

## SOCIAL PRESCRIBING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

# SHEFFIELD FUTURES CASE STUDY



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## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Sheffield Futures is one of four pilot sites delivering youth social prescribing since October 2018. The programme was funded by the Department of Health & Social Care, coordinated by StreetGames, and evaluated by Dr Marcello Bertotti at the University of East London. The Link Worker is based primarily at the Door 43 Wellbeing Café in the city centre but also works out of different locations. The model complements and adds value to the organisation's newly developed Youth Information Advice Counselling and Support (YIACS) service. Plans are in place to open up four wellbeing cafés based in schools/colleges.

### MAIN TARGET GROUP

Children and young people with emotional problems (13-25 years old) who live in Sheffield (mean age 17).

### REFERRAL SOURCES/ROUTES

- Schools/college (27%)
- Self-referrals through drop-in wellbeing café in the city centre (Door 43) (9%) and friends/family, 14.9%, combined 23.9%
- GP surgeries (21%)
- Adult and social care (11.9%)
- None from CAMHS (Sheffield Children's Hospital NHSFT) and AMHS (Sheffield Health and Social Care NHSFT)

### HOW REFERRED

A single 'Professional Referral Form' is in use across the City, which is completed and sent by email to the social prescribing service. There are also existing referral routes from CAMHS and AMHS. Some young people also self-refer through the well-being café.

### RATE OF REFERRAL

Total number of people seen by LW since Oct 2018 (n=117) (Oct 2018- Dec 2019). Total number of people referred on n=68, so rate of referral from LW is about 50%.

### MAIN REASONS FOR REFERRAL

Mental health is by far the most important reason for referral in Sheffield (44.8%), followed by social isolation (17.9%) and lifestyle change (10.4%). More social reasons for referrals such as social welfare advice, financial advice, work or training/learning are not so important (between 2-4% of reasons for referral).

### ROLE OF LINK WORKER

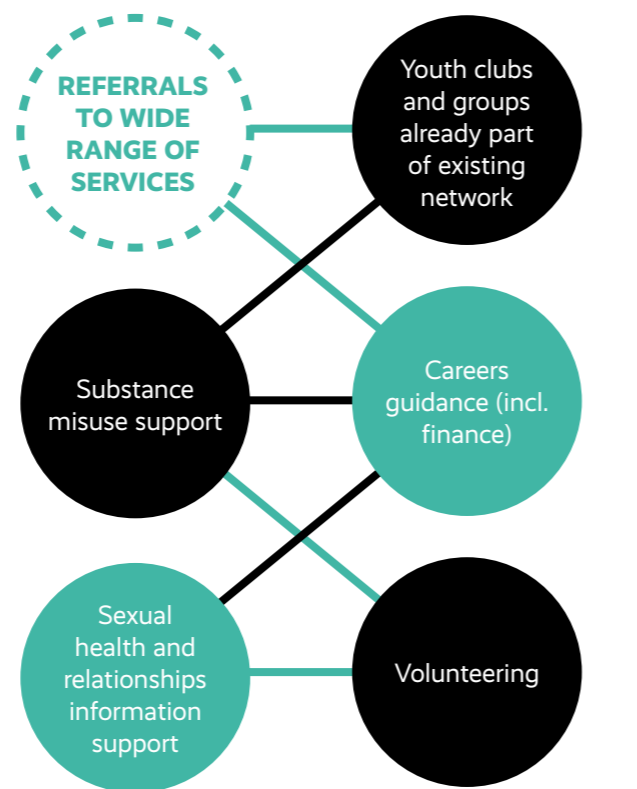
Link Worker travels to wellbeing cafés and can provide outreach. For example, LW may accompany participant to other organisations, at least in the initial stages of support.

### DETAILS OF SESSIONS

Holistic, typically 4-5 sessions take place over a period of 2-3 months with fortnightly appointments. Data from evaluation show that mean session was just under one hour. Second and third sessions were often longer than the first (80 minutes).

### REFERRALS TO

One to one and group work support provided by the Youth Information Advice Counselling and Support (YIACS) service in-house:



## EVALUATION

### Key findings from one focus group with Children and Young People (CYP) from Sheffield

#### ADVANTAGES/STRENGTHS

- Some young people conceived of the role of the Link Worker as coordinating their care (e.g. counselling) and 'being there in the background' a bit more longer term, something to fall back on.
- Walking-in off the street I had a long chat in my first appointment followed by an invite to the newly set-up service.
- The session focussed on my interests.
- This service is generic unlike past specific services I have attended with the NHS.

#### DISADVANTAGES/CHALLENGES

- Poor publicity of promotion; drop-in cafe' did not have social prescribing service banner or sign. no info was provided by the GP. Nice to know more about the service in a leaflet.
- Knowledge of what you're getting yourself into.
- Difficult to trust people initially. 1-2-1 over a number of 4 to 5 sessions enables you to build that trust.
- Transport was an important challenge for respondents. Activities were too far. Respondents could not go beyond two bus rides to reach activity.

#### IDEAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT FROM FOCUS GROUP WITH CYP

- Blended access points are needed: social media (instagram) and others.
- Set up a peer group of users so that CYP in the service can meet others in the service. This is happening sometimes through the drop-in cafe but should be more systematic.
- Videos for relatives explaining what social prescribing is.
- Contact at weekend as LW only works mon to fri and cannot help to access VCSE activities during these days.
- Funding to pay for participant transport costs.



### Key findings from other events from Sheffield (e.g. knowledge learning exchange event)

#### DISADVANTAGES/CHALLENGES

- At the beginning high rates of high risk referrals.
- There is a very high demand for this service but limited resources with which to respond, putting unsustainable pressure on the Link Worker to be able to respond within a reasonable time to all referrals.
- Awareness of social prescribing and who and how it can help is still developing.

#### IDEAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT FROM OTHER EVENTS

- Link workers mentioned the need for clear referral criteria at the very beginning to avoid inappropriate referrals.

