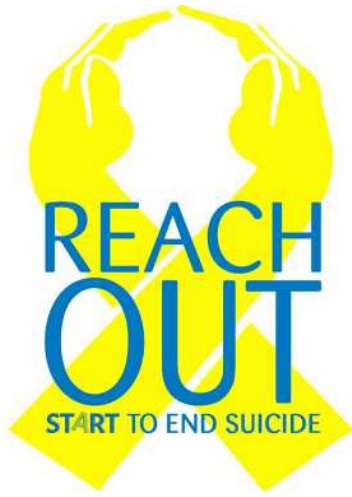




IMPACT REPORT
2023-2024



Empowering Salford: Transformative Initiatives

In the past year, Salford has seen a surge of innovative projects and community involvement in mental health support and suicide prevention by **'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide'**. From rhythmic drumming to creative arts workshops and assertive outreach, these initiatives, including the **'Everyday Mental Health Hero'** program, demonstrates our evolving commitment to compassion and resilience.

Drumming Up Co. Connecting Through Music Page 4

'Drumming Up Co.' hosts weekly drumming sessions, fostering social bonds and well-being. Through 48 workshops, participants experienced the therapeutic power of drumming, transcending barriers and enriching lives.

Surviving Suicide Peer Support in the Arts Page 6

These peer-led creative workshops empower suicide attempt survivors, fostering resilience and personal growth through artistic expression and community support.

World Suicide Prevention Day Vigil & Procession Page 8

On September 10th, Salford remembered lives lost to suicide, highlighting the need for cohesive support structures and proactive prevention efforts.

Assertive Outreach Amid Economic Strain Page 16

'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide' continues to provide support and education amidst economic challenges, addressing mental health impacts and promoting resilience.

'Everyday Mental Health Hero' Initiative Page 18

This initiative aims to transform community attitudes towards mental health and suicide prevention through education and visible solidarity.

Reflecting on these initiatives, **'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide'** reaffirms our commitment to prioritise mental health, dismantle stigma, and build a supportive community where everyone feels valued and heard.

Together, we can stand against suicide and cultivate a future of hope and resilience.

For more information please contact:

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Follow us on Twitter & Facebook @ReachOutSTES

THANK YOU to all our funders, our commissioners, our volunteers & our supporters....



Salford City Council



We couldn't do what we do without you!

‘Hospital Workers Breakfast, Lunch & Tea’ shortlisted for Best Community Safety Project at ‘The Spirit of Salford’ Awards 2023

With NHS & social care workers being characterised as a high risk profession of suicide, especially within the context of the pandemic, with the support of ‘Salford CCG’ and the ‘Department of Health & Social Care’ we took pizza from our delivery partners ‘Bakehouse 32’, and lived experience engagement worker to them, in their workplaces. We served pizza and chatted about their mental health and suicide prevention, while distributing suicide prevention messaged ‘Thank You’ cards (folded business card sized) to over 380 staff at Salford Royal Hospital NHS Trust and to their teams in the community. It was then rolled out across Greater Manchester with in excess of **1,730** hospital workers being engaged with over **3,450** suicide prevention resources being distributed. It was greatly received with 100% of staff reporting an increased awareness of suicide prevention.

It inspired, educated and empowered them to meaningfully connect with those around them,

improved attitudes, increased dialogue on suicide, improved resilience, saving lives and ending stigma. When engaging with the workers with regards to what impacts on their mental health they cited workloads with one NHS worker commenting ‘it’s a good day, we have a full team’; rostering with many teams only having the legal minimum requirement of staff on the wards, not allowing for illness of staff; bed shortages; cost of living crisis, with the elimination of free parking for staff being taken away all have an impact on staff mental health.



Drumming Up Co.

Empowering Communities through Samba Drumming

Every Friday, a rhythm of joy and camaraderie fills the air as 'Drumming Up Co.' gathers participants from diverse backgrounds to embark on a musical journey of healing and connection. This innovative project, made possible through generous grant funding from 'The Charity Service', has facilitated 48 weekly 2-hour workshops, providing a safe space for individuals to explore the therapeutic benefits of drumming while fostering social connectedness.

Combining elements of a drum circle and jam session, 'Drumming Up Co.' welcomes individuals of all ages, genders, and skill levels to join in the rhythmic exploration of global drumming traditions. From Cuba to Brazil, participants have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich history and vibrant rhythms of samba drumming, guided by the highly qualified instructor, Cheryl Blake, in an inclusive environment.

One of the highlights of the project was the group's participation in the 'World Suicide Prevention Day Procession', underscoring the project's commitment to community engagement and social advocacy.

The impact of 'Drumming Up Co.' extends far beyond the beats of the drum. Through self-reported assessments, participants have demonstrated remarkable improvements in their mental health and well-being, with an average increase from 4.7 to 8.6 out of 10 in overall well-being scores. Testimonials from participants further illustrate the transformative power of the project, providing vital support and a lifeline to those in need. "I wouldn't have had anyone to reach out to, which with the way I was feeling, without you, I probably wouldn't be here to talk to you now. Thank you," expressed one participant, reflecting on the invaluable support received through the project.

Another heart-warming testimonial comes from a community connector, who witnessed the profound

impact of 'Drumming Up Co.' on a young woman with multiple disabilities. "She had the most radiant smile on her face, which I haven't seen before. She could not wait to tell me that she was coming to the drumming group and loved it. Her dad quickly chipped in to say 'tell Charlie about the band'. She beamed and said 'they have made me part of the band. I'm in a band now Charlie, I'm part of it'" shared the community connector, highlighting the project's role in fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Reflecting on the project's success, we have identified key learnings and opportunities for future growth. By recognising and responding to the unique needs of participants, especially those living with disabilities, the project has laid the groundwork for expanding its reach to other neighbourhoods and communities within Salford.

Would you like
'Drumming Up Co.' to play at your
community event please email
dennisb@startinspiringminds.org.uk





Peer Support Creative Arts Sessions

Empowering Suicide Attempt Survivors to Reclaim Their Narrative

In a ground-breaking initiative aimed at empowering suicide attempt survivors, **'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide'** held 48 weekly 2-hour workshops over the course of one year, providing a lifeline of peer support and creative expression. Led by individuals with lived experience of mental distress and trauma, these sessions, funded by **'The Lottery'**, offered a unique opportunity for vulnerable individuals to connect, heal, and grow.

Drawing on the transformative power of peer support, the project placed suicide attempt survivors at the forefront of their own recovery journey. By harnessing the healing potential of creative arts, participants engaged in a journey of self-discovery, building fundamental coping skills while nurturing personal fulfilment and resilience.

We believed in the power of peer support to ignite hope and catalyse transformation. By creating a safe space for individuals to share their stories, we empowered them to reclaim their narrative and chart a path toward healing and recovery.

Led by a creative artist with extensive experience in mental health, the workshops provided participants with a platform to explore various mediums and art forms, from painting and sculpture to mosaics and paper craft. Through a process of conceptualisation, design, and creation, participants not only honed their creative skills but also developed vital coping and crisis strategies for navigating life's challenges.

At **'START'**, we understand the power of creativity to transcend pain and cultivate resilience. Through these sessions, participants not only learned new artistic

techniques but also forged meaningful connections with their peers, fostering a sense of belonging and community.

The project was supported by a dedicated project manager, who oversaw the delivery of the workshops and provided trauma-informed care for participants. By accepting self-referrals and referrals from primary and secondary care services, the project aimed to reach individuals who may have fallen through the gaps of traditional mental health support.

Participants reported improvements in their mental health and well-being, increased confidence and self-esteem, enhanced social connectedness, and a reduction in suicidal thoughts and ideation. By providing a holistic approach to recovery, the project sought to empower suicide attempt survivors to take control of their lives and reach their full potential.

We knew from our experiences that peer support could make a world of difference in someone's recovery journey. By harnessing the wisdom and resilience of individuals with lived experience, we created a community of support where everyone felt seen, heard, and valued.





University of Salford
Frederick Road
campus



University Nursery



World Suicide Prevention Day

Vigil & Procession of Remembrance

On Sunday, September 10th, **'START'**, hosted a solemn **'Vigil & Procession of Remembrance'** in observance of **'World Suicide Prevention Day'**. This heartfelt event, organised by the award-winning initiative **'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide'**, received invaluable support from the **'Salford Integrated Care Partnership'**. Members of the Salford community gathered at the **'START's'** Wellbeing Centre to unite and remember those lost to suicide, offering solace and empathy to those who remain.

Symbolising the impact of suicide on the Salford community, 130 yellow flags were unfurled along the procession route leading to the **'Salford Museum & Art Gallery'**. Each flag represented a life lost to suicide in Salford over the past five years, creating a poignant visual tribute.

At the **'Salford Museum & Art Gallery'**, a solemn vigil was held, featuring Melanie Anderton and other speakers and performers who respectfully honoured the lives lost to suicide. Participants included Singer/Songwriter Vinny Peculiar, Salford Ceremonial Mayor Gina Reynolds, Salford Council Chief Executive Tom Stannard, Living Experience advocate Melanie Anderton, Poet Jardel Rodrigues, and June Green from the Caribbean & African Health Network and Councillor Sharimna August, Salford City Council, who shared her lived experiences of bereavement by suicide. The event was hosted by Salford CVS's CEO

Alison Page.

Ceremonial Mayor Gina Reynolds and Salford Council Chief Executive Tom Stannard read the Roll of Remembrance, listing the names of those lost to suicide. Vinny Peculiar closed the event with his song 'Big Grey Hospital,' a poignant tribute to his brother who took his own life in 2001.

Participants in the event expressed their emotions, with one saying, *"Very moving and poignant. A profound event which raises awareness of suicide, reducing stigma and helping to push for change."* Another attendee commented, *"This has been a fantastic evening on so many levels. It was very informative about suicide, its impact and prevention, and I found the personal stories and songs incredibly moving."*

'Salford Council' once again provided refreshments to participants in **'Salford Museum & Art Gallery'**, which provided a space for connection and remembrance.

'START' and its **'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide'** initiative are committed to fostering awareness, support, and prevention of suicide in the Salford community. Our dedication to commemorating **'World Suicide Prevention Day'** and advocating for improved mental health services and support remains unwavering.



Tonights vigil was outstanding for everyone who attended. The band was brilliant all the speeches was meaningful + thoughtful. Doing the vigil each year is helping people know they are not alone.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered to help out tonight 2023.

This has been a fantastic evening on so many levels. It was very informative about suicide, its impact + prevention and I found the personal stories and songs incredibly moving.

Rona Taylor



'WSPD Vigil & Procession' Photography by Saulomon Hashmi 'X' @SaulomonP



June Green, the Caribbean & African Health Network



Tom Stannard, Salford Council Chief Executive read the Roll of Remembrance



Jardel Rodrigues, Poet



Vinny Peculiar, Singer/Songwriter



Alison Page, Salford CVS, hosting the WSPD Vigil'



Councillor Sharmina August, Salford Council



Ceremonial Mayor of Salford Gina Reynolds, reading the Roll of Remembrance at WSPD Vigil'

A Mother's Story of Losing Her Son to Suicide at World Suicide Prevention Day Vigil & Procession of Remembrance

On Sunday, September 10th, members of the public gathered at the Starts Wellbeing Centre to stand as a united community before embarking on the **'WSPD Vigil & Procession of Remembrance'**. This impactful occasion served as a poignant tribute to those departed, offering solace and empathy for those who remain.

A highlight of the event was Melanie Anderton, a mother who experienced the heartrending loss of her son Jake to suicide. At just 23 years old, Jake, a talented photographer, left behind a legacy that has driven his mother to advocate for improved mental health services and support systems.

Melanie Anderton shared, *"Growing up, Jake didn't have any issues around his mental health. He was confident, popular, and enjoying student life and traveling with friends. Everything changed just 10 months before he died. Jake suddenly became reckless, impulsive, obsessive, spending money, and experiencing rapid mood swings. All completely out of character."*

"To cut a long story short, Jake more than likely had Bipolar disorder, and he was self-medicating using Benzodiazepines purchased over the internet. Jake was very open and honest with both myself and the medical professionals and substance misuse team about what he was doing and how he was feeling. He was desperate for help and could not have shouted any louder. Jake was denied a mental health

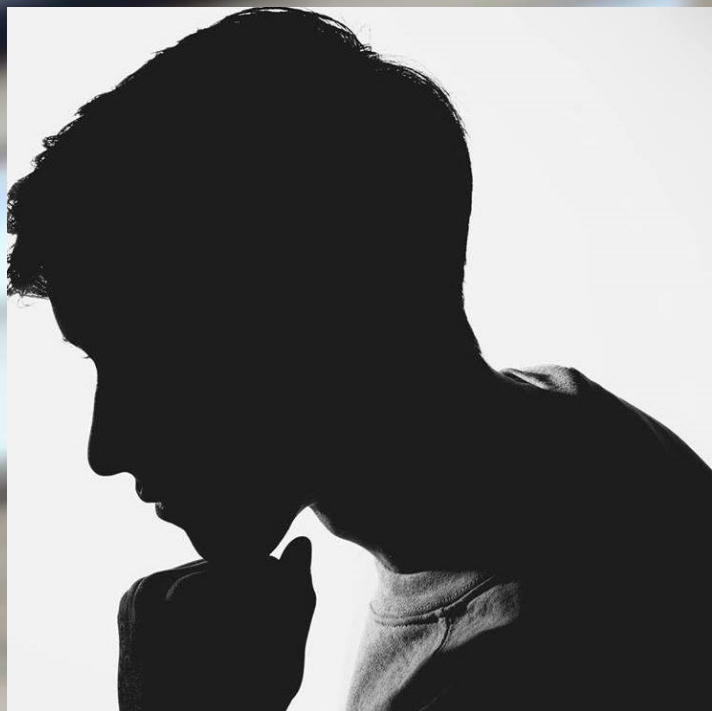
assessment due to his substance misuse, and this is where things spiralled out of control."

"Jake's story is a reminder of the urgent need for enhanced mental health services and cohesive support structures," shared Melanie Anderton. *"We cannot change the past, but we can come together to prevent such tragedies in the future."*

Jake's untimely death spotlighted the importance of cohesive services and early intervention. His journey, marked by sudden and uncharacteristic behavioural shifts, revealed gaps in the existing support system. Through introspection and engagement with professionals, Melanie Anderton has tirelessly pursued improvements to mental health care accessibility and effectiveness.

The Vigil & Procession of Remembrance served as a catalyst for dialogue and action, driving home the imperative of cohesive mental health services and supportive communities. By sharing her story, Melanie Anderton has sparked conversations and advocacy efforts aimed at preventing future tragedies and supporting those affected by suicide.

The Vigil & Procession of Remembrance, led by Melanie Anderton, stands as a testament to the power of community support and advocacy in the face of tragedy. START remains committed to honouring the memory of those lost to suicide and working tirelessly to improve mental health services for all.



Melanie Anderton holding a flag in remembrance of her son Jake (inset photos) awaiting the start of the 'Procession of Remembrance'

'VIGIL-antes' Finalists

at the 'Heart Of Salford' Awards for Best Volunteer Group

By honouring the memories of those who have tragically lost their lives to suicide, at our **'World Suicide Prevention Day Vigil & Procession of Remembrance'** a powerful message that their lives were valued and that their struggles are not forgotten is sent.

Volunteers, affectionately known as **"VIGIL-antes"**, play a crucial role in making this event a success. From marshalling the procession to utilizing social media for live updates, selling awareness ribbons, and collecting donations, supporting attendees their dedication and commitment are commendable.

In a world where the stigma surrounding suicide still persists, our **"VIGIL-antes,"** are a beacon of hope, a symbol of unity, and a powerful catalyst for change. They are making a difference by fostering compassion, empathy, and open dialogue surrounding mental health and suicide at the Vigil & Procession. They are bringing together the community to say, "You are not alone, and your pain matters." The **"VIGIL-antes,"** are shining example of how collective action can break down barriers and offer support to those in their darkest moments.

The procession itself, featuring 130 flags, each representing a life lost to suicide in the past five years, is a sombre yet beautiful visual tribute carried by the very people who loved and lost them. It's a moving act of remembrance that underscores the shared pain and resilience of the community.

The event also extends an invitation to add the names of loved ones to a roll of remembrance, ensuring that each individual is acknowledged and remembered

during the vigil.

The volunteers at the **'WSPD Vigil & Procession'** are indispensable contributors, deeply impacting the event's success and significance. Their roles can be summarized as follows:

Logistical Support: Volunteers act as marshals, ensuring the event's smooth operation. Beyond maintaining safety and order, their presence provides a comforting atmosphere for participants. Navigating such an emotionally charged event can be challenging, and volunteers offer a sense of security and organization, allowing attendees to focus on the event's purpose.

Digital Connection: In our interconnected world, social media is a potent tool for raising awareness. Volunteers managing social media accounts provide real-time updates, expanding the event's reach far beyond its physical location. This digital connection enables remote participation, encouraging more people to engage with suicide prevention efforts and reducing stigma.

Fundraising for Awareness: Volunteers selling awareness ribbons and collecting donations play a pivotal role in financing the event and supporting ongoing suicide prevention initiatives. Their commitment ensures that the event can continue its mission of destigmatising suicide.

Personal Touch: Adding loved ones' names to the remembrance roll is a deeply emotional process. Volunteers facilitate this, offering comfort and empathy to attendees. Their involvement ensures that every life lost to suicide is acknowledged during the vigil, fostering unity and compassion among those present. This personal touch imbues the event with profound meaning for participants.



Assertive Out Reach:

Addressing Mental Health & Suicide Amidst Economic Strain

In response to the ongoing economic challenges facing the people of Salford, we at **'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide'** have continued our assertive outreach efforts through the highly successful 'Lunch' initiative. This initiative involved taking our pizza lorry to various locations across Salford, including **'START'** and **'Manchester City Missions'** foodbanks across Salford, to distribute free healthy pizza slices and engage with service users about suicide prevention. We engaged with close to 150 people at risk of suicide, self-harming and deteriorating mental health. Alongside the pizza slices, we have been distributing thank you cards containing messages of suicide prevention.

The utilisation of free healthy pizza as a tool has enabled us to directly target a hard-to-reach at-risk group of service users. Through these engagements, we aim to educate and empower economically disadvantaged individuals in Salford to connect meaningfully with their community, recognise the warning signs of suicide, and initiate conversations with loved ones who may be in distress and contemplating suicide. Additionally, we aim to raise awareness among men at risk of suicide about the mental health support services available to them.

The impact of the cost of living crisis on mental health cannot be understated. Financial stress, arising from increased expenses coupled with stagnant wages or reduced income, has become a significant burden for many of the individuals that were engaged with. This strain often leads to feelings of hopelessness and despair, increasing the risk of suicidal ideation.

Housing insecurity is another pressing concern that we identified through our engagement, with skyrocketing housing costs and limited affordable housing options leading to instability and

homelessness. The stress of housing insecurity heightens anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation, exacerbating mental health challenges.

Food insecurity also emerged as a significant issue, as individuals struggle to afford nutritious food. Poor nutrition and hunger contribute to mood disturbances and exacerbate existing mental health conditions, increasing vulnerability to suicidal thoughts and behaviour's.

Job insecurity, low wages, and precarious work conditions associated with the cost of living crisis lead to chronic stress and anxiety. Unstable employment situations may also limit access to mental health benefits or resources, further impacting mental well-being.

This economic hardship often results in social isolation, as individuals withdraw from social activities due to financial constraints. Feelings of loneliness and social disconnectedness can intensify existing mental health challenges and contribute to suicidal ideation.

Limited access to support services exacerbates the problem, as public and community support services face increased demand and reduced funding during economic downturns. This limits access to vital mental health resources for those in need.

Through our **'Lunch'** initiative and assertive outreach efforts, we strive to mitigate the adverse effects of economic hardship on mental health in Salford. By providing support, education, and resources, we aim to empower individuals to prioritise their mental well-being and seek assistance when needed.



**IF I'M WEARING THIS BADGE
& YOU'RE STRUGGLING
YOU CAN REACH OUT TO ME
(EVEN IF YOU DON'T KNOW ME)**

HERE TO HEAR



**FOR ADVICE & SUPPORT VISIT:
WWW.SHININGALIGHTONSHICIDE.ORG.UK**

'EVERYDAY MENTAL HEALTH HERO'

TRANSFORM SUICIDE PREVENTION & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In an effort to foster a community that prioritises mental health and supports those in need, a ground-breaking initiative titled 'Everyday Mental Health Hero' has launched in the Salford community. This initiative, led by the leading Mental Health Charity 'START' and their award-winning 'Reach Out; Start to End Suicide' campaign, aims to inspire, educate, and empower individuals to meaningfully connect with one another, raise awareness of suicide prevention, and foster a supportive environment for mental health wellbeing.

The 'Everyday Mental Health Hero' initiative introduces a three-stage model designed to engage a diverse cross-section of the Salford community:

LEARN: Participants will engage with trained living experience engagement workers and undergo online suicide prevention training. The program, developed by the Zero Suicide Alliance and hosted by GM Health & Social Care's 'Shining a Light on Suicide', offers real-life stories and scenario videos to equip participants with the skills to recognise warning signs and provide support.

PLEDGE: Individuals will make a public pledge to reach out when they or others are in need. Research shows that publicly committing to a goal increases the likelihood of follow-through, and by joining the 'Everyday Mental Health Hero' community, participants support and

motivate each other to uphold their commitments.

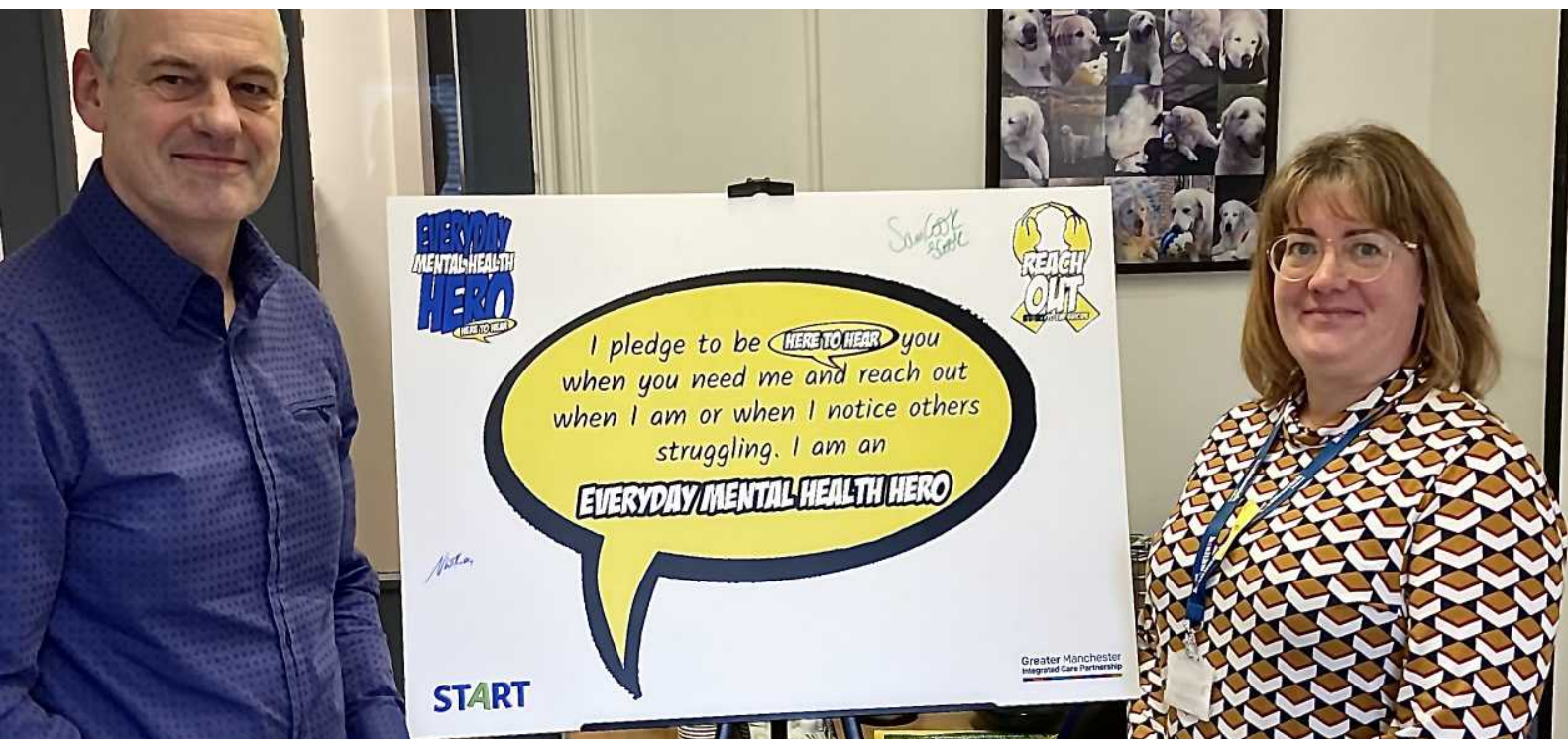
WEAR: Community members will wear a distinctive 'Hear to Hear' badge, signalling their willingness to listen and support others. While wearing the badge doesn't imply having all the answers, it signifies being a friendly ear and knowing how to connect individuals with available support services.

The initiative also provides bespoke resources including signposting to online training, bereavement support, and local services such as the Samaritans helpline. These resources, including posters, info cards, and more, aim to reinforce the message of 'Everyday Mental Health Hero' throughout the community.

'Everyday Mental Health Hero' seeks to demonstrate to those struggling with mental health challenges that they are not alone. Through education, commitment, and visible support, we aim to build a community where individuals feel empowered to seek help and support one another.

The 'Everyday Mental Health Hero' initiative is poised to transform attitudes towards mental health and suicide prevention in Salford, fostering a resilient community where lives are saved through collective action and support.

Below, START Trustees, Neil Withnell & Sam Cook take the Pledge



I pledge to be **HERE TO HEAR** you
when you need me and reach out
when I am or when I notice others
struggling. I am an

EVERYDAY MENTAL HEALTH HERO

**EVERYDAY
MENTAL HEALTH
HERO**
HERE TO HEAR

**REACH
OUT**
START TO END SUICIDE

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