

**COUNCIL SEMINAR**  
**1st July, 2014**

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); together with The Mayor (Councillor John Foden), Ali, Cowles, Currie, Dalton, Doyle, Ellis, Kaye, McNeely, Reynolds, G. A. Russell, Sansome, Swift and Whelbourn.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jepson, Reeder and Rushforth.

**ROTHERHAM'S AWARD WINNING SOCIAL PRESCRIBING SCHEME - COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS.**

Councillor K. Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Finance, welcomed Sarah Whittle, NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group, Janet Wheatley, Voluntary Action Rotherham, and Linda Jarrold Manager of Rotherham's Social Prescribing Scheme, to the Seminar. The Officers had prepared an information sharing presentation for Elected Members about Rotherham's award winning Social Prescribing Scheme.

- Rotherham's Social Prescribing Scheme had been commissioned by the Rotherham CCG from Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) in 2012;
- The Scheme had been commissioned in response to a number of factors in Rotherham: -
  - High number of people with long-term conditions, including asthma, diabetes, obesity and arthritis;
  - Rotherham had above average unplanned hospital admissions;
  - GPs were saying that there was not a lot they could do for people, they could prescribe, refer to hospital or give people TLC. TLC was often the most appropriate/needed factor, and one that they had limited resources/time for;
  - The Social Prescribing Scheme was commissioned to give GPs a 'fourth option'.
- The Social Prescribing Scheme's tag line was: 'Strengthening Individuals, Strengthening Communities';
- All of Rotherham's GP Practices were engaged in the Scheme;
- 26 Voluntary Sector Organisations were involved with the Scheme.

**How it works: -**

- Patients were identified by their GP who remained their Case Manager/Lead;
- VAR operated a Case Management Team who worked with the individual to identify an activity/resource that they could get involved with: -
  - After referral by the GP the majority of participants received an individual visit by a member of the Case Management Team. A guided conversation and formed an assessment of the individual's needs;
  - At this stage, the individual identified what it was that they would like to improve about their life;
  - The Case Management Officer referred the individual to the appropriate VCS activity;
  - Often support was provided to the individual to access their first sessions.
- A quote demonstrating the gravity of the Scheme from a member of the Case Management Team: - they often felt as though they were 'giving the people involved something to live for';
- Rotherham's Social Prescribing Scheme had won an NHS England award.

**The statistics so far: -**

- 1,626 referrals into the Social Prescribing Scheme since September, 2012;
- 3,200 referrals on to VCS Services;
- 700 referrals on to non-VCS Services – such as the SY Fire Authority;
- 65% referrals aged 75+;
- 42% lived alone;
- 37% had an informal carer;
- 5% were members of the BME community.
  
- Many were suffering from loneliness and isolation. The health effects of loneliness and isolation were comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day or being an alcoholic;
- The Rotherham model of the Social Prescribing Scheme was being used as an exemplar, and a programme of presentations across the North West had been planned. Visits of other authorities to Rotherham were also due to take place.

**Outcomes: -**

- 51% fewer outpatients appointments;
- 50% fewer A&E attendances;
- 43% fewer hospital admissions;
- 78% progress on at least one outcome area;

- 66% increased their financial benefits (£225,000 in additional benefits since September, 2012);
- 50% of the participants were more active.

**Quotes and case studies: -**

- Two positive case studies were shared from the many successful examples that could have been chosen;
- Patient quote: “It has been fantastic, getting out of the house, meeting nice people, we are back in society, love it!”;
- Patient quote: “So many housebound and disabled people have a better quality of life now because of all you”;
- GP quote: “Reduces our workload and reassures that all that can be done is done”;
- GP quote: “Patients who are responsive to voluntary sector referrals have notably had less need for presentation to us”;
- Volunteer quote: “The reward for me is seeing people become brighter, more talkative, looking forward to having visitors and making a new circle of friends”.

Discussion ensued and the following questions and answers were made: -

- Many Members expressed how pleased they were that Rotherham’s excellent practice had been recognised by the award and the scheme being used as an exemplar;
- Members should be encouraged to visit the Programme in their Wards;
- Members were glad that they had been made aware of the scheme and could signpost people to it via their GP;
- Rotherham’s model needed to be rolled-out to the whole country!;
- More information was requested about the age-profile of the participants – were younger people using the Scheme?: -
  - 11 – 12% of participants were under 60;
  - Some participants were over 100;
  - The Programme started with very high risk patients and was now moving down the risk profile.
- What about the volunteers who, where, what? They were the key part of the Scheme: -
  - Contracts and/or one-off spot purchases existed with the VCS organisations;
  - For example, the befriending service and Swinton Lock;
  - Physical activity;
  - Satisfaction from volunteering;
  - Revenue streams used to sustain VCS organisations;
  - Volunteers gain skills that could be used to increase their employability.

- How was the Scheme funded?: -
  - The CCG funded the Social Prescribing Scheme and it now formed part of the Better Care Fund;
  - The Scheme represented a prevention and early intervention mechanism, which would lead to efficiencies in other areas;
  - Projected fewer unplanned hospital admissions and less 999 ambulance call-outs.
- Importance of increasing the number of local provisions, including courses, coffee mornings and so on;
- Important role for young people to get involved and volunteer;
- The added value provided to the CCG through VAR's role.

Councillor Wyatt thanked the Officers for their attendance and their informative and positive presentation and contribution to the discussion.

Resolved: - That the information shared be noted.