

Social Prescribing - Frequently Asked Questions

“Supporting you to take control of your health and wellbeing.”

Social Prescribing supports you in managing your health and wellbeing by recognising that health is not just physical but emotional and social too. Many things can affect your health and wellbeing, including feeling isolated or lonely, feeling the pressures of work, financial hardship or experiencing low level mental health challenges.

What is a Social Prescriber?

Social Prescribers give you time, by listening and allowing you to focus on ‘What matters to me.’ The service takes a non-medical, holistic approach to your health and wellbeing and can connect you to community groups, services, charities, or other agencies and resources, for practical and emotional support.

What could Social Prescribers offer support with?

- Low level mental health such as anxiety, low mood and overthinking
- Social or lifestyle issues that are impacting wellbeing such as housing or debt
- Struggling with sleep
- Overwhelmed with stress
- Facing life changing challenges such as moving home or changing job
- Improving your lifestyle, finding hobbies and social activities
- Your overall mental wellbeing and self esteem

Who is my Social Prescriber?

Sarah Sylvester is employed directly for Victoria Primary Care Network



What Surgeries does the Social Prescriber cover?

Social Prescribing is available through the following Victoria Primary Care Network surgeries:

- Victoria Medical Centre
- The Beacon Digital First
- Manor Park Surgery
- Downlands Medical Centre

I have completed a referral to the Social Prescribing service, what happens next?

Once you have sent a referral through to the service you will receive an email response containing some helpful resources. You are encouraged to watch and read the information provided as it gives further information about the service and what it can offer.

The Social Prescriber will then reach out to you via text, email or phone to arrange an initial appointment. Your first appointment can be over the phone or in person and you will receive a text from the Surgery confirming your appointment.

I have been told that the service is not suitable for me, why is that?

The Social Prescribing service is not suitable if you are already engaged with and getting help from services such as Adult Social Care, Mental Health Team, or receiving treatment or medical intervention for a diagnosed mental health illness.

What happens if I can't make my appointment?

We appreciate that situations change and life events happen. As soon as you realise you can't make your appointment, please contact your Social Prescriber via email and suggest an alternative date. If you don't have a date in mind then not to worry, the Social Prescriber will follow up your request to cancel your appointment and reschedule.

I can't get to Surgery, what now?

The Social Prescriber can offer appointments in your home or in the Community. Home appointments are only offered after you have been asked to attend Surgery.

What happens at my initial appointment?

The initial appointment will generally last approximately 45 minutes. This is your chance to offer as much detail as you can about your current situation. The Social Prescriber will ask some questions about how you are doing and listen carefully to your answers, often taking notes.

What happens if I don't want to continue with the service?

At the end of your first appointment, the Social Prescriber will ask if you wish to continue with the support offered. It is your choice to accept or decline. If you feel that you are not ready to engage at the current time but may be in the future then please let the Social Prescriber know that you wish to re-refer at a later date.

How do any follow up appointments work?

The Social Prescriber will work with you to arrange a follow up appointment that fits in with your current schedule. Clinics are available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm apart from Friday when the last Clinic finishes at 4:30pm. The Social Prescriber can work with you for a maximum of 5 additional appointments of up to 30 minutes each. The way you work with the Social Prescriber is guided by you and can have as much or as little involvement as you feel you would like and need.

How can I contact the Social Prescriber?

The Social Prescriber's email address is on the leaflet provided to you after you made your initial referral. Please use this email address to make contact outside of appointments should you have questions. The Social Prescriber may also use this email to send you helpful resources and links to topics that you may have discussed during your appointment.

What happens after 6 appointments?

After your 6th appointment the Social Prescriber will make sure you are happy to be 'discharged' from the service. However, you can re-refer at any time in the future with no time cap.

Where do I go if I would like to give feedback or make a complaint?

If you have any ongoing comments on the service, please in the first instance tell the Social Prescriber directly. At the end of your time with the Social Prescriber, you may be asked to provide overall feedback which will be collected anonymously and used to continually improve the service.

We recognise that on occasions you may have some concerns and we encourage you to share these. All feedback will help us ensure our service is continually improving. To escalate any feedback or share any concerns you may have, you can access our Complaints Procedure here: <https://victoriamedicalcentre.co.uk/complaint-procedure/>