

**Doncaster Central Learning
Centre CIC (DCLC)
Summary Report**

Healthwatch Doncaster
Engage, inform, influence

July 2018 to March 2019

1 Introduction

1.1 Details of activity

Sew for an integrated pathway to Social Prescribing in Doncaster

The aim is to deliver 6 sewing workshops (workshops targeting a small group of BME older people), delivering health conversations around the topic of social prescribing in Doncaster.

1.2 Acknowledgements

Volunteers:

We would like to thank individual volunteers of DCLC and to acknowledge their contributions in taking part in the workshops and in making the banner.

Host:

We would like to thank DCLC for contributing the use of the free training room and for promoting and facilitating the workshop sessions.

Collaborators:

We would like to thank Mandy Willis from South Yorkshire Housing Association for helping us find out more about Social Prescribing in Doncaster.

2 What was the purpose of the activity/session?

2.1 Purpose

We (volunteers) have learned about the journey of social prescribing in Doncaster and have depicted the experiences in the form of a creative sewing banner.

Volunteers have researched, discussed, shared conversations and understood better the pathways of social prescribing with others. We have used skills in finding out and have gathered information about social prescribing in Doncaster and information from neighbouring counties.

We have shared the new knowledge with others who may have an interest. By connecting through conversations and linking through making the banner.

We wanted to build on volunteers' skills and to use a similar innovative approach, in capturing stories, experiences and conversations about local health and social care services. The purpose is to discuss and find out and understand better about the following as regards to Social Prescribing in Doncaster.

1. What it is and why social prescribing?
2. Referral system
3. Voluntary and Community Sector providers
4. Types of services or activities

We think the pathway to social prescribing will impact on the areas of:

- Health and Well-being
- The impact of poverty on health
- Talking about men's health – getting men talking about their health
- Social isolation and loneliness

2.2 What did you do?

We delivered a minimum of 6 creative workshops, with a total number of workshops which exceeded 15 sessions. Where we translated experiences into forms of sewing, creative objects, images and text that represent the journey to accessing social prescriptions.

We built on our skills in sewing, crocheting, knitting and creative making and to use the banner to tell a story about the journeys and experiences in Doncaster.

The grant has enabled us to fund the necessary craft materials to make the banner, to cover for volunteer transport costs and facilitation fees.

The aim was to target at a small group of BME women (a minimum of 6 people).

The aim also was to research into barriers to understanding healthcare services particularly on the understanding and what is meant by Social Prescribing.

We learned and had identified where there maybe gaps or access to services or activities.

2.3 Results of the activity/session(s)

We will showcase the completed banner to Healthwatch.

The activity has increased opportunities for conversations and for researching skills. It has enabled us to search for information. Information that helped us find out more about how social prescriptions have an impact on our health and wellbeing. The sessions have demonstrated a need for greater collaboration with other organisations in understanding of referrals, networks in Doncaster and how activities are linked in Doncaster. i.e. Your Life Doncaster.

2.4 Conclusion

We learned to engage and highlight the importance of an integrated pathway to social prescribing and that activities should reflect, be inclusive of all communities including that of the BAME communities in Doncaster.

How this can impact on health and care services, issues about loneliness for BAME people and on people who are socially isolated because English is not their first or stronger language.

The difference made:

We can exhibit and showcase the banner to promote different ways of communication with local people, groups and communities. In promoting access to knowledge and information about social prescribing with local health care services.

We have empowered individual BAME people and communities to ask questions about other local health and wellbeing services.

We have raised aspirations and engagement by creating opportunities for health conversations about social prescribing activities.

We have engaged and motivated local BAME people to be involved in shaping health and wellbeing in Doncaster.

We have listened and found out to what extent people and communities are willing and are able to get involved in taking more control of their own health.

Key messages

DCLC have worked with a small group of BME women, a community of interest that are considered least likely to engage in conversations or may be made invisible due to smaller numbers. We have created a sewing banner which highlights awareness and experiences to an integrated pathway to social prescription. The project would not be possible without the in-kind contributions from DCLC and its volunteers.

The following is a summary of the feedback from volunteers:

- Team work
- Open to sharing and contributing ideas
- Building confidence in sewing and using material and equipment
- Brought out the hidden skills of volunteers
- Enjoyment and relaxation from sewing
- Take on more personal sewing projects
- Feel less isolated

Scope and opportunities created for DCLC:

Diverse social prescribing activities that could be offered i.e. mahjong group, calligraphy group, reading group

Set up of new sewing groups such as the creative banner making project

Develop further learning, health and wellbeing creative activities that DCLC can offer as part of social prescriptions.