

My Best Life

GPs across Barnsley will now be able to put patients who have non-medical needs in touch with someone from the My Best Life team who will talk to them and find out what help or support they need; whether it be money worries and relationship difficulties, or counselling and finding social groups to attend to tackle loneliness and isolation.

The type of support will vary widely depending on the individual's needs and could be as simple as introducing someone to the local fishing club to getting advice on managing debt.

The two major benefits for people referred to the My Best Life service will be an improvement in their health, wellbeing and quality of life and a reduction in social isolation, exclusion and loneliness. With a special focus on improving mental health and wellbeing, the scheme will enable people to manage their own health, improve social networks and develop their self-confidence.

What impact can we make?

We know from running our service in Doncaster that this sort of support makes a huge difference. Over 80% of the people we worked with in Doncaster felt more able to manage their health, and felt less isolated and lonely. We also saw a 68% drop in repeat visits to GP's, so we're confident that we can make a similar impact in Barnsley.

When the scheme is up and running in April, My Best Life will also be looking for volunteers to help increase the variety and quality of support available to people in Barnsley.

If you'd like to get involved in providing follow on support, sharing your experiences with others or even setting up groups for carers or people with specific conditions, please do get in touch.

What the experts say

“Good health and wellbeing is about much more than doctors and medicines. Helping people overcome loneliness and debt for example can have a huge impact on your physical and mental health. This scheme will create a different type of conversation when you see your GP or nurse that allows both medical and social elements to be taken into account. If you're just treating medical issue then you're often not getting to the root of the problem.”

“The main benefits of this type of service are that it creates a connection between family doctors and nurses and the rest of the wellbeing community services and groups across the town. It adds to the range of support and advice we can offer as a GP. We know from other areas that this type of support has the potential to reduce admissions to hospital and reduce the number of GP visits people need to make, but most importantly, to improve the health and wellbeing of the participants.

“There are some really good examples of this type of service on a smaller scale in Barnsley, and I’m really pleased to see that it will now be available in all GP practices and across the borough.”

Dr Nick Balac, local GP and Chair of NHS Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group

Get in touch

If you, or anyone you know might benefit from the support offered by My Best Life please contact your GP, pharmacist or community nurse and ask to be referred to the service. You can also get in touch with us directly by calling us on 07970399427.

THE ‘MY BEST LIFE’ PRACTICE CHAMPION IS;

Louise McCarthy

To find out more about our social prescribing service – ‘My Best Life’ and how the service can help you, please ask our practice champion for more details about the service

THE ‘MY BEST LIFE’ ADVISOR IS:

Lisa Baugh

The ‘My Best life’ Advisor works in a number of practices across the locality – this is the person that the practice champion can put you in touch with and who can talk to you and offer support.