

## Social Prescribing and u3a Sheffield

Social Prescribing, sometimes known as community referral, is a means of enabling health professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services. The referrals generally come from professionals working in primary care settings e.g. GPs or practice nurses. Social Prescribing is designed to support people with a wide range of social, emotional or practical needs. Those who could benefit from social prescribing include people with mild or long term mental health problems, people with complex needs, people who are socially isolated and those with multiple long term conditions.

Extract from The Kings Trust website

Members of the Executive Committee have decided that u3a Sheffield will not take part in formal social prescribing schemes. We are a self-help charity run by the members for the members and we do not have the organisational structure or the resources required to offer support to possibly vulnerable people.

It is worth noting that many of our members volunteer with other charities but Su3a activities and interest groups are something which they do for themselves. Whilst we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure those with disabilities can access our activities and whilst relationships within groups can develop to a stage where practical and emotional support are given, there can be no **expectation** of such support from our members.

Reasons for reaching this decision..

1. Safeguarding - The specific legal provisions in respect of vulnerable adults could apply. Charities providing services for older people & local authorities providing activities and services will already have this in hand together with a designated Safeguarding Officer. Su3a does not.
2. Inherent issues involved in moving from the informal support and help which arise naturally out of group friendships to formal acceptance of SP.

Legal and insurance issues.

How will this affect the ethos of the u3a movement? Self help?

Would Constitution need amending to introduce the concept of care and support.

Membership – need to be consulted and agree? It's not what they signed up for.

March 4<sup>th</sup> 2023