

NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Governing Body

Governing Body – 1 September 2021

Update on Social Prescribing

Lead Executive:	Ian Atkinson – Executive Place Director
Lead Officer:	Ruth Nutbrown – Assistant Chief Officer
Lead GP:	

Purpose:

To update members as to the current and proposed developments within social prescribing.

Background:

Rotherham has an award-winning social prescribing scheme which has been in place since 2012. The CCG runs 2 schemes in partnership with Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) one for Long Term Conditions (LTC) and one for Mental health. Recently Primary care Networks (PCNs) have also been encouraged to put in place a social prescribing link worker scheme which is run in most areas with input from VAR.

Analysis of key issues and of risks

There is a lot of focus on social prescribing with new initiatives coming forward daily.

For your update here is a brief rundown of what is happening in the world of Rotherham social prescribing.

Long Covid work

VAR is supporting the CCG with the long covid assessment service, undertaking on average 11 holistic needs assessments each week with follow up six weeks later through the social prescribing service. This will continue until the TRFT long covid clinic is up and running. Currently this is a lot of work as some clients VAR are contacting are quite disgruntled which in some cases leads to verbal abuse about the service, staff are also completing quite a lot of correspondence and chasing with GP practices. It is expected once TRFT have the long covid clinic set up, social prescribing will take referrals from the service under the LTC pathway.

Green prescribing

1. VAR is involved with the national green social prescribing initiative. Two development workers have come into post for the ICS from the Wildlife Trust who are mapping out the green activity in each geographical location, whom VAR are working with to support identification of gaps. There will also be a small round of commissioning from October to seed fund new activity. Rotherham has a BAME focus for this work and those with mental health support needs. VAR are not receiving any funds for this work.
2. The CCG is supporting the LA Public Health Department in a bid to the Department of Transport (DoT) around new cycling and walking infrastructure schemes. One of these is to take part in a pilot to provide cycling and walking interventions as part of a social prescribing offer, which is being offered alongside another bid around developing cycling infrastructure. The project “will seek to deliver personalised care through approaches determined most appropriate for the identified areas. A key network for this will be link workers experienced in social prescribing in primary care networks. Pilots

will prescribe cycling or walking wherever appropriate, and make available cycles, as well as training, access to cycling groups and peer support”.

The DoT is keen to target areas of poor health and low physical activity rates, with a range of experiences in social prescribing. While only a small number of local authorities will eventually be awarded funding to take part in the pilot, our local positively evaluated social prescribing scheme and poor health indicators would put us in a strong position. The first step is to submit an expression of interest for up to £100,000 to go towards developing detailed proposals to gain access to longer term funding.

Mental Health Work

Support for the mental health pathway from RDASH has been confirmed in the region of £64k to VAR this year to allow VAR to fund 4 organisations to support patients struggling with low lying mental health problems coming through a GP referral route and through RDASH teams. Counselling is one of the biggest asks from patients which is one of the funded pathways.

Health Equalities Partnership Programme

Work is continuing with two main strands for Rotherham.

1. Cultural competency which will have two elements – face to face and an online programme for Rotherham GP’s, practice staff and wider. VAR will be commissioning locally for elements of this work to be developed.
2. BAME volunteering under social prescribing – VAR are currently scoping a BAME volunteering programme to support access from BAME patients to social prescribing – utilising the skills of BAME individuals to advocate and translate on behalf of patients. This would also provide VAR with a diverse workforce for future SPS projects as they would grow their own candidates.

Children’s Social Prescribing

Working with RMBC children’s services to access a £250K RMBC covid pot of money supporting young people who have been affected by covid. Piggy backing onto the trailblazer project to provide a referral mechanism from RDASH staff working into schools for pupils with low level mental health issues. This is currently in the very early stages of development.

Patient, Public and Stakeholder Involvement:

Via VAR

Equality Impact:

Via VAR

Financial Implications:

TBC

Human Resource Implications:

N/A

Procurement:

N/A

Approval history:

N/A

Recommendations:

To note and support the developments within the social prescribing service in Rotherham.