

Social Prescribing in Primary and Community Care in Wales: Minute Briefing

Virtual Event 16.03.22



1. Welcome and introduction

A warm welcome and introduction to the event was provided by Kerrie Phipps, National AHP Lead for Primary and Community Care, Strategic Programme for Primary Care. Kerrie highlighted that social prescribing plays a key role in improving peoples' health & wellbeing by recognising the importance of the relationship between what people do and how it makes them feel.

2. Welsh Government overview

Lynne Neagle, Deputy Minister for Mental Health & Wellbeing, emphasised the need to move towards a wellness model of social prescribing that supports people to take better control of their health & wellbeing, as well as, supporting the broader preventative agenda. Lynne highlighted that social prescribing is a key priority for Welsh Government, with commitment made in the Programme for Government 2022-2026 to introduce an all-Wales framework to support the roll out of social prescribing. Existing social prescribing work was commended, and it was emphasised that the aim of the framework is to support and add value to social prescribing in Wales. Delegates were thanked for the key role they play in improving the health & wellbeing of the people in Wales. Albert Heaney, Chief Social Care Officer for Wales, shared an excellent example of community co-ordination in Anglesey whereby GP clusters, local authorities and the local health board delivered an asset based approach to social prescribing.

3. Social prescribing landscape in Wales

Professor Carolyn Wallace, Community Health & Care Services, Associate Director PRIME Centre Wales and Director Wales School Social Prescribing Research, defined social prescribing in Wales as 'connecting citizens to community support to better manage their health & wellbeing'. Key findings, key messages and recommendations from the recent publication 'Understanding social prescribing in Wales: A mixed methods study' were presented. To view the full report, visit: <https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/primary-care-division/social-prescribing/>.

4. A primary care experience

Dr. Karen Parry, Community Director for Cardiff South West Cluster, shared a GP cluster experience of social prescribing activities and projects, working to support the shift from illness to wellness. For example, a garden/growing project that connects individuals, reduces social isolation and increases healthy behaviours. Karen reflected that working collaboratively with community organisations enables clusters to support individuals in many ways, recognising that both opportunities and challenges exist.

5. National framework for social prescribing in Wales

Nicola Evans, Head of Health Inequalities & Healthy Communities, Welsh Government, demonstrated the commitment to social prescribing at a policy level, as well as, across sectors. The draft national model for social prescribing was presented, illustrating a person-centred focus with multiple referral routes, community assets and a range of feedback mechanisms. Seven themes for the national framework were discussed: workforce, leadership & governance, co-production, community assets, sustainability, technology and monitoring & evaluation. A timeline for action was outlined, including the consultation period and publication plans. An engagement poll, which ran in parallel to Nicola's presentation, suggested that 71% (n=45) agreed, or strongly agreed, that the model is right for Wales. Additionally, sustainable funding was seen as a barrier, as well as, support that is required on a once-for-Wales basis.

6. Q&A session

Kerrie chaired and facilitated a Q&A session with Prof. Carolyn Wallace, Dr. Karen Parry, Nicola Evans, Dr. Amrita Jesurasa (Public Health Wales) and Dr. Sally Rees (formerly with the Wales Council for Voluntary Action). Seven questions/comments were discussed, related to the following:

1. Top tips for spreading good work across other clusters in Wales
2. How social prescribing can respond to Inverse Care Law principles
3. The need for sustainable funding
4. The role and skills of allied health professionals
5. Ways to bring sectors together in a productive forum
6. Overcoming transport barriers for people to use social prescribing
7. Collaboration and coproduction between health, local authority and third sector for the benefits of community members.

7. Who attended and next steps

188 people joined the event, with a total of 58 questions/comments raised and 171 poll votes.

Kerrie thanked delegates for joining the event, and also key speakers for their presentations. It was noted that a high volume of feedback was received from attendees. This will be analysed and feed into the development of the national framework, as well as, to the work of the Primary and Community Care Development and Innovation Hub.

To catch-up on the event, the full recording can be viewed on the PCOne website, visit: <https://primarycareone.nhs.wales/topics1/strategic-programme/event-and-information-videos/>