

Mental Health News

Social Prescribing in Salford

The Mental Health News e-bulletin is a daily bulletin issued by the Mental Health Improvement Programme (MHIP) containing an item relating to a Mental Health issue, development or outcome in the North West.

The aim is to bring awareness to our stakeholders about service improvement and innovative projects underway in Mental Health across the North West, and to encourage you (the reader) to act as vehicle for ensuring that you or your organisation is engaged with the work where applicable.

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Social Prescribing is about looking at ways to meet the needs of patients with physical, mental or social problems, from a non-medical approach.

In 2008 The Angel Healthy Living Centre (HLC), an NHS funded social enterprise, started an exciting project to evaluate the use of Social Prescribing to tackle some of its local community's health issues. Based in inner-city Salford the project began to work with primary health care professional's such as GP's, nurses and primary mental health workers to devise a 10 week programme of clients and patients with included Art, Exercise, Cooking, Sexual Health, Gardening, Support and a Health MOT.

To access the project people need to live locally, attend the resident GP or one of the other organisations that are situated within The Angel. Clients can be referred by the on-site GP, Mental Health Team, or other providers within The Angel building e.g. Carer's, Mind or they can self-refer. Some of the reasons they may qualify to access the project are because they are experiencing: chronic illness (physical or mental), chronic pain, low self esteem/low mood or feeling demotivated, live alone or they have limited network of family or friends, have caring responsibilities or require weight management advice.

The project aims to help people access activities to manage their problems, rather than going down the traditional route of medical intervention. Patients who access the projects may return to work sooner, become volunteers or access training courses. Many patients who access the project benefit in a number of ways including; improved mental well-being, increase in self esteem and confidence and better integration into the community.

To find out more about the project visit <http://www.salfordangel.org.uk/>

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