

‘We get along very well’ Anne’s Story

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing enables healthcare providers to refer a patient/client to a Senior Resource Coordinator who will work with the client, to jointly identify and consider community-based programs or services that can improve the client’s social connections, health and well-being.

Depending on the person’s needs and interests, Senior Resource Coordinators connect the older adult with programs and services such as:

- social and physical activities
- meal programs
- transportation options
- health education
- and much more ...

Friendly Hello Program

The Friendly Hello program is offered in some communities as a way to enhance older adults’ social connections. The Senior Resource Coordinator matches a volunteer with an older adult and the volunteer calls the older person over the phone once a week for a chat. Sometimes the volunteer and older person also start to meet in person.

Social Prescribing Manitoba is led by the Manitoba Association of Senior Communities. For more information see: manitobaseniorcommunities.ca

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Anne’s Story

Anne [not her real name] loved her job, but had to retire because she had problems with her eyes and, at the time, could not drive anymore. Because of the retirement and not being able to drive, she was stuck in her house, she says. Plus the COVID pandemic started and made things even worse. Although Anne lives with her daughter, she didn’t have anybody else to talk to.

“I was stuck in my house for four years.”

Anne’s healthcare provider recognized that Anne would benefit from more social contact and referred her to the Senior Resource Coordinator in the community. In discussing her situation with Anne, the Senior Resource Coordinator suggested the Friendly Hello program and Anne agreed to try it.

The volunteer who was matched with Anne was a perfect fit. Anne and the volunteer went from phone calls to meeting in person. They get along well and became friends, Anne says.

“We were supposed to talk maybe 15 minutes, but then it got longer and longer and then we were friends.”

Anne feels that having made a friend has helped with her mental health.

And she is even considering becoming a volunteer for the Friendly Hello program herself. Anne feels she could help somebody else who is lonely because “I know what I went through” she says.