



16th February 2024

Social Prescribing in Bury is changing

Over the past four years, the Beacon Service has run a successful social prescribing service across Bury supporting around a thousand individuals each year to access a choice of non-medical services and activities in their local area. This success was made possible via funding and partnership working with the Primary Care Networks and GP surgeries in the borough.

During this time there have also been significant developments in the broader role of GP surgeries in providing personalised care to residents including the role of social prescribing. This has included in some areas, employing additional link workers within GP surgeries to meet demand. Following a review of the current offer, it has been agreed that Bury's social prescribing offer should be harmonised under one umbrella led by Bury GP Federation.

From the 31st March 2024, the Beacon Service will be moving over to Bury GP Federation as part of a refreshed social prescribing service.

For existing clients, the change will be minimal as you will still be working with the same friendly team for as long as you need; but to ensure a smooth transition, the Beacon Service will stop taking new referrals on the **23rd February 2024**. From **24th February to 31st March**, only staff in GP practices will be able to refer into the programme and residents seeking social prescribing support should contact their GP surgery. Self-referrals and partner referrals will restart on the 1st April 2024, and individuals are advised to visit www.burygpfederation.com for further information.

Dave Mayren, PCN Development Manager from Bury GP Federation, says:

"Health and wellbeing is impacted by a range of factors and people sometimes need additional support than that traditionally provided via General Practice. Social Prescribing helps connect people with groups and services in their communities, supporting them with a range of aspects of their lives. We know that in Bury the benefits of social prescribing, realising improvements in the lives of residents and reductions in the pressures on Primary Care, are tangible. We look forward to welcoming the experienced staff from the Beacon Service to join our existing team, working together to develop our social prescribing offer to the residents of Bury."

Dr Kiran Patel, Medical Director of Bury GP Federation, said:

"The benefit to patients, and indeed the wider team, in having the social prescribing service has proven invaluable. We are thrilled to bring our social prescribing team under one roof so we can be better placed to offer a truly person-centred approach to support the improvement of the health and wellbeing of our patients."

For any further queries please contact nwch.bgpf.comms@bgpf.com.

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