

How long will the Social Prescriber support a patient for?

An initial meeting can last for up to 1 hour and 30 minutes. The Social Prescriber will then follow up with the patient at agreed intervals depending on their needs and progress. This will be via AccuRx messaging/phone call/video chat/face to face at the practice, or at a locally agreed venue

Where will patients be seen?

Social Prescribers rotate between working remotely within their PCN and seeing patients face-to-face at any practice across the PCN area.

Can only GPs make referrals?

All health professionals in the surgery staff team can refer appropriate patients to a Social Prescriber.

How can a health professional refer a patient to the service?

Patients who are identified by health professionals in the GP surgery team will be asked if they would like to be referred. When a patient has given verbal consent, the health professional will inform the Social Prescriber. Within a week of receiving the referral, the Social Prescriber will contact the patient to let them know they are on the waiting list, and they will then be contacted for an assessment.



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Services provided by

One Westminster in partnership with Central London Healthcare and Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust

For enquiries:

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This leaflet outlines how clinicians can best utilise Social Prescribers and describes the services they can offer to practices and their patients.

Frequently asked questions

What is a Social Prescriber?

Social Prescribers are part of the Primary Care Network (PCN) multidisciplinary team. Social Prescribers support patients who have an unmet need that, if left unaddressed, could create additional vulnerabilities for the patient or spiral into further issues. Social Prescribing is a preventative service that deals with social, emotional and practical needs.

The Social Prescriber provides a confidential, safe space to discuss what matters most to the patient. The aim is support them first to identify achievable goals and then link them to more appropriate services, activities or support groups through a managed referral system. Social Prescribers aim to come alongside the patient to better understand the difficulties they are facing.

What are the criteria?

Appropriate

- Patient must be registered with a GP practice
- Aged 18+
- There must be evidence that the patient needs social, emotional, or practical support
- The patient is ready to engage with SP.

Inappropriate

- Anyone who has multiple poorly managed long-term conditions, and anyone with a medical need or acute mental health difficulties

What are the benefits of this service for your GP practice?

Patients will be supported to engage in practices which gives them more control over their life through building sustainable links with voluntary & community sector groups for activity and services. When appropriate and necessary, links with statutory services will be established to better support the patient. On occasion, appropriate GP services will be recommended.

Sample cases:

1. A patient regularly attends their GP practice because they are lonely or isolated and want to come in for a chat. The Social Prescriber can support the patient with a referral to a befriending service and/or activities where they can meet other people and gain social connections.
2. A first-time parent is booking regular GP support with the usual 10-minute time limit on appointments. The GP has recommended joining a local group, but the patient has not engaged. The Social Prescriber can support the patient to engage.
3. A patient recently lost their partner who was solely responsible for the household finances, and the patient is struggling to cope. The Social Prescriber can support the patient to engage with support services and provide a managed referral to the support structures they need.



Are Social Prescribers clinically trained?

Social Prescribers are not clinically trained and therefore do not have the appropriate skills to conduct clinical investigations eg. blood pressure. Social Prescriber is a trained professional in a people-centred discipline, such as social work, health & wellbeing coaching or psychology, that is complementary to the medical model of care.

If it is flagged on SYSTM1 that a patient is due for a review or screening, the Link Worker can discuss with the patient and support them to book with the appropriate clinician.

How do I view the Social Prescriber's consultation notes?

You can view the Social Prescriber's consultation notes at any time by viewing the Shared Record on the consultation screen in SYSTM1.

What happens when the patient finishes Social Prescription?

When the Social Prescriber discharges the patient, the patient is sent full details of the interactions they have had and the support they have received. Additionally, patients are given contact details and a 'how to' guide for any outstanding service they need to follow-up. Patients are supported to understand the route back to Social Prescribing if they need to use the service in the future. If at a later date the patient would benefit from further support from the Link Worker, the Practice should re-refer.

Our Social Prescribing Service links Westminster patients with the voluntary & community sector