



Social prescribing provides a way of linking patients' primary care and their carers with non-medical sources of support within the community. It is tailor-made for voluntary and community sector (VCS)-led interventions and can result in:

- better social and clinical outcomes for people with long-term conditions (LTCs) and their carers
- more cost-efficient and effective use of NHS and social care resources
- a wider, more diverse and responsive local provider base.

The Rotherham Social Prescribing Pilot is delivered by Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) on behalf of NHS Rotherham CCG. It is part of a wider GP-led Integrated Case Management Pilot and aimed to increase the capacity of GP practices to meet the non-clinical needs of their patients with long-term conditions (LTCs). The pilot began receiving referrals from September 2012 onwards. The service operates with 5 VCS advisers employed by VAR who are integral within the GP multi-disciplinary case management team. VAR also acts as a micro-commissioner managing contracts with up to 26 VCS organisations

Over the course of the Pilot:

- Over 26 voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) received grants with a total value of just over £600,000 to deliver a menu of 31 separate social prescribing services
- By Oct 2014 2341 referrals to the service were received, of which 3534 were referred on to funded VCS services. In addition, more than 911 referrals were made to non-funded VCS provision. 63% of referrals are aged 75+, 13% are under 60
- the five most common types of funded services referred to are information and advice, community activity, physical activities, befriending and enabling.

The SPS pilot was one of the largest of its kind, covering the whole of the Borough -all 35 GP practices are engaged. The service has been independently evaluated by CRESR at Sheffield Hallam University. The findings to date show that for patients who have accessed the service there has been a 21% reduction in Inpatient stays, a 20% reduction in A&E attendances and a 21% reduction in Outpatients appointments. In terms of wellbeing improvements 83% patients made progress in at least one outcome area. The annual investment of £500k is showing £415,000 potential cost saving in first year post-referral with a £870,000 to £1.9M potential full cost savings (dependent on length benefit sustained/drop-off rate). The potential social value of well-being gains in year post-referral is estimated at ££920,000 .In addition the service has enabled an extra £350,000 in additional welfare benefits claimed and has enabled VCS organisations to attract over £210,000 in other funding

The Rotherham model has attracted significant national interest. In March 2014 the Pilot received the 'Excellence in Individual Participation Commissioner' award at NHS England's Excellence in Participation Awards 2014. VAR is a registered supplier as part of the Big Assist programme for VCS Infrastructure organisation..

To find out more about the Rotherham Social Prescribing Service and the support Voluntary Action Rotherham can offer please contact either : Linda Jarrold or Janet Wheatley at VAR – Telephone 01709 829821 e-mail linda.jarrold@varotherham.org.uk or janet.wheatley@varotherham.org.uk

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