



Carlisle City Council

Report to Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

Report details

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| Meeting Date: | 13 th January 2022 |
| Portfolio: | Communities, Health and Wellbeing |
| Key Decision: | N/A |
| Policy and Budget Framework | Yes |
| Public / Private | Public |
| Title: | SOCIAL PRESCRIBING |
| Report of: | The Deputy Chief Executive |
| Report Number: | CS 03/22 |

Purpose / Summary:

Social Prescribing is an approach being developed by the NHS and its partners to help address health and wellbeing issues across England. This paper provides brief details of the approach, what is already happening in Carlisle and how the City Council could support future development, working with partners and stakeholders across the District.

Recommendations:

The Panel is invited to consider the contents of the report and advise on how they think the Authority can best support the development of social prescribing across the District in coming years.

Tracking

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|------------|-------------------------------|
| Executive: | |
| Scrutiny: | 13 th January 2022 |
| Council: | |

1. Background

- 1.1. Social prescribing is a non-medical health and wellbeing intervention, forming a key component of the NHS's approach to [Universal Personalised Care](#). It is a way for local agencies to refer people to link workers, who can take a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing and, by working collaboratively with local partners, can connect people in need with the community groups and statutory services that can provide the practical and emotional support needed.
- 1.2. Social prescribing works for a wide range of people, including people:
- with one or more long-term conditions
 - who need support with their mental health
 - who are lonely or isolated
 - who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.
- 1.3 When social prescribing works well, people can be easily referred to link workers from a wide range of local agencies, including general practice, pharmacies, multi-disciplinary teams, hospital discharge teams, allied health professionals, fire service, police, job centres, social care services, housing associations and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. Self-referral is also encouraged.
- 1.4 To illustrate the approach, the NHS has developed a model of social prescribing, which shows the key elements that need to be in place for it to be effective:



- 1.5 NHS England is committed to building the infrastructure for social prescribing:
- there will be 1,000 new social prescribing link workers in place by 2020/21, with significantly more after that, so that

- at least 900,000 people will be referred to social prescribing by 2023/24.
- 1.6 This is part of the drive to Universal Personalised Care that will see at least 2.5 million people benefiting from personalised care by 23/24. Social prescribing link workers are becoming an integral part of the multi-disciplinary teams in [primary care networks \(PCNs\)](#).
 - 1.7 This is the biggest investment in social prescribing by any national health system and legitimises community-based activities and support alongside medical treatment as part of personalised care.
 - 1.8 There is [emerging evidence](#) that social prescribing can lead to a range of positive health and wellbeing outcomes, such as improved quality of life and emotional wellbeing, and although there is a need for more robust evidence, social prescribing schemes may lead to a reduction in use of NHS services, including GP attendance.
 - 1.9 For example, some people visit their GP because they are feeling stressed about work or money situations. The issues can have an impact on our physical and mental wellbeing, but the causes cannot be fixed by medicine or Doctors alone. Social prescribing connects people to practical and emotional community support e.g. taking part in activities within their community, connecting with nature, being physically active etc.

2 City Council Contributions To Social Prescribing

- 2.1 The City Council has multiple opportunities to contribute to development of social prescribing in Carlisle, offering diverse opportunities for people to gain physical exercise, contact with nature, engagement in cultural activities and social interactions.
 - We have been supporting a programme of health walks for many years, working with both the Ramblers Association and Active Cumbria, including through training and supporting voluntary walk organisers and leaders.
 - We run Carlisle Green Spaces Volunteers, who meet every Wednesday to carry out practical tasks within our parks, green spaces and allotments.
 - We support Food Carlisle, who encourage and support community/neighbourhood food growing.
 - We provide Allotments throughout the urban area, which are in high demand. As future development takes place across the City, we are working to ensure provision of additional allotment sites.
 - Authority supported Community Centres provide a wide variety of opportunities for social, cultural and physical activities within their communities.
 - We support the Healthy City Forum, who meet regularly and is made up of representatives from all sectors, including University of Cumbria, local GP practice, Social Prescribing Link Workers, Ward Councillors, NHS, members of the Healthy City Team etc. The Forum seeks to integrate health and wellbeing work across the District, including the development of more social prescribing opportunities.
 - We continue to work with partners to expand and develop the highly successful 'Space to Talk' initiative. Weekly sessions take place in the City Centre, and a

training package is being developed to help different organisations / individuals develop their listening skills so they can run their own sessions in other venues and locations.

2.2 Thriving Communities

- 2.2.1 The City Council is also part of an externally funded local 'Thriving Communities' partnership - the North Cumbria Arts, Health & Wellbeing Partnership - delivering a strategic programme of community co-produced arts, health and well-being activities across North Cumbria.
- 2.2.2 [Thriving Communities](#) is a national programme led by the National Academy for Social Prescribing, for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups, supporting communities impacted by COVID-19 in England, working alongside [social prescribing link workers](#). It is supported by Arts Council England, Historic England, the Money and Pensions Service, Natural England, NHS Charities Together, NHS England, NHS Improvement and Sport England.
- 2.2.3 The local partnership brings together the City Council, Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery, Carlisle Healthcare, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, North Cumbria Integrated Care, Prism Arts and Susie Tate Projects. Next month sees the Partnership delivering a joint event facilitated by Cumbria CVS. Details are in the following box. Members would be very welcome to attend, if interested:

Working together for sustainable social prescribing practice

Tuesday 18th January, 10-11:30am

Online event

Heading into the New Year, our communities continue to recover from the disruption and impact of COVID-19. This online event will bring the third sector together with those working in health & social care to explore ideas of social prescribing and community provision. This will be an opportunity to reconnect and share information and identify how our different sectors can work together for the people we serve.

This event will utilise breakout rooms for discussion. A full agenda will be released in the New Year.

Sign-up to join the event using <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/working-together-for-sustainable-social-prescribing-practice-tickets-220574342797>. This event is open to all staff and organisations who deliver activity in Carlisle district.

This event is organised by Thriving Communities Carlisle and Cumbria CVS. Thriving Communities Carlisle is a partnership project between Tullie House, Carlisle City Council, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Prism Arts, Susie Tate Projects, NCIC and Carlisle Healthcare. The partnership aims to support our communities

3. Future plans

- 3.1 A survey undertaken by Cumbria Community Foundation, working closely with infrastructure organisation Cumbria CVS, on behalf of the North Cumbria Social Prescribing Work Group, identified that “79% of respondents to the survey felt that there were specific opportunities for new services in North Cumbria, including: befriending services; social and wellbeing groups, mental health services, young people’s services and substance misuse/addiction support”.
- 3.2 The report goes on to state that “many of the determinants of mental and physical health are outside of the NHS’s direct control. For example, housing, employment, debt and personal relationships impact on individual’s mental health and ability to recover and stay well. COVID-19’s impact on these determinants has been significant”.
- 3.3 The Thriving Communities partnership has recently been granted additional funding of £5000 from Community Foundation Cumbria to extend the length of the current project and associated project co-ordinator role (until the end of June 2022) An extra three sessions of the ‘Inside Out’ programme, will also be funded via the grant allowing the work to continue to reach as many people as possible. The Partnership is actively pursuing other funding opportunities to extend and develop its social prescribing work.
- 3.4 Following an interesting WHO case study from Horsens Municipality in Demark, the authority are interested in the possibility of developing a city centre Health & Wellbeing Hub – ideally located in a prominent empty retail unit - alongside a rural based health & wellbeing hub at Talkin Tarn Country Park. The aim would be to provide focal points for local communities in terms of a wide variety of health and wellbeing related resources and opportunities.

4. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan Priorities

- 4.1 This work contributes to the Health & Wellbeing Priority in the Carlisle Plan 2021/23 *We will continue to prioritise the current response to and rapid recovery from the health & wellbeing impacts of Covid-19 pandemic.*
- 4.2 *We will work with our partners in the public, health, private and voluntary sectors to deliver a board programme that will support the good, life-long health & wellbeing of our residents and visitors. This priority builds on the framework of the Cumbria Public Health Strategy and WHO Healthy City Programme with projects and programmes that will focus on the determinants of health; a sense of place and safety; the quality of the local environment and tackling climate change together.*

Contact details:

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Appendices attached to report: None

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

REFERENCES

- Cumbria Community Foundation & Cumbria CVS (2021) *Enabling Effective Social Prescribing Through a Strong and Supported Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Sector North Cumbria Social Prescribing Working Group: Connector and VCFSE Organisation Survey Report*
- NHS (2021) *Social Prescribing* [on-line]. Available from: [NHS England » Social prescribing](#) [accessed 16 December 2021]

Corporate Implications:

Legal -

Property Services -

Finance -

Equality -

Information Governance-

Annex: Sources of further information:

Below is a summary of other useful sources of information:

- [What is social prescribing](#) – The Kings Fund, February 2017
- [Social prescribing animation](#) – Healthy London Partnership
- [Making Sense of Social Prescribing](#) – University of Westminster
- [Social prescribing: a pathway to work?](#) – The Work Foundation, Lancaster University, February 2017
- [Spotlight on the Ten High Impact Actions](#) – Royal College of GPs
- [Social prescribing – a guide for local authorities](#)
- [A review of the evidence assessing impact of social prescribing on healthcare demand and cost implications](#) – University of Westminster
- [Creative Health – All Party Parliamentary Group report](#)
- [What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing? A scoping review Nov 2019](#) – World Health Organisation, November 2019
- [What are the health benefits of physical activity?](#) -Public Health England, 2019
- [Review of evidence on the outcomes of sports and physical activity](#) – Sport England, 2017