

Pressures and gap analysis

From VAC / Care Navigation and Social Prescribing Service data Jan –
March 2021

Resourcing the VCS for social prescribing

- North Central London (NCL) emerging Integrated Care System (ICS) interest in pressure points and service / support gaps for NCL area residents in relation to social prescribing.
- VAC working with VCS counterparts in other 4 NCL boroughs, NCL groups, NHS Charities and National Academy of Social Prescribing (NASP) / London Plus Thriving Communities programme to influence and secure commitment to funding / resources for VCS.
- Identifying current and emerging themes for VCS support to residents. 5 key themes identified for Jan to March 2021 ranked high (1) to low for people with and without long term health conditions.

Housing and home management

People with LTCs (1)

- Homeless, risk of homelessness, unsuitable accommodations (overcrowding, dampness, stairs)
- House swaps – neighbours/crime-anti-social behaviour
- Housing repairs, need for cleaners/cleaning
- Hoarding/support to de-clutter
- Mobility aids
- Adaptations to home
- Gas and electric top ups

People without LTCs (4)

- Homeless, risk of homelessness
- Support and advice on benefits,
- Rehousing, repairs and adaptation.

Mental health and self-management

People with LTCs (2)

- Care packages, connecting to health and social care providers, support with medical appointments.
- Counselling/therapy/CBT requests.

People without LTCs (5)

- More complex than pre Covid when there was more emphasis on prevention.
- Resulting from prolonged isolation, bereavement, and domestic violence.

Social Isolation

People with LTCs (3)

- Mobility issues.
- Ill health.
- Digital exclusion.

People without LTCs (2)

- Loss of social connection.
- Loss of work.
- Digital exclusion.
- Prolonged isolation and fear of going out.
- Lack of informal opportunities to connect and chat with other people.
- Open spaces overcrowded / games and play areas were also locked down.
- Coherent recovery opportunities - covid / general lockdown fatigue.

Debt and finances

People with LTCs (4)

- Need for benefit review, grant applications.
- Loss of employment/Furlough.

People without LTCs (3)

- Loss of income through job loss.
- Accumulating debt.

Food

People with LTCs (5)

- Food poverty.
- Food delivery.

People without LTCs (1)

- Food poverty.

Gaps and Challenges

- **Housing / home management:** access to services; cost of private rents; housing security, housing register, long response time from housing teams; limited number of suitable properties; housing advice.
- **Mental health / Self-management:** access to services; waiting times; people left in limbo; general feeling from social workers being overwhelmed; not enough or variety of provision; have lost an emphasis on prevention of mental health crisis through Covid; cultural appropriateness of services.
- **Social isolation:** reluctance to connect / fear of going out – requires social prescribing support over longer period; outdated provision and perceptions of community-based support; ‘service’ culture is off putting; need for chaperoning; technological divide; emphasis still on firefighting not recovery.
- **Debt / finances:** lack of, and low paid employment; sustainable approaches to manage debt; back to work and retraining that residents can afford to take up.
- **Food:** sustainable food supply; addressing dependency.