

Social Prescribing Day Press Release

For release on Thursday 9th March at 8.00am

Social prescribing helps hundreds of people across Bassetlaw every year, but without the help of volunteers much of this invaluable work would simply not be possible.

Thursday 9th March, the national day for Social Prescribing, is the perfect opportunity for local to help a lending hand at one of the many groups and organisations across the district that provide much needed support, to get involved.

Social prescribing is a non-medical approach to support people's health and wellbeing. Social prescribers – or link workers as they are often called – give people time to focus on themselves and consider 'what really matters' to them.

A recent example of how much social prescribing can improve a person's life, is a recent referral that came in to the BCVS Social Prescribing team. The patient had been struggling with their finances and mental health for quite some time, but did not know where to turn. A friend of theirs, who had also recently been supported by the social prescribing team, told them about the service and encouraged them to seek the support available.

Once connected with a social prescriber, the patient was referred to Bassetlaw Citizen's Advice for financial advice, and supported to complete a household budget plan, to help them manage their income.

They were also supported with a food parcel from Bassetlaw Food Bank and the patient has started volunteering at Oasis Community Centre community garden, which is benefiting their mental health.

The patient is very grateful for all the support and said "I can't thank you enough for all the you have done to help me".

If it was not for the volunteers that help to keep places like Bassetlaw Citizen's Advice, Oasis Community Centre, Bassetlaw Food Bank and hundreds of other local charities going, then this level of personalised support would not be possible.



Oasis Community Centre, Kilton, Worksop, which relies on volunteers to provide a variety of services on offer to local people

Bassetlaw Place Clinical Director Dr Eric Kelly said: “People might visit their GP because they are stressed about work or money, or because they feel lonely and isolated, however these problems can’t be fixed by medicine alone.

“Social prescribing aims to support people with a range of social, emotional or practical needs while improving their mental health and physical wellbeing. It’s about connecting people to community groups and statutory service for practical and emotional support.

“The benefits of volunteering with these invaluable organisations also brings many benefits, such as social interaction, a sense of purpose and the satisfaction you feel in helping someone in real need.”

Social prescribers work with Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service (BCVS) to help direct and support people with finding the best service to help them.

Andria Birch, BCVS CEO said: “The role of the social prescriber is invaluable in someone’s journey to better health and wellbeing.

“They take the time to discuss with patients the many voluntary, community and statutory services that might help to improve a patient’s health and wellbeing.

“This could include identifying groups which may offer additional support to help patients understand and manage their medical condition, access benefits, debt and welfare advice or address loneliness and isolation issues by encouraging participation with local activity groups.”

In addition, social prescribers can provide information on a wide range of services for the whole family.

If you would like to volunteer in Bassetlaw, please visit www.bcvs.org.uk/iwanttovolunteer for the opportunities currently available. If you can't find something suitable please email involve@bcvs.org.uk or call 01909 476 118 and BCVS will be able to help you find the perfect role for you.