

Social Prescribing Link Worker Impact Case Study

Name of case study: South Fulham PCN – Covid19 support service	
Brief description of the client's/patient's issue	<p>Working closely with the Clinical Director, the two Link Workers contacted local organisations and groups in mid-March to see if they would be able to partner with them as they set up a new support service for patients over 70 who were self-isolating. Three local churches and Fulham FC responded saying that they had trusted staff and volunteers who were able to provide support with shopping, medication delivery and regular telephone calls. With this support in place, the Link Workers wrote to over 4000 local older people on the day of lockdown to let them know of the service and started receiving calls that week. They have now linked in a few hundred local older people with local volunteers for one off and regular help, additionally utilising the NHS volunteer responders to help with capacity.</p> <p>An example of someone they have helped is Doris. She contacted the Link Workers to say that, although she had family help with shopping, she was anxious about the lockdown and would value regular check in calls while staying home. After a chat to learn more about her, they referred her to one of their support organisations to set up a regular call.</p>
Summary of the support provided	<p>A volunteer, Sarah, has been calling Doris twice a week to have a chat and check she has all that she needs. Sarah loves listening to Doris' brilliant stories and is able to reassure her that she will always have support when she needs it. On one occasion, Doris mentioned that she was anxious because she was missing some food supplies but said her grandson was going to pick things up for her. Sarah checked-in with her the next day to make sure this had happened.</p>
Summary of outcome and impact (including quotes)	<p>Sarah's calls to Doris have alleviated her feelings of isolation and reduced her anxiety. Following one call recently, Doris said to Sarah, "I can't thank you enough for your calls. I know I have my family, but you are now the next best thing." For obvious reasons this made the both of them quite emotional, but they've created a brilliant relationship.</p> <p>There are definitely some silver linings to our current crisis, and one of these is that relationships that have been formed across our PCN during these times will continue long into the future, strengthening communities and ensuring some of those who have been on the fringes of our community now feel part of it.</p>

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Tips for others or future plans (optional)	<p>Be flexible in your approach to your work. It was never envisaged that coordinating support for patients from home via the telephone would be the way our role would develop, but it has proved highly effective in responding to the needs of our community.</p> <p>Liaise with your PCN/Clinical Director about what their highest areas of needs are, and work with them to target these groups. This will vary across each locality, so there is not a one size fits all model.</p>
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