

Social Prescribing

What is It?

Social prescribing is where health professionals such as GPs and nurses refer patients to receive non-medical support that can help improve the patients' health and well-being. This could be things like helping the patient to get more active outdoors to improve their mental health or help manage diabetes. Social prescribing enables you to take much more control of your health and helps you to be more connected to others.

How Does it Work?

It works when you visit a health professional who may suggest that a referral into social prescribing could help. A follow up appointment will be made at the surgery with a trained 'link worker' where a longer conversation can take place about your health and what is important to you. The link worker will listen and walk you through potential options and be on hand to further support you to take up a social prescription with a local group. Lots of social prescribing services are run by charity, voluntary and community groups.

Will There be Social Prescribing in my Area?

In 2019 the government pledged investment for 1000 social prescribing link workers in surgeries and community settings across England within two years. In Devon link workers are now operating across 41 Primary Care Networks. A Primary Care Network is a local group of GP surgeries serving 30,000 - 50,000 patients. This means that social prescribing options are in most surgeries across Devon. Active Devon is working closely with the health sector and local authorities across Devon to support social prescribing especially where it encourages people to get active in nature as part of our naturally healthy work.

Can Social Prescribing Help Me Get More Active Outdoors?

Yes. New evidence is telling us that being active outdoors is a significant contributor to improving our health and wellbeing. We do understand that taking the first step can feel a bit scary, that's why social prescribing link workers and our activity ambassadors and groups are there to help build your confidence. We believe everyone can be active in some way and that just a little bit of movement is good for you. This can be as simple as joining a short low-level walk near where you live supported by one of our [friendly walk leaders](#) or even taking up some [outdoor bathing](#) with one of our activity partners.

If you would like to find out more about Social Prescribing, please [get in touch](#).