# South London and Maudsley Trust invests over £2 million to empower grassroots mental health initiatives in Lewisham



South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust is making a significant investment of over £2 million in voluntary, community, and social enterprises (VCSEs) to revolutionise mental health care provision across its service areas, with a pivotal focus on Lewisham. This bold transformation aims to enhance the accessibility and responsiveness of mental health support services within local communities by partnering closely with grassroots organisations. The first £800,000 tranche of this funding has been allocated to a variety of local partners in Lewisham, designed to improve how services support residents and help them access care before urgent intervention becomes necessary.

Notably, the Trust has worked to make the funding process more equitable and streamlined, enabling smaller, community-based groups to compete effectively. Professor Derek Tracy, Chief Medical Officer for the Trust, highlighted the importance of this approach, stating that working in partnership with local voluntary groups brings invaluable insight and innovative ideas essential for tailoring support to meet local needs. He emphasised that “local communities have great insight, great energy and great ideas on how to help support and heal those living in their neighbourhoods,” underscoring the move from traditional service delivery to more collaborative, community-informed approaches.

An important component of the Lewisham funding pot has been its strategic prioritisation of Black-led organisations to deliver culturally relevant mental health support, reflecting the Trust’s data showing that Black communities—including African, Caribbean, and mixed heritage groups—experience some of the poorest access and outcomes within mental health services. Thirteen voluntary groups have been awarded funds to deliver a range of innovative projects, from cooking and faith-based activities to peer support, sport, and recreational therapy, all targeted at tackling barriers in engagement and improving early intervention outcomes. This builds on the Trust’s previous work on its Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework and Anti-Racism Action Plan, as well as supporting the rollout of a pilot model within Lewisham.

Alongside grassroots initiatives, a substantial portion of the funding supports borough-wide mental health care delivery through established providers with specialist outreach capabilities. South East London MIND will focus on primary mental health care, while Together for Mental Wellbeing will deliver assertive outreach services designed to engage those at risk or disengaged from traditional services. This dual approach ensures comprehensive, culturally competent care across different community needs.

The funding complements broader initiatives unfolding in Lewisham and the wider South London region. In a related development, the Trust recently secured £2.5 million from NHS England to pilot a 24/7 community mental health service in one Lewisham neighbourhood, starting in 2025. This pilot aims to provide continuous, intensive community-based support to individuals with severe mental health needs, reducing hospital admissions and enhancing quality of life through trusted local care relationships.

Moreover, the Maudsley Charity, closely linked with the Trust, is channeling its own investments to bolster mental health services and research in the area. Its Building Brighter Futures programme has awarded £7.5 million across Southwark, Lambeth, Lewisham, and Croydon to youth-focused projects addressing emerging mental health difficulties, while the Living Well with Psychosis initiative has granted £600,000 to support 21 organisations offering community aid for people experiencing psychosis. The charity also supports youth-centric programmes in Lewisham such as the Alchemy Recovery College and drama initiatives aimed at preventing mental ill health among younger populations.

Further underscoring the region's commitment to advancing mental health care, the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) recently awarded South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust £1.3 million to upgrade research infrastructure, including digital and virtual reality technologies that could enhance therapeutic options and expand participation in cutting-edge studies.

Adeniyi Aderinto, Interim Service Director for Lewisham, expressed optimism about the ongoing community partnership efforts, emphasising the importance of both sustaining successful collaborations and building new ones as part of the broader community care transformation. He noted, “This funding is really important in supporting local groups. But it is also important that we build on this exciting new approach and existing relationships and create new ones too as part of our community care transformation programme.”

Taken together, these investments and initiatives signal a comprehensive shift towards community-driven, culturally sensitive, and accessible mental health care in South London, with Lewisham at the forefront. By integrating grassroots organisations, specialist providers, and research innovation, the Trust and its partners aim to forge a mental health care model that is equitable, responsive, and deeply embedded in the local fabric.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://london-post.co.uk/lewisham-community-transformation-800000-investment-from-south-london-and-maudsley/), [[2]](https://slam.nhs.uk/pressreleases/brand-new-community-development-programme-funding-for-lewisham-communities-4729)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://london-post.co.uk/lewisham-community-transformation-800000-investment-from-south-london-and-maudsley/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://london-post.co.uk/lewisham-community-transformation-800000-investment-from-south-london-and-maudsley/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://london-post.co.uk/lewisham-community-transformation-800000-investment-from-south-london-and-maudsley/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://london-post.co.uk/lewisham-community-transformation-800000-investment-from-south-london-and-maudsley/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://slam.nhs.uk/pressreleases/lewisham-community-mental-health-service-funding-3986)
* Paragraph 7 – [[4]](https://maudsleycharity.org/building-brighter-futures-funding-awarded/), [[5]](https://maudsleycharity.org/our-grants/living-well-with-psychosis-community-support/), [[6]](https://maudsleycharity.org/our-work/our-work-in-the-community/lewisham/)
* Paragraph 8 – [[7]](https://www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk/posts/2024/november/13m-awarded-to-south-london-and-maudsley-nhs-foundation-trust-for-cutting-edge-research-equipment-and-technology/)
* Paragraph 9 – [[1]](https://london-post.co.uk/lewisham-community-transformation-800000-investment-from-south-london-and-maudsley/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://london-post.co.uk/lewisham-community-transformation-800000-investment-from-south-london-and-maudsley/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://slam.nhs.uk/pressreleases/brand-new-community-development-programme-funding-for-lewisham-communities-4729> - South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust is investing over £2 million in voluntary community and social enterprises (VCSEs) to transform mental health care in Lewisham. The initial £800,000 funding aims to enhance service accessibility and responsiveness, enabling residents to seek support proactively and reduce the need for urgent interventions. The Trust has streamlined the funding process to assist smaller, local services in competing effectively. Professor Derek Tracy, Chief Medical Officer, emphasised the importance of collaborating with local organisations to provide tailored support that aligns with community needs.
3. <https://slam.nhs.uk/pressreleases/lewisham-community-mental-health-service-funding-3986> - South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust has secured £2.5 million from NHS England to pilot a 24/7 community mental health service in Lewisham, set to commence in 2025. This initiative aims to offer comprehensive, community-based mental health care, focusing on building trusting relationships and providing intensive support to individuals with severe mental health needs. The pilot will operate within one of Lewisham's neighbourhoods, integrating services to improve quality of life and reduce hospitalisation rates.
4. <https://maudsleycharity.org/building-brighter-futures-funding-awarded/> - Maudsley Charity has awarded £7.5 million to 11 projects involving approximately 50 organisations across Southwark, Lambeth, Lewisham, and Croydon through its Building Brighter Futures programme. The initiative supports the delivery of timely mental health care to young people facing emerging difficulties by funding collaborations between local organisations, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, and King’s College London. The programme aims to address complex mental health challenges by fostering collaborative efforts and sharing expertise.
5. <https://maudsleycharity.org/our-grants/living-well-with-psychosis-community-support/> - Maudsley Charity has awarded £600,000 to support 21 local charities and organisations through its Living Well with Psychosis programme. The initiative funds diverse community-based projects in Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham, and Southwark, focusing on providing support for individuals experiencing psychosis. The programme aims to enhance community support systems and improve the quality of life for those affected by psychosis through various tailored interventions and services.
6. <https://maudsleycharity.org/our-work/our-work-in-the-community/lewisham/> - Maudsley Charity funds projects across the London Borough of Lewisham, aiming to improve the lives of individuals living with mental illness. Collaborating with community-based organisations, the charity supports initiatives such as the Alchemy Recovery College, offering young people access to a range of classes and opportunities, and the 'Whatever Makes You Happy' programme, a free drama programme for young people aged 8-14 at risk of developing mental ill health.
7. <https://www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk/posts/2024/november/13m-awarded-to-south-london-and-maudsley-nhs-foundation-trust-for-cutting-edge-research-equipment-and-technology/> - The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) has awarded £1.3 million to South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust for new research equipment and technology. The funding will support the establishment of a Centre for Advanced Neurotherapeutics, a Digital and Virtual Reality Centre, and the acquisition of retinography equipment. This investment aims to enhance the Trust’s research capacity and capability, in collaboration with King’s College London and other partners, expanding research in specialist areas and providing more opportunities for service users and patients to participate in research.