

Briefing Paper 5 October 2017 (v0b)

Social Prescribing across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan

Situation

This briefing provides an overview of social prescribing, together with an update on national and local (Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan) initiatives and progress.

Background

The concept of social prescribing has been included in the Welsh Government Programme for Government 'Taking Wales Forward 2016 – 2021'. The Programme includes 'Prioritise mental health treatment, support, prevention and de-escalation, including a pilot Social Prescription scheme and increase access to talking therapies'.

Social prescribing seeks to address people's needs in an holistic way, recognising that people's health is determined primarily by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. It is an approach that enables GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services often provided by voluntary and community sector organisations. Examples include volunteering, arts activities, group learning, gardening, befriending, cookery, healthy eating advice and a range of physical activity opportunities. Different models of social prescribing exist; some involve a link worker or navigator who works with people to access local sources of support while other models develop the roles of existing primary care staff to signpost and refer people to, for example, exercise referral schemes or mental health services. Evaluations of programmes targeting psychosocial problems are not conclusive but suggest schemes may lead to self-reported improvements in health and well-being, reductions in social isolation and feelings of loneliness, improvements in mental well-being, increases in healthy behaviours and improvements in quality of life, but not necessarily reduced use of healthcare services.

Social prescribing also has a potential role in the sustainability of primary care; being part of new models of care, new roles and new approaches.

Assessment

- National level

At a national level, the Primary and Community Care Development and Innovation Hub of Public Health Wales is coordinating the delivery of three commitments in relation to social prescribing:

- Commitment 1: Evidence mapping. Mapping of all relevant evidence for social prescribing practice has been collated and made available
- Commitment 2: Develop a systematic process for gathering and sharing social prescribing activity. Information has been collated (February 2017) and can be viewed by theme and by Health Board area on the Primary Care One website <http://www.primarycareone.wales.nhs.uk/social-prescribing>
- Commitment 3: Organise regional and national event (s) to develop and share learning.

Additionally, the Welsh NHS Confederation has developed and circulated a briefing paper on social prescribing.

- **Local level**

Cardiff & Vale Public Health Team (C&VPHT) is contributing to the work at national level and informing local level discussions of national level developments.

Across Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan, a number of initiatives are being developed. The highlights some of the progress:

South West Cardiff Cluster is developing a sustainable approach to social prescribing through engagement with all members of the Cluster, including community organisations, at Cluster meetings and via facilitated workshops at a CPET session. A mapping exercise has been undertaken and an action plan agreed. The future planning of a sustainable model incorporating existing initiatives is the focus of the project being undertaken by a Welsh Clinical Leadership Training Fellow who is working with the cluster under the supervision of the Cluster Community Director for 12 months from August 2017.

The following initiatives are currently being evaluated:

- A social prescribing system has been established by ACE (Action in Caerau and Ely) to enable primary care to signpost patients to local services and projects within the western area of the cluster. ACE also delivers two mental wellbeing courses 'ACTion for living' and 'Stress Control'. It is hoped to extend these courses to all areas of the cluster .
- The Grow Well Project. Following a successful bid to the Neighbourhood Partnership Fund, Cardiff SW Cluster has collaborated with a local charity, Grow Cardiff to establish a gardening project within one of the GP practices in the cluster. This is the first of its kind in Wales and the group is supported by a gardener who promotes health and wellbeing through a variety of projects centred on the garden. The aim is to support patients through physical

exercise, healthy eating and mental health. An additional benefit is to promote GP surgeries as a focus for wellbeing rather than focussing on ill health and the traditional medical model. Following the initial pilot phase, the project is being extended to other areas of the cluster following a successful bid to the Innovate to Save Fund. The R and D phase of this project will allow more in depth evaluation including the cashable savings resulting from the project. These will form the basis of the next phase of the grant, which will be to extend the project across the Cardiff and Vale UHB area.

- An innovative approach to social prescribing is currently being developed in order to establish a sustainable system for social prescribing across the cluster. The project is the result of a collaboration between the cluster and the charity SPICE and formed the basis for a successful bid to the Innovate to Save Fund, which is supported by Nesta (an innovation foundation) and Cardiff University.. The project will deliver Time Credit social prescribing in the Cardiff South West Cluster, initially to three practices in the cluster during the pilot phase. Time Credits are a well-established community currency that enables an asset-based approach to community development and encourages active citizenship via earning and spending in the network. In Cardiff 120,000 hours of Time Credit have been earned by community members engaging in volunteering opportunities in 171 groups across the city. The project will allow the outcomes of social prescribing to be evaluated in terms of benefits to patients, primary care staff and also the economic benefits in terms of cashable savings. The role of the social prescriber will also be evaluated and this will inform future standards and training associated with this rapidly expanding role. It is hoped that the information gained will help to inform a sustainable model for social prescribing which may be applicable across Wales.

East Cardiff Cluster established an informal system with East Cardiff, Llanedeyrn and Pentwyn Communities First prior to the ending of the Communities First Programme.

The Wellbeing 4U Team is a community wellbeing service funded by the UHB for 2 years (using Welsh Government primary care monies). Funding of £273,000 per annum commissions the third sector to deliver the service via a team of seven staff. The service is provided in one Cluster in each of the three Localities working with primary care teams to improve patient access to community activities and services. The Clusters receiving the service are City & South, South West Cardiff and Central Vale. Currently 2 Clusters are considering using non-recurring monies to commission additional services from the team.

Community Well-being Coaches, part of the Barry Communities First Cluster, provides activities centred on the key topic areas of physical activity, food and health, smoking, mental health and sexual health. Referrals are received from mainly primary care teams and schools.

Dewis Cymru <https://www.dewis.wales> collates local information or advice about well-being and services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, as well as other areas of Wales.

Conclusion

Social prescribing approaches and models are being supported, developed and implemented across Cardiff and Vale, informed by national level work.

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October 2017