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**London Borough of Enfield  
Members Equalities Board**

**Meeting Date 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Subject: Enabling the increased use of social prescribing  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Alev Cazimoglu  
Executive Director: Dudu Sher-Arami – Interim Director of Public Health**

**Key Decision: None required – for information only. ]**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To report to the Board some activities currently being undertaken in Enfield to enable the increased use of social prescribing

**Current Activities**

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- i. The “Youth Alive” programme of Enfield Voluntary Action.

The Youth Alive programme is for children and young people aged 10-19 who live or study anywhere in Enfield. It encourages children and young people to look after their wellbeing, build their confidence and happiness, feel empowered, learn a new skill and take part in physical activities. This aims to improve health and wellbeing in a community setting.

Jo Ikhelef – The Chief Executive of Enfield Voluntary Action will undertake a short presentation about this.

- ii. Social Prescribing within Primary Care in Enfield.

Kerree Ahern – The Programme Manager of the Enfield Training Hub of the North Central London Commissioning Group will lead on an update on current Social Prescribing activities and future plans within Enfield.

- iii. Social Prescription – London Borough of Enfield Public Health overview.

Dudu Sher-Arami – The Interim Director of Public Health for The London Borough of Enfield will provide an overview of latest developments around social prescription within the Council.

## **Reason for Proposal(s)**

3. To discuss utility of Social Prescription in addressing health and other inequalities within the Borough, both as part of formal Inequalities and Diversity strategies and as part of ongoing Health and Wellbeing work.

## **Relevance to the Council Plan**

4. Recommendation 6 of the Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission report is that The Council, health providers and the voluntary and community sector should work together to enable increased use of social prescribing to improve public health for residents.

The “Fairer Enfield – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021-2025 requires the increased use of social prescribing to improve mental and physical health.

The Enfield Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy also makes specific reference to Social Prescription activities

## **Background**

5. “Social prescribing” is a way to help GPs and other frontline healthcare professionals to refer people to ‘services’ in their community instead of offering largely medicalised solutions. Often the first point of referral is a link worker who can talk to each person about the things that matter to them. Together they can co-produce a social as opposed to a medical prescription that will help to improve their health and wellbeing.

Approaches to social prescribing were being developed across the country prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. These were particularly aimed at people with mild mental health issues who may have been anxious or depressed. And those ; and, those who struggled to engage effectively with services.

It is also relevant to people with wider social issues such as poverty, debt, housing, relationship problems, all which impact on their health and wellbeing. Very often these people make frequent repeat visits to their doctor or to their local emergency department – effectively trapping them in a ‘revolving door’ of services.

Clearly social isolation was and remains a major risk factor in the development of the issues that social prescription was designed to address. This has been both emphasized and exacerbated by the imposed social restrictions related to infection control measures put in place to control the spread of coronavirus within the last 20 months. The [necessary] withdrawal and/or pausing of services has also contributed to this.

The “recovery” from the pandemic and the ongoing stress upon secondary and primary care, in both physical and emotional areas of wellbeing, together with focus upon “prevention” being a higher political priority, makes Social Prescription even more important than previously estimated.

## **Main Considerations for the Council**

6.

- i. Renewed importance of Social Prescription at the Borough level and across NCL as whole.
- ii. There is considerable activity at a NCL-level around further developments in Social Prescribing – changes in the local governance of health and health commissioning [ICP's etc], may result in lack of oversight and loss of localism if awareness is not maintained.

## **Conclusions**

7. Social Prescription is a useful tool to address a number of “Wider Determinants of Health” issues. Including health and other inequalities.

Report Author: Mark Tickner  
Health and Wellbeing Board Partnership Manager, MH/LD  
Lead  
[Mark.tickner@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.tickner@enfield.gov.uk)  
02081320610

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## **Appendices**

[PowerPoint Slides x1 – to follow]

## **Background Papers**

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

<https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/fairer-enfield-policy-2021-2025-your-council.pdf>

<https://new.enfield.gov.uk/healthandwellbeing/jhws/>