Brentworth, Chiswick, Feltham and Bedfont, Hounslow Health and Great West Road Primary Care Networks in partnership with:





Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW)

**Background Information**

Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLW) are now established roles in Hounslow as part of a new NHS England national programme. These roles have brought social prescribing into every GP Practice in Hounslow from 2019.

**What is social prescribing?**

It is widely recognised that people’s health is impacted by not only health conditions, but also by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. Social prescribing can help to strengthen personal resilience and reduce health inequalities by addressing the wider determinants of health, such as debt, poor housing and physical inactivity and/or by increasing people’s active involvement with their local communities. It particularly works for people with long-term conditions (including support for mental health), for people who are lonely or isolated, or have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

Social prescribing seeks to empower people to take control of their health and wellbeing by giving them time to focus on what matters to them and by connecting people to community, statutory and voluntary groups and services for practical and emotional support.

**How social prescribing works in Hounslow**

Hounslow is a diverse outer London Borough of approximately 320,000 residents, supported by 46 GP Practices. The Practices are organised into five Primary Care Networks: Brentworth, Chiswick, Feltham and Bedfont, Hounslow Health and Great West Road. These networks are supported by the Hounslow GP Consortium.

The Hounslow Primary Care Networks have recognised that social prescribing can play a crucial role in improving people’s physical and mental health. They are partnering with Groundwork London, to put Social Prescribing Link Workers in place across GP Practices.

Hounslow GP Consortium support link workers to embed in Hounslow GP Practices, provide mentoring, training and support as well as provide a link into the wider strategic work being undertaken across Hounslow, including the formation of a Social Prescribing Steering Group which will be well placed to address any gaps in services identified by the Link Workers.

What is Groundwork London?

Groundwork London helps communities across the capital become greener, stronger and healthier. Its programmes help build the capacity of individuals and communities, empowering them to find sustainable, long-term solutions to the challenges they face, resulting in a healthier, more resilient city, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper.

GL was a founding partner of the Well London Alliance and has a long history of working in Hounslow supporting a diverse range of communities to improve their health and wellbeing outcomes. GL is a member of the Hounslow Community Network executive, a partner for Hounslow Giving, and represents the voluntary sector on the Hounslow Together Board. GL delivers home energy visits across the borough as part of Hounslow Better Homes, Better Health. GL delivers Employment Services in the borough, through our Restart contracts we offer tailored one-to-one support and specialist advice to hundreds of individuals, matching them with and preparing them for appropriate and suitable job opportunities.

From January 2022, Groundwork London will be employing and seconding Link Workers to all five PCNs, in addition to providing comprehensive training and support to the post holders, as well as promoting the integration of this new resource into existing provision in Hounslow.

What is Hounslow Consortium?

Hounslow Consortium Ltd is a GP Federation set up to support the five Localities (now PCNs) in Hounslow. It is a membership organisation for the 5 PCNs with its Directors being the same Clinical Directors for the PCNs. Hounslow Consortium provides administrative support to the PCNs and the Hounslow Practices to deliver national and local primary care contracts, as well as supporting them to form partnerships with other local organisations.

What is the role of the Clinical Commissioning Group?

There has been a collaborative approach between the CCG and the London Borough of Hounslow to support the development of social prescribing in Hounslow, with the aim to build on community knowledge, local assets and existing programmes. The role of the Link Worker will be a valuable resource to support this partnership and start to help to inform commissioning decisions by using the intelligence gathered about community health needs.