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**What is Social Prescribing?**

Social prescribing is a means of enabling GPs and healthcare professionals to refer patients to a social prescribing link worker- to provide them with a face to face conversation during which they can learn about the possibilities and design their own personalised solutions, i.e. ‘co-produce’ their ‘social prescription’-so that people with social, emotional or practical needs are empowered to find solutions which will improve their health and well-being, often using services provided by the voluntary and community sector. It is an innovative and growing movement, with the potential to reduce the financial burden on the healthcare system.

Social Prescribing is about supporting the health and wellbeing of people by using community-based activities and supports, such as exercise, art, reading and gardening. There may also be an opportunity to attend self-help sessions such as stress control.

* A focus on “what matters to the person” rather than “what’s the matter with the person”.
* It aims to connect people with sources of support within the local community with a purpose of improving health and wellbeing.
* Holistic approach focusing on individual needs and preferences
* Promotes health and wellbeing and reduces health inequalities in a community setting, using non-clinical methods
* Addresses barriers to engagement and enables people to play an active part in their health and well-being
* Utilises and builds on the local community assets in developing and delivering the service or activity
* Aims to increase people’s control over their health and lives.

**Who is it for?** The programme is for anyone over the age of 18 living in Clonmel who may need additional support to mind their health and wellbeing. This programme is mainly beneficial to people who may feel lonely, socially isolated, anxious, depressed or in need of different kinds of social supports or for people with chronic health conditions.

**How it Works?**

1. A GP or any other Healthcare Professional can refer a patient/client to the Social Prescribing link worker or self-referrals are also encouraged.
2. The Social Prescriber will meet your patient/client to discuss their needs and the various Social Prescribing options available in the area.
3. The Social Prescriber will make contact with the patient/client for a period of 8 sessions.

**If you would like further information about social prescribing please contact Mary Anne the social prescribing link worker for Clonmel at 085 2711689 or email maryannesp@clonmelcrc.ie**