

Social Prescribing at Guelph CHC Project Backgrounder

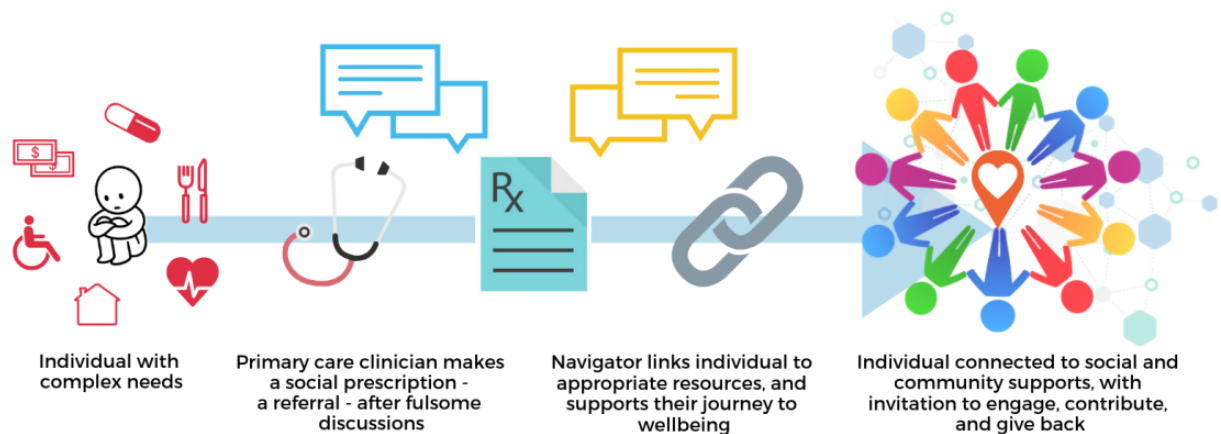
Guelph CHC, in partnership with the Alliance for Healthier Communities is bringing Social Prescribing to Guelph. From September 2018 to December 2019, the Alliance and 11 pilot community health centres, including Guelph CHC, will be implementing and evaluating social prescribing as a sustainable service innovation rooted in asset based, people centered approach to the front lines of primary care.

Social prescribing will enable Guelph CHC health care providers to implement, in a systemic and evidence informed way, what we know anecdotally- that people are healthier when connected to social and community supports.

What is Social Prescribing?

- A structured means of referring people who visit their health care provider to a range of local, non-medical services that seek to address people's needs in a holistic way.
- An asset based approach that goes beyond treating illnesses, recognizing patients as people with gifts.
- A way to support individuals in taking greater control of their own health.
- A pathway to enabling health care clients to engage with and contribute back to the community.

What does Social Prescribing look like in practice?



What are the potential impacts of Social Prescribing?

- Clients experience improved mental health, are less isolated or lonely, and are more physically active.
- Providers are able to use their time more effectively by redirecting non-medical clients to more suitable resources.
- Communities see improvements in sense of connectedness and belonging.

What does Social Prescribing look like at Guelph CHC?

For Guelph CHC, social prescribing is a new spin on an old idea, that a sense of belonging can have a positive impact on health and well-being. For many years Guelph CHC health care providers have been referring to local health and social services agencies that can support clients. For many years Guelph CHC has also offered a variety of programs and services that are co-created, meaning that Guelph CHC staff, community members and clients work alongside one another to develop and implement programs that meet the needs of the community. Being part of the Social Prescribing pilot project will allow Guelph CHC to further expand, enhance and evaluate this work.

Who is involved?

Partners

Guelph CHC is working in partnership with its valued clients and community members, as well as community agencies such as the Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition, Street Wise, Art Not Shame and the People and Information Network to lead this innovative work locally.

International Experts

The Alliance for Healthier Communities is taking a leadership role in bringing Social Prescribing to Ontario, with knowledge and mentoring support from experts with the National Health Services, Altogether Better and the Social Prescribing Network in the United Kingdom.

If you would like more information on Social Prescribing in Guelph, please contact Karrie Cumming at (519) 821-6638X268 or kcumming@guelphchc.ca

What are Guelph CHC's current Social Prescribing programs?

Link workers - Staff link clients to appropriate internal and external resources and supports.

Front Desk Community Connect - Volunteer led front reception who are trained to support clients to access supports in our community.

Peer Leader Program - This 10 year old program builds community capacity to provide accessible programs in priority neighbourhoods including Onward Willow, Brant, Two Rivers and Grange. Current programs include; open gym, yoga, English conversation circles, Zumba, community kitchens, community garden and chronic pain support group. Involvement in the Social Prescribing project provides opportunity for Guelph CHC to enhance peer led programs.

What are Guelph CHC's new and developing Social Prescribing programs?

Primary Care Clinician Referrals - After discussion with clinical clients, Doctors and Nurse Practitioners can now make and track social prescription referrals.

New Co-created programs - Staff and clients have worked together to create new drop in programs, which provide opportunities to enjoy creative activities such as art, crocheting, board games, music, along with snacks and socializing.

Food prescription pilot - A Nurse Practitioner will prescribe fresh fruits and vegetables from a sliding scale food market that is run by the SEED, our in house program that increases access to fresh food and decreases food insecurity in our community, to a small group of clients.