

Keys to Success

Emily's Story

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.

Emily's story illustrates some key factors for successful social prescribing, including¹: the healthcare provider sees the potential benefits of community resources for a client/patient; the client/patient is ready to accept the referral to a Senior Resource Coordinator; the Senior Resource Coordinator follows up; and the person is ready and able to try out a program.

Emily's Story

Emily [not her real name] is in her 70s and lives with her husband. She has family and friends she sees regularly. Because of mobility problems, she feels she could benefit from being more physically active.

Healthcare provider asks the right question

During a regular physician visit, Emily's healthcare provider asks her if she is satisfied with her physical activity. When Emily says she would like to be more active, her healthcare provider suggests a referral to the local Senior Resource Coordinator.

Somehow, when you read [about activity programs] in a newspaper, you may not apply that to yourself. But my doctor's looking after my personal health. It's got a different flavor for my health when my doctor mentioned it to me.

Emily

Accepting a referral

Emily agreed to be referred to the Senior Resource Coordinator. She feels that having a healthcare provider suggest a referral to activity programs was important because it seemed more relevant to her personally.

Senior Resource Coordinator follows up

Having received a referral from the healthcare provider, the Senior Resource Coordinator contacts Emily, and arranges to meet her at Emily's house to explain the community resources that are available.

Being willing to try something new

Emily was willing to try a new physical activity. With the help of the information that the Senior Resource Coordinator provided her, she found an activity that interested her and that she could get to.

Benefits of participating in activity program

Emily feels that the activity program has benefited her physical and mental health. It has also allowed her to make new social connections.

¹ Husk, K., Blockley, K., Lovell, R., Bethel, A., Lang, I., Byng, R., & Gar-side, R. (2020). What approaches to social prescribing work, for whom, and in what circumstances? A realist review. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 28(2), 309–324.