

Social Prescribing

Carolyn Cooper, Social Prescribing Link Worker for Wisbech PCN

Often in our lives we face difficulties that impact on our wellbeing. When these are added to long-term health conditions, these can lead to depression, feeling low, over whelmed, isolated and alone. A referral to the Social Prescribing service can help to alleviate these feelings, by looking at the issues that are causing the difficulties in our lives.



Social Prescribing provides advice and signing to services and social opportunities to help support people who have long-term health conditions.

The support is tailored to each individual, putting the person at the centre, giving people time, focusing on 'what matters to me' and taking a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing. Social prescribing can improve people's general health and wellbeing and prevent or delay the need for GP or social care involvement. Some of the issues Social Prescribing can help with are:

- Accessing Community Support and Interest Groups
- Stress, Debt and Financial support
- Benefits and Housing support
- Befriending and Loneliness
- Returning to work
- Nutrition, exercise and diet support
- Budgeting
- Accessing support for carers
- Support to navigate the social care system
- Support in staying safe at home
- Care and Support Planning to explore wider social care needs
- Support to arrange private care packages or respite
- Referrals to health services to support with physical and or mental health needs
- Smoking cessation

A referral to Social Prescribing will typically begin with a 30 to 45 minute appointment, where the issues will be explored and a plan will start to be formulated. It may take a couple of appointments until the plan becomes clear. The patient will set the goals, (what they want to achieve) and the Social Prescriber will support them as required to achieve these. These will be reviewed periodically, depending upon the issues and their complexity. Support from the Social Prescriber could last up to 12 months, again depending on the issues and the needs of the individual person.

For more information, the Social Prescribing Link Worker can be contacted via Carolyn.cooper1@nhs.net or via any of the GP surgeries in the Wisbech PCN.