion with local services about developing a range of new children and young people support groups in Salford including to support bereaved young people, including those bereaved by suicide, and to support those with or without a mental health or neurodevelopment diagnosis.
- Develop resilience group with 42nd Street.
- Have out of hours sessions and specific sessions for older CYP with Youth Service.
- Continue to develop peer support networks and mental health support tailored for neurodivergence.

**4. Improve training for staff on hospital wards to support CYP who are/might be neurodivergent, in order to alleviate the pressures and travelling time to different hospital settings for CAMHS staff.**

**They did:**

- The S.A.M. report and Salford Action plan has been shared widely across the Salford Thrive and Children's system to inform service improvement, staff training and development planning.
- Salford Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) has completed a training needs analysis to understand what training is available and what needs to be developed/embedded. A new Workforce Lead post has been agreed and is moving towards recruitment to lead this programme of training work in SEND/Neurodiversity.
- Training offer for all professionals working in Salford also now includes Trauma Responsive Training, two-day Youth Mental Health First Aid, one day Youth and Adult MHFA as well as Connect 5 training.

**They plan to:**

- We engaged with Human Resources and Organisation Development teams at local and GM level to try and get the Oliver McGowen training included in mandatory training. However, the technical capabilities of systems do not allow this. We are now proposing a manual approach, where team managers monitor the mandatory completion of this and SEND basic training across the workforce. This action will now be taken up via the new Workforce Transformation Lead post.

**5. Implement immediate support and counselling provision for any parent whose CYP has attempted suicide. Unpaid carers need to be given the support mechanisms to care for themselves and their family safely.**

**They did:**

- Commissioning team sought assurance from All Age Mental Health Liaison Team and CAMHS about how families are supported following suicide attempts. Service Duty teams provide advice to parents and carers about their children's mental health needs and how to keep them safe.
- Parents are signposted to adult mental health services including talking therapies and parents can ask their GP about referral into the service, and potentially also Carers Support via Gaddum.
- NHS 111 option 2 for mental health support is now live in Greater Manchester and means families have a single point of contact when they need help
- GM Safe Zones are now operational, providing a VCSE alternative support offer for children and families during mental health crisis in addition to the CYP Crisis Service (delivered by CAMHS) and the Mental Health Liaison team in A&E. This is delivered by 42nd Street in Salford and is based in The Beacon Centre.
- Drop-in sessions are available for parents whose children are in the CAMHS Emerge service.
- A Greater Manchester working group has produced and published self-harm resources which have now been included in the Salford Thrive webpages and directory and shared with Thrive Partners to promote and cascade wider. This is included on the 'Shining a Light on Suicide' website which has a wider GM offer for suicide prevention.
- Developed self-harm community of practice sessions for professionals which are ongoing.
- 'Alfie's Squad' peer support groups for CYP and families who have been bereaved by suicide now launched in Bolton for families across Greater Manchester.

**5. Implement immediate support and counselling provision for any parent whose CYP has attempted suicide. Unpaid carers need to be given the support mechanisms to care for themselves and their family safely.** (continued)

**They plan to:**

- Salford's all age self-harm strategy and action plan are currently being developed.
- CAMHS are exploring with Salford Parent Carer Forum to see if there is any scope for possible quarterly psycho education sessions we can support, using a systems advice and support model.
- Ongoing discussions for more peer support groups in Salford.

**6. Conduct further analysis on neurodivergence amongst girls in school, and review SEL provision (social and emotional learning). Two of our families spoke of teenage girls being able to mask neurodivergent traits in school and concerns not being taken seriously.**

**They did:**

- Recruited a Neurodevelopment lead practitioner in our Thrive in Education mental health support team to further improve the understanding of neurodiversity in education settings as part of a whole school and college approach.
- Whole system Neuro Development in Education engagement workshops were held in March and October to garner support for a joined-up approach to supporting schools. A schedule is being developed for the year around key themes: Workforce development and training, Culture and inclusion, Transition and preparing for adult life, family and young people voice and system navigation and core offer.

**They plan to:**

- Introductory awareness courses to be delivered for the children's workforce and to improve knowledge and awareness of the 'Graduated Approach' and 'Reasonable Adjustments'. Educational Psychology team are co-producing and developing a training package for children and young people to understand neurodevelopment.
- An action planning meeting for neurodevelopment in education is scheduled for October bringing together representatives across education and children's services. The expected outcome is a clear, co-developed neurodevelopment in education system action plan.

**7. Implement some kind of traffic light system for referrals into CAMHS (if it isn't used already as part of the triaging process).**

The system should take into account, for example:

- People who have been referred in (who may sometimes be more reluctant to engage with the process and less needy).
- Those CYP who are estranged from their families/have little family support (who may require a quicker intervention, maybe can't provide the expected family history, and may have more DNAs than usual -one young person turned up at the wrong location for our interview, but we adapted the process.)
- Those CYP whose family have other members with SEN (and may find accompanying CYP to appointments difficult).

**They did:**

- Young people on the CAMHS ND Assessment waiting list have been contacted to check in and seek feedback on their needs and offer support.
- The Greater Manchester Neurodevelopmental Transformation work is developing a prioritisation criteria for referrals into CAMHS to ensure those with the highest need get prioritised.
- The participation groups are now up and running on a monthly basis. Young people are part of new staff interview processes, and there is a current review of the waiting room in Salford as a direct response to feedback from young people.

**They plan to:**

- We are working on developing a role for a parent/carer representative for neurodevelopment.
- Continually review and contact families whose children are on the ND assessment waiting list to offer support, advice and signposting whilst they are waiting.

**8. Consider the development of relevant projects when the CAMHS participation group is relaunched.**

**They did:**

- The participation groups run monthly. Young people are part of new staff interview processes and there is a current review of the waiting room in Salford as a direct response from feedback from young people.
- Established peer support groups available in Salford in-person and online.
- The Nerd Club, Youth Council and Fight for Change were both involved in the development of the 'Empowering Children and Young People in Salford' plan.
- Established Salford Youth Service LGBTQ+ youth groups and Tea and Toast parent group – ongoing discussion for GM wide groups.
- Council and NHS partners are working together collaboratively to transform and improve our approach to neurodevelopment in Salford. Partners include: CAMHS, Early Help / Family and Parent support, 0-19 service, Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language, Community Paediatrics Service, Learning Support Service and schools/education settings. We have an established Neurodevelopmental Steering group where partners are regularly represented.
- MFT CAMHS have produced a While You Wait Offer and this can be accessed via [mft.nhs.uk](http://mft.nhs.uk) and has been included in a letter sent directly to parents with children who have been on the waiting list for a long time already , along with additional information on the Salford Early Help and ND waiting well offer. The Neurodevelopment hub sessions in the community being developed will also support this.

**9. Conduct further analysis in cases where families were signposted from CAMHS to other support and ended up back at CAMHS – what are the reasons for this, and how can the decision-making around this be improved?**

**They did:**

- CAMHS have undertaken an audit of cases on the neurodevelopment waiting list to inform improvements in the waiting well offer.
- The Manchester Foundation Trust Strategic Lead for Neurodevelopment works across Salford/Manchester/Trafford and as part of the GM Transformation work programme to support the pathway and developments of locality Neurodevelopment Hubs. Collaboration with the Salford Neurodevelopment Steering is helping to improve coordination and communications between services and professionals.
- Pilot has commenced for Salford Thrive Assessment and Referral (STAR) Hub, with referrals currently accepted from a few GP practices which will improve signposting/directing referrals to the most appropriate service. Referrals will be accepted from 10 more GP practices early 2026.
- Salford Neurodevelopment hub supports in triaging referrals as well as advice and signposting.
- Dedicated webpages for information on the Salford Neurodevelopmental approach and offer. Link for the webpage is also sent out with outcome letters to referrers from the Neurodevelopment triage.

**They plan to:**

- Expand the STAR Hub so referrals are accepted from all referral sources including self-referrals.