



Ceann na Seirbhíse, Sláinte & Folláine
FSS Cúram Sláinte Pobail an Mheán-Iarthair
Teach an Phiarsaigh,
Bóthar an Phiarsaigh
Páirc Ghnó an Ráithín
Luimneach V94 1R71
Teil: 061 464060
Suíomh Gréasáin: <http://www.hse.ie>

Head of Service, Health and Wellbeing
HSE Mid-West Community Healthcare
Pearse House
Pearse Road
Raheen Business Park
Limerick V94 1R71
Tel: 061 464060
Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

7th May 2024

Cathal Crowe TD
4 Francis Street,
Ennis,
Co. Clare.

RE: PQ 18030/24

To ask the Minister for Health if a social prescribers programme is operating in Clare; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Crowe,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Social prescribing recognises that health is heavily determined by social factors such as poverty, isolation and loneliness. Social prescribing offers GPs and other health professionals a means of referring people to a range of non-clinical community supports which can have significant benefits to their overall health and wellbeing.

Social Prescribing has a number of key components:

- A referral from any healthcare professional/other professional or self-referral into the service.
- An intervention between the service user and a social prescribing link worker. The intervention can take up to eight sessions.
- Facilitate the service user to access local voluntary community and social enterprise organisations or services through discussion and joint discussion.

Social Prescribing is a core element of the Slaintecare Healthy Community programme established by the Department of Health in 2021. As you are aware the only Slaintecare Healthy Community site in the Mid West is in Limerick. In the absence of a Slaintecare Healthy Community in Clare, the HSE established the Community Connectors programme in March 2023. This service is delivered via Clare Care and is specifically for older persons who are service users of the Clare Integrated Care Programme for Older People based in St Joseph's Hospital Ennis. The ultimate aim of Community Connectors is to connect older people to community groups, organisations and statutory services for practical and emotional support, enhancing each individual's health and wellbeing while improving social supports.

Mid West Community Healthcare is also pleased to inform you that following an expression of interest process in late 2023, as of May 8th 2024, Shannon Family Resource Centre will commence the delivery of a social prescribing service for the Shannon and Ennis area in County Clare.

I trust this information is of assistance to you and should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'NWallace', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Niamh Wallace
Head of Service,
Health and Wellbeing.