

What is a Parent/Carer, Baby and Children Social Prescriber Link Worker?

Social Prescribing is a preventative service that deals with social, emotional and practical needs. The SPLW is someone who is able to work with parents/carers and a family to recommend a plan to improve their health and wellbeing.

They will focus on supporting women at risk of perinatal mental illness during the antenatal and postnatal period. The SPLW will offer additional support in the antenatal and postnatal care of mothers and babies from vulnerable, high-risk groups and for families with children 0-2 with complex social needs.

They offer support where there is an unmet need that, if left unaddressed, could create additional issues and vulnerabilities.

Information for Professionals



What services do they offer?

The SPLW provides a confidential, safe space for parents/carers to discuss what matters most to them. By providing personalised support the aim is to empower families to take control of, and manage their wellbeing and improve their parenting confidence. The SPLW will:

- take the time to understand what's important to their health and wellbeing and what they would like to work on
- help them identify achievable goals and create a personalised plan
- link them to other appropriate services, activities or support groups through managed introductions or referrals which will help improve their health outcomes

Who can use this service?

- People who are currently pregnant, or a parent/carer with a child under two years old
- There must be evidence that the parent/carer needs social, emotional, or practical support.
- The parent/carer is ready to engage with the SPLW and has given their consent to be referred.

AND

Live in the London borough of Harrow and be **registered with a GP practice** within the **Sphere** or **Collaborative** Primary Care Network (PCN)

Sphere PCN - Elliott Hall Medical Centre, GP Direct, Hatch End Medical Centre, St. Peter's Medical Centre, Streatfield Health Centre and The Northwick Surgery

Collaborative PCN - Collaborative PCN - First Choice Medical Care, Headstone Lane Medical Centre, Headstone Road Surgery, Kenton Clinic, Kings Road Surgery, Pinner Road Surgery, Pinner View Medical Centre, Shaftesbury Medical Centre and Zain Medical Centres HA8 0AD and HA1 1RQ.

AND

meet **any** of the **inclusion criteria**

Parents/carers and families will be seen at
Hillview Children's Centre,
2 Grange Road, HA2 0LW
(Thursday's 9:30am-2:30pm)
OR other suitable agreed venues.



Inclusion Criteria :

- Mild-moderate antenatal or postnatal depression, anxiety disorder and/or adjustment disorder (not currently under the Perinatal Mental Health team)
- High risk of perinatal mental illness
- No age limit for using the service. Could particularly benefit young parent (aged <22)
- Lack of practical and or emotional support: first time mother, single-mother, social isolation, frequent attendances to GP/UCC/A&E for minor illness/due to lack of social support
- History of abuse as a child
- Late booker (after 20 weeks gestation)
- Mild concerns about the parent infant relationship and emotional well-being of infant
- Relationship/family/social problems (e.g. social services involvement)

Exclusion Criteria :

The service is not suitable for:

- Those currently under the Perinatal Mental Health team
- Previous/current psychiatric in-patient/ received mental health crisis intervention
- Severe mental illness: psychotic disorders, bipolar disorder, and either major depression with psychotic symptoms or treatment-resistant depression
- Any mental disorder with severe impairment of day-to-day functioning, treated or not (e.g. OCD, ADHD, depression, anxiety, PTSD, personality disorders and eating disorders)
- Emotionally unstable personality disorder
- Current self-harm
- Previous suicide attempt/suicidal ideation
- Severe concerns about the parent infant relationship and emotional well-being of infant (e.g., baby is not responding to social cues and stimuli, appears shut down, etc.)
- Alcohol and substance misuse

What else you need to know

Is the social prescriber clinically trained?

No, the SPLW is not clinically trained and they do not give any type of medical advice. They are trained in a people-centred approach that is complementary to a medical model of care.

How long will the SPLW work with a parent/carers?

An initial meeting can last for up to 1 hour and 30 minutes. The SPLW will then follow up with the parent/carers at agreed intervals depending on their needs and progress. The interventions will be target-led with progression monitored. The service will support families as long as needed (on average 6-12 contacts over 3-6 months).

What happens when the parent/carers finishes social prescription?

When the SPLW discharges the parent/carers from the service, the parent/carers is sent a summary of the interactions they have had and support they have received. In addition, they are also given contact details and an action plan for contacting any outstanding service they need to follow-up. The SPLW makes it clear how they could be re-referred in the future if they would benefit from further support.



Example of when they can help

A first time parent is seen by the GP at the postnatal check. She moved to the UK last year and is socially isolated without family or friends. She is low in mood and anxious about her baby. She has been seen on a few occasions at the practice with baby for concerns about baby's feeding, crying and colic. The GP is unable to provide her with the support she needs with the usual 10-minute consultations.

The GP has signposted to children's centre and the health visitor support available, but the patient has not engaged with this. At the postnatal check she says she has also been struggling with breast feeding and is concerned she is not producing enough breast milk.

The GP refers her to the social prescriber via Joy. The social prescriber receives the referral and invites the mother to attend the postnatal support group at Hillview children's centre.

As a result of attending the group facilitated by the social prescriber she registers with the children's centre and joins a regular parent and baby group which helps reduce her social isolation. She also attends a breast feeding support session.

The social prescriber follows up with a one to one support session. The mother finds the perinatal mental health support particularly helpful and the social prescriber encourages her to make a self-referral to NHS Talking Therapies and then to engage with therapy.

The Social prescriber is able to provide her with encouragement and support that improves her confidence and wellbeing. Her visits to the GP for worries about the baby reduce. She continues with exclusive breastfeeding till baby is 6 months.

Example of when they can help

A mother with gestational diabetes is seen in the antenatal clinic by the community midwife. She has four other children, one of whom has Autism. She has missed two previous antenatal clinic appointments. She has a history of gestational diabetes in her previous pregnancies and she is obese. She is a refugee and is living in crowded rented accommodation. She speaks limited English. The midwife notes from her previous notes that there was social services involvement in the past.

The midwife refers to the social prescriber. The social prescriber meets the parents for a one-to-one consultation and is able to understand the family's social needs around childcare and housing.

The social prescriber links in the family to support via the Harrow Law Centre, Harrow Council and a local support group for refugees. They are also signposted to local foodbanks, baby banks and charities.

Struggling to cope with their autistic child's behaviour the social prescriber also refers the parents to Early Support to help them manage their child's behaviour, and to the centre for Autism and ADHD, and brings the case to the monthly CYP MDT for further advice.

How to refer:

If you have access to the JOY system:

Please complete the '**Parent and Baby (0-2) SPLW and Perinatal Community Support Programme Form**'. Tick the relevant box to show that you are requesting one to one support.

If you DO NOT have access to JOY:

For those **professionals** and **parents** who do not have access to JOY, they can use the Blossom referral link www.blossomantenatal.com/referrals

Within a week of receiving the referral, the SPLW will contact the parent/carer to let them know they are on a waiting list, and they will be contacted for an assessment. If they are suitable for the service the parent/s will be invited to the next available appointment. They will also be informed about the weekly drop in postnatal support sessions. If they do not meet the criteria, other appropriate options will be discussed & the referrer will be informed.

