



## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

It is mental health awareness week (11-17th May)

### Mental Health Foundation:

“This Mental Health Awareness Week we’re asking people to join us in taking action to support good mental health. Even small actions can help us feel hopeful and less powerless. And while our individual actions matter, when we come together we are even more powerful.”

We all have times when we feel low, anxious or overwhelmed and it's not always easy to know what to do to feel better. We have a lot of information in the Mental Health section of [our website](#). The [NHS website has a really helpful area](#) “Every Mind Matters’ with lots of useful advice and resources.

Looking after your mental wellbeing doesn't have to involve big changes. A few small actions can make a meaningful impact:

- Take regular breaks during the day
- Check in with friends and colleagues
- Spend time outdoors or moving your body
- Make time for rest and activities you enjoy
- Reach out if you need help



**NHS**

### Use 111

If you need urgent medical help but you're not sure where to go, use 111 to get assessed and directed to the right place for you.

Call, go online or use the NHS App.



Anyone experiencing a mental health crisis in can access urgent support 24/7 by calling NHS 111 and selecting the mental health option (this is option 2). Calls will be answered by mental health advisors who will be able to quickly assess the situation and determine whether an urgent referral is required.

## Exam stress

At this time of year, exam stress can increase anxiety levels and lower mood. If you are struggling to cope, you are not alone. It's normal to feel worried and on edge about exams, stress is your body's natural response to pressure and it can often help you focus and get things done. We know that sometimes it can all get a bit much, there are lots of great resources for children and young people to support their mental health:

[Mind - exam Stress](#)

[NHS - exam stress](#)

[Young Minds - exam stress](#)

## Sleep and insomnia

Sleep problems are common, and the reasons we struggle to sleep are likely to change throughout our lives, for instance, illness, work and having young children. A few sleepless nights are usually nothing to worry about, but it can become an issue if a lack of sleep starts to affect your daily life.

Having a regular routine helps to improve sleep. It's sometimes called sleep hygiene. A good sleep routine should include having a set time to start winding down – and a way to relax is important too. Going to bed and getting up at fixed times is another good sleep habit. Ideally, a sleep routine should be the same every day, including weekends. [NHS website](#)

Sleep problems are often persistent, but they don't have to be permanent. Patients in our area have access to SleepStation (currently needs a GP referral but has been self-referral in the past). This is a digital programme which uses evidence-based methods, including CBTi.

“The structured, drug-free approach is grounded in scientific research and turns proven methods into small, manageable actions that make it easier to improve your sleep over time.”

See more information on the [SleepStation website](#) here.

# Social Prescribing

Many things that affect our health can't be treated by clinicians or medicine alone. For example - loneliness, debt, or stress due to financial pressures or poor housing. Social prescribing connects people to support that can help address these issues and other needs.

We have a team of Social Prescribers or Link Workers at PMG. They can support our patients in a number of ways if you are struggling with any social need, for example:

- Housing
- Finances
- Loneliness & isolation
- Lack of routine

You can start the process of arranging a referral by contacting the surgery. We can then send a message to the Social Prescribing (SP) team.

The SPs will be in touch with a rough wait time and some information while you await to be allocated to a member of the team. You can also self refer by leaving a voice message on 01904 437911 with your name, number and GP surgery and the SP team will then be in touch.

The Social Prescribers will work with you on your needs and what matters to you and help to support you by linking you up with the right services out there in York. They can meet you for appointments in:

- The GP surgery
- Out in the community if you feel more comfortable talking this way
- At home if you struggle with leaving the house
- Or chat to you over the phone

For more information about Social Prescribers or how you can access social support, visit our website - [Referrals and Resources](#) page.



An example case shared by our SP team (with consent)

Loneliness is one of the biggest concerns that we support our clients with, whether this is the reason for the initial referral, or it is an underlying issue causing other problems leading to referral. The Social Prescribing team run a small craft group in York once a month, which is for those who are working with a social prescriber to access. We keep the group small, and use it as a stepping stone to integrate people back into the community and build confidence to attend some bigger groups / attend groups without a social prescriber present.

A woman who was recently bereaved, lonely, and struggling to make friends and adapt to life with no full time care responsibilities was referred to the social prx team. The social prescriber used this craft group as a starting point to allow the individual to build confidence by attending, explore her hobbies and interests and build meaningful relationships with others. As an individual who had not been in the York area long, this allowed her to build upon her skills and knowledge of public transport within the area to get to the group also.

**Discover the Benefits of Social Prescribing in York**

**Primary Care Link Workers**  
Social Prescribing in York

**What is Social Prescribing?**

Social Prescribing is a personalised, non-medical way to improve your health and wellbeing. It helps you manage practical, emotional and social challenges by connecting you with the right support in your community.

**How can it help you?**

- Talk to someone who listens
- Get support tailored to your needs
- Build confidence and reduce stress
- Access services, groups, and resources near you

Your Primary Care Link Worker (Social Prescriber) will work with you one-to-one – whether you need just one session or a few over time.

**How do I get in touch?**

Leave your name and GP surgery – we'll call you back.  
Or simply ask someone at your GP surgery to refer you.  
Already working with a Link Worker?  
Call the same number to get in touch.

**01904 437911**

Please note: this service is for individuals aged 18+.

Find out more at  
[www.yorkcvs.org.uk/social-prescribing-in-york](http://www.yorkcvs.org.uk/social-prescribing-in-york)

My Social Prescriber was brilliant, they're the first person I have ever opened up to

Scan here to visit the website

SCAN ME

Social Prescribing in York is managed by York CVS  
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Primary Care Link Workers  
Social Prescribing in York

Another woman who was feeling lonely, and was struggling with the change of being in work to retirement was also referred to our team. Again, the craft group was used as a first step for the lady to work out what she would like from social prescribing, if groups are for her and whether she would be confident attending a group alone.

From this group both the above clients have now created a solid friendship, they help each other out in their own ways and they now have each other to do things with...even if that is natter and eat the odd slice of cake! This friendship has meant that they both now get out more, which is good for their physical health, as well as feeling less lonely which is a benefit to their mental health and wellbeing.



## What is parkwalk?

Walking is simple, free and one of the easiest ways to get more active, lose weight and become healthier. Sometimes overlooked as a form of exercise, walking briskly can help you build stamina, burn excess calories and make your heart healthier. A brisk 10-minute daily walk has lots of health benefits and counts towards your 150 minutes of weekly exercise, as recommended in the [physical activity guidelines for adults aged 19 to 64](#). Movement and exercise can improve physical and mental wellbeing.

Joining parkrun (parkwalk) is a great way to start moving and there are so many benefits to walking, running or volunteering at parkrun. Everyone starts at the same time and walks the same 5k parkrun route, alongside runners and volunteers. It's free, fun, and a great way to stay active at your own pace. At parkwalk there's no pressure to run, it's fine to go at whatever speed you want - there's no time limit and every event has a volunteer tail walker who's always last to finish.

We are a parkrun practice and many of our staff regularly attend to walk, run or volunteer. We have run takeovers events (see a very wet March takeover a few years ago) and plan to do another in the next year.



## ADHD and Autism

Patients wanting to be referred to NHS Adult Autism and ADHD Assessment services need to initially complete the [DoltProfler](#) questionnaire. Wait times at NHS clinics waiting list at the Retreat are variable (4-5 years +): for more information visit [their website](#) as we have no awareness or control of the waiting list.

If you choose to access assessment and medication for ADHD from a private or Right to Choose provider, please be aware of our [private/specialist shared care prescribing policy](#). There are ICB guidelines for Right to Choose referrals, please be aware that not all patients who request a RTC referral are eligible.

## Medicines Management

There are many medications that we prescribe which can cause problems to the rest of the body e.g. liver/kidneys. It is important we monitor these with blood tests (how often depends on your medication). Some medication monitoring also includes measuring BP/weight regularly.

Our prescription administration team may ask you to get some blood tests done ahead of your next repeat medication request. If you are well overdue monitoring bloods, it may not be safe to continue to prescribe some medications.

There are many ways patients in York can access blood tests quickly and easily, we keep the details up to date on our [website here](#) on the Referrals and Resources page.

## Klinik update

From 19<sup>th</sup> May, Klinik (who provide the prioryCARE form) will be integrated with the NHSapp. Patients will be able to make a request through the NHSapp, not just the website.



[www.priorymedical.net](http://www.priorymedical.net)



[www.facebook.com/priorymedical](https://www.facebook.com/priorymedical)