



**Neuro Café:  
Social Prescribing  
2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023**

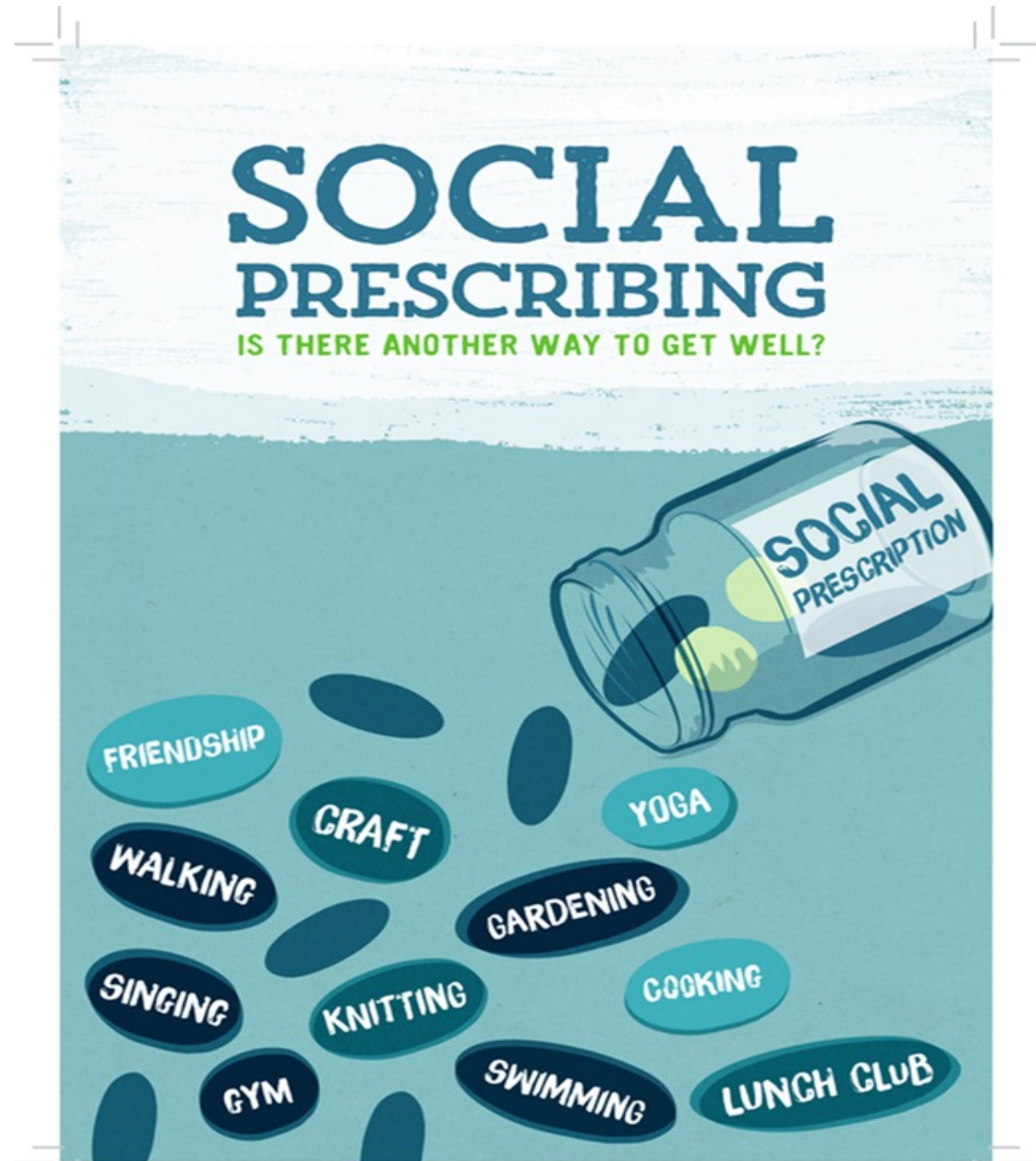
# Social prescribing

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- Social prescribing and community-based support is part of the NHS Long-Term Plan's commitment to make personalised care central
- Personalised Care means people have choice and control over the way their care is planned and delivered, based on 'what matters' to them and their individual strengths and needs
- It is an approach that connects people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing.



# Social Prescribing



A row of five wooden figures, one red and four white, on a light blue background. The red figure is in the center, and the white figures are on either side. The background is a light blue gradient with a white circular shape on the left side.

# Social Prescribing

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- Social prescribing is an all-age, whole population approach that works particularly well for people who:
  - have one or more long term conditions
  - who need support with mental health issues
  - who are lonely or isolated
  - who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

# Social Prescribing

- Social prescribing *'enables healthcare professionals to refer patients to a link worker, to provide them with a face to face conversation during which they can learn about the possibilities and design their own personalised solutions, i.e. 'co-produce' their 'social prescription'- so that people with social, emotional or practical needs are empowered to find solutions which will improve their health and wellbeing, often using services provided by the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.'* (National Social Prescribing Network)





they are there to listen



and put you in touch



# Link workers role

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- Social prescribing link workers play a key role in delivering social prescribing by giving people time, focusing on ‘what matters to me’ and taking a holistic approach to people’s health and wellbeing in order to connect them to appropriate community groups and services.
- Link workers often have strong knowledge of their local community groups, and work to map community assets to recognise gaps in community provision and to find creative ways of encouraging development.



# Social prescribing support plan

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- An important element of social prescribing support is for the person and their link worker to co-produce a simple personalised care and support plan, which outlines:
  - what matters to the person – their priorities, interests, values and motivations
  - community groups and services the person will be connected to
  - what the person can expect of community support and services
  - what the person can do for themselves, in order to keep well and active
  - what assets people already have that they can draw on – family, friends, hobbies, skills and passions.

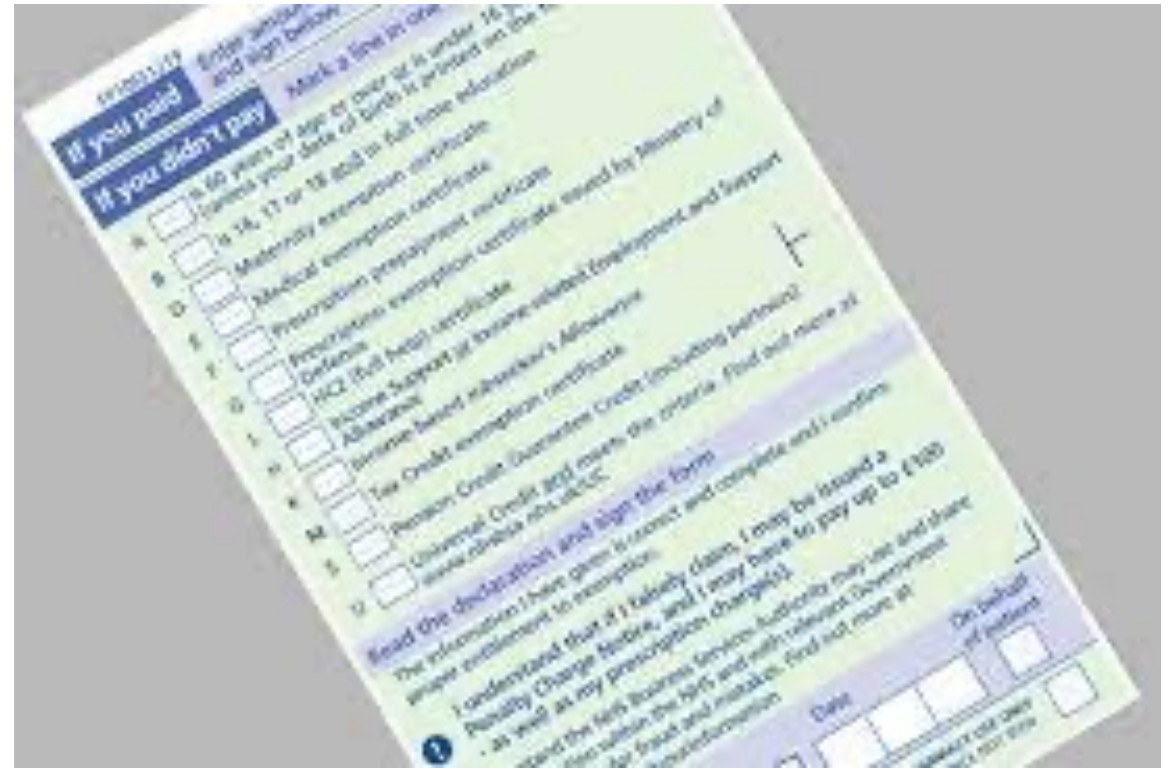


# The social 'prescription'

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The **prescription** takes the form of a personalised, bespoke information sheet which is **emailed to the individual**. The information sheet could include; condition specific **fact sheets**, links to **national charity websites**, links to **online peer support communities** and **signposts to local services and organisations**.

If an individual does not have access to email the 'prescription' can be printed off and discussed with the individual



# It is a Change of Focus

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*“What’s the matter with me”* to *“What matters to me”*

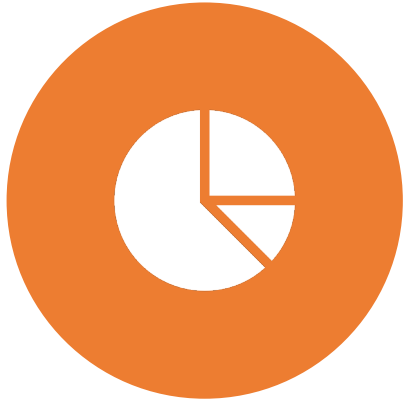
- Strengths rather than deficit
- Builds on existing assets
- Connects me to my communities
- Offers me a greater choice of opportunity & help that’s non-medical
- Meet new people and make new relationships including volunteering
- Build my self-responsibility, take control, engaging, empowering
- Improve my health and well being
- More enjoyable and/or rewarding



# Example social prescribing services referred to:

- Making appointments for Housing, benefits, financial support and advice.
- Completing Blue Badge, Taxi Card and Dial a Ride applications.
- Introducing you to healthy lifestyle advice and physical activities.
- Arts, music, outdoors and creative activities.
- Social activities and clubs.
- Befriending, counselling and emotional /peer support groups.
- Employment, training and volunteering
- Education and learning.

# Three keys to social prescribing



NO TWO SOCIAL  
PRESCRIPTIONS ARE THE  
SAME. THEY MEET DIFFERENT  
NEEDS FOR DIFFERENT  
PEOPLE.



CENTERED AROUND “WHAT  
MATTERS TO THE PATIENT”.



-PATIENTS AND SOCIAL  
PRESCRIBER’S SPEND  
QUALITY TIME TOGETHER  
EXPLORING SOLUTION.



***Five Ways to Wellbeing*** to promote general wellbeing:

# Green Prescriptions

**Green space** has huge benefits to both physical and mental health<sup>vi</sup> and also significant social benefits.<sup>vii</sup>

**Being in green space** can improve mood and result in a decrease in blood pressure and muscle tension.<sup>ix</sup>

**The availability** of good quality green space in a neighbourhood can lead to higher physical activity levels and people living in close proximity to good quality green spaces enjoy better health and live longer.<sup>x</sup>

**Improving access** to and use of green space can help to reduce health inequalities in key priority health areas.<sup>xi</sup>



**Exercising outdoors** in natural and green spaces is more beneficial to health and wellbeing than indoor exercise.<sup>viii</sup>



**Physical activity** can offer benefits to those receiving cancer treatments and can reduce the likelihood of breast and bowel cancer reoccurring.<sup>xiii</sup>

**Green space** is important for prevention and for reducing rates of some chronic diseases: e.g. trees improve air quality and asthma rates in children are found to be lower when there is more tree cover.<sup>xii</sup>

## Green Prescriptions

**6-8 months** after receiving their green prescription, 63% of patients are more active than they were before and 46% have lost weight.<sup>xiv</sup>

**Lose Weight**



**= 46%** ↓

# SOCIAL PRESCRIBING



IS NOT JUST . . .

- Signposting
- Health Coaching
- A directory of services
- Activities to fill someone's time now and then

## IT'S MUCH MORE . . .

Physical  
Activity



Diet &  
Nutrition



Mental  
Health



Social  
Support



Substance  
Abuse



Debt & Benefits  
Advice



Housing  
Support



Employability  
Support



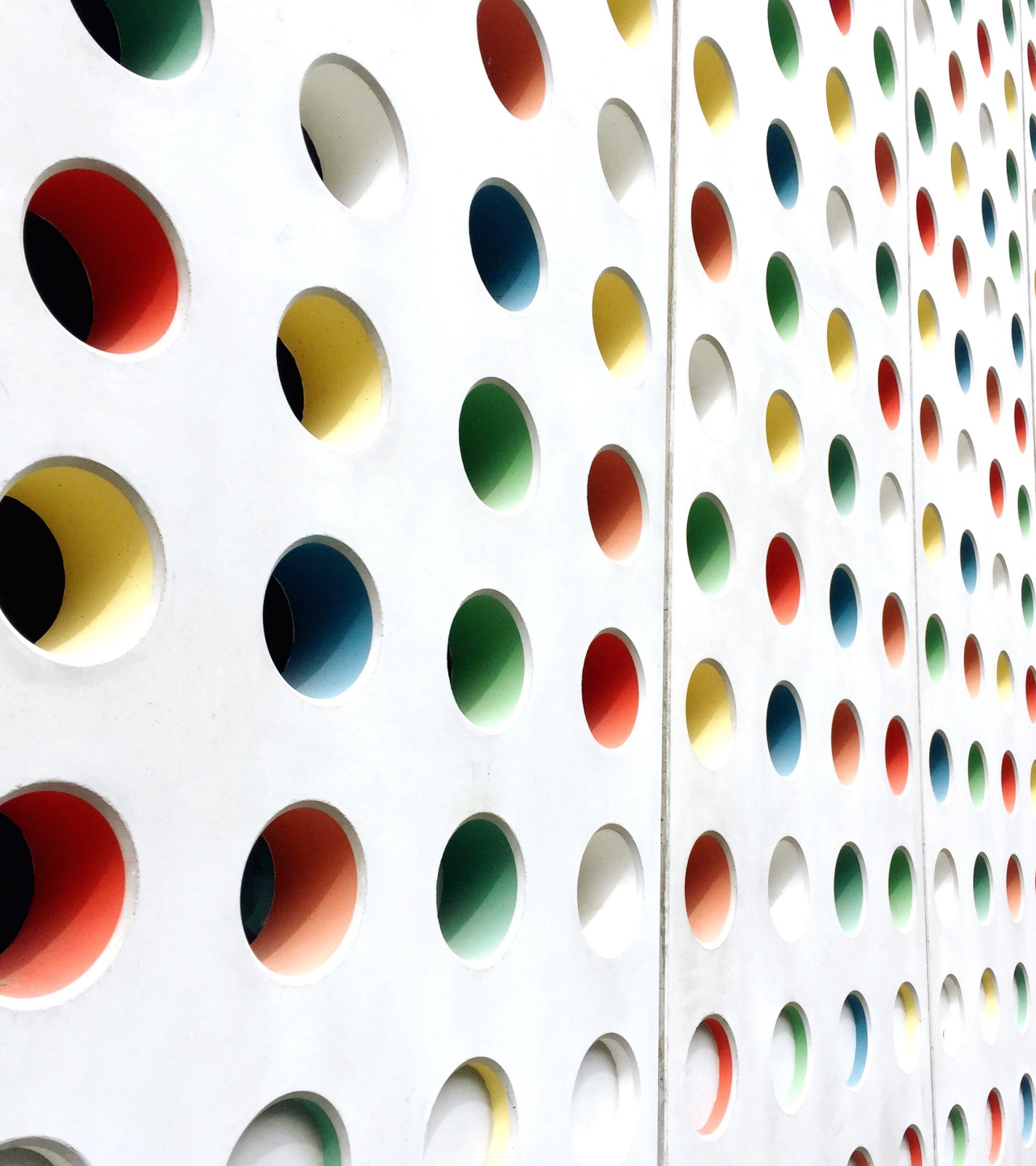
Volunteering  
Support



Gambling  
Addiction







## Benefits of social prescribing

- Benefits which may be achieved for patients and their local NHS through social prescribing include:
  - Reduced hospital admissions and A&E attendances
  - Reduced outpatient appointments
  - Reduced GP consultations
  - Improved health and wellbeing
  - Reduced social isolation
  - Increased engagement in health-related activities
  - Reduced reliance on medical prescriptions

# Benefits of social prescribing

Physical and emotional health & wellbeing	Cost effectiveness & sustainability	Builds up local community	Behaviour Change	Capacity to build up the VCSE	Social determinants of ill-health
Improves resilience	Prevention	Increases awareness of what is available	Lifestyle	More volunteering	Better employability
Self-confidence	Reduction in frequent primary care use	Stronger links between VCSE & HCP bodies	Sustained change	Volunteer graduates running schemes	Reduced isolation
Self-esteem	Savings across the care pathway	Community resilience	Ability to self-care	Addressing unmet needs of patients	Social welfare law advice
Improves modifiable lifestyle factors	Reduced prescribing of medicines	Nuture community assets	Autonomy	Enhance social infrastructure	Reach marginalised groups
Improves mental health			Activation		Increase skills
Improves quality of life			Motivation		
			Learning new skills		

# What Does Good Social Prescribing Look like for Individuals?

## People, their families and carers;

- Can **easily be referred** to social prescribing link workers from the Surgery and a wide range of local agencies or self-refer.
- Work with a **link worker** to coproduce a simple plan or a summary personalised care and support plan
- Help to **engage with services** there to support. May **follow-up services on their behalf**
- May be **physically introduced** to community groups
- Are encouraged to **develop their knowledge, skills and confidence** by being involved in local community groups and giving their time back to others.
- The **sense of belonging** that comes from being part of a community group and having peer support can reduce loneliness and anxiety.
- Being **connected to community** groups through social prescribing enables people to be more physically active and improves mental health, helping them to stay well for longer and lessen the impact of long-term conditions.

# Resources

- Social Prescribing Network:  
<https://www.socialprescribingnetwork.com>
- Northern Ireland Social Prescribing:  
<https://www.socialprescribingnetwork.com>