

## **ARFON SOCIAL PRESCRIBING SCHEME [MANTELL GWYNEDD\*]**

A Community Link Officer was appointed in August 2016 and referrals into the scheme commenced at the beginning of October 2016; the scheme was run as a proof of concept project for approximately 20 months. It was initially funded through the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) for the first 12 months and then the Arfon GP Cluster funded the scheme for the subsequent year.

The Community Link Officer works closely with GP surgeries and other health and social care professionals in the Arfon area and is the first point of contact when pursuing solutions to social issues of patients referred into the scheme. It is open to anyone who can benefit from it with the aim of improving their health, well-being and a better quality of life.

The emphasis is on prevention and early intervention before an individual's needs intensify and become more complex which will cost more to the NHS and other statutory services.

The role of the Arfon Community Link Officer is to facilitate the process and help:

- Empower individuals to re-connect with their local communities with emphasis on what is important to those individuals, encompassing the "What Matters conversation", and building on their strengths and aspirations.
- Build confidence and resilience
- Improve Health and Wellbeing
- Improve the individual's quality of life
- Reduce medical appointments and the prescribing of medication
- Reduce Isolation
- Increase awareness of what is available to help and support individuals
- Encourage and support individuals to take control of their own lives

### **Process and Procedures:**

After receiving initial referral, the Community Link Officer will contact the individual and offer to meet for a chat. The officer will try and help them find solutions for themselves and refer on to other specialised support if needed.

She will then contact them again to see how things are going and arrange another visit if needed. By doing this she is also able to feed information into the SROI evaluation process. The function of the post is not to create dependency but to help navigate what is being offered in the local communities. The Community Link Officer might have to provide a helping hand in the first instance and then slowly "let go" when required.

For many individuals and their families, the scheme provided them with the reassurance that there is support available to them within their community. By having the time to communicate their issues with the Community Link Officer they are more aware of what is available to them that can help improve their lives and well-being.

## **Anticipated Outcomes:**

- More resilient individuals who can make the right choices to improve their own health and wellbeing
- Better quality of life for individuals and their families
- Fewer referrals and dependency on health care and other statutory services

## **Measuring Impact:**

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) model has been utilised to measure the impact of the scheme on individuals.

The social impact assessment has been undertaken for the project to date (up to September 2018) which clearly demonstrates' outcomes experienced by clients which include improved mental and physical health, reduced loneliness and isolation (Please see report <http://mantellgwynedd.com/downloads/041218-community-link-arfon-project-2018.pdf>)

The results demonstrate that significant value is created through the Arfon Social Prescribing scheme by utilising services offered by the third sector. The result of £5.23:1 indicates that for each £1 of value invested, **£5.23** of value is created.

A DVD of the Arfon social prescription scheme can be seen on *YouTube*. These first hand experiences provide a valuable insight into the scheme and demonstrate its value at an individual and professional level

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMTe3jZfRbg&t=17s>

Up to end of January 2019 more than 500 individuals have been referred into the scheme and due to high demand, a waiting list has been created

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## **Note \*:**

Mantell Gwynedd is a County Voluntary Council operating in the county of Gwynedd. It is one of 19 County Voluntary Councils operating across Wales. Its core funding comes from Welsh Government. The Welsh Government's Infrastructure Partnership Agreement recognises that County Voluntary Councils and County Volunteer Centres, alongside the WCVA (Wales Council for Voluntary Action), form the infrastructure for third sector support in Wales.

Mantell Gwynedd operates as a charity (charity no. 1068851) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (company no. 3420271). Its role is to support and promote the multiple needs of the third sector in Gwynedd.

**[Update - February 2019]**