

Ray Wang, 2nd Year Medicine

The Charity:

[Access Community](#) Trust aims to promote social inclusion for the community benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.

The Project:

Social prescribing seeks to address social, emotional and practical needs in a holistic way, through connecting individuals with communities of interest, place, accessing a range of local, non-clinical services and activities. It also aims to support individuals to take greater control of their own health, encourages independence and self-management of care.

This project was composed of three interconnected strands:

1. Conduct research into local social prescribing models in Suffolk and Norfolk to identify experience and learning to incorporate into future projects.
2. Literature review to identify best practice from models around the country and summarise current evidence base, combining with the research around local models and need to produce a report for the Trust. The report made practical recommendations to shape the development and delivery of a new pilot project.
3. Develop, design and bid for a proposed pilot social prescription project covering 6 GP practices in a rural area, with report recommendations implemented within the project if application is successful.



I have learnt the importance of being pragmatic and realistic at all times, given the tight budgetary confines and the fact that this is only a one-year pilot which may not be funded beyond the initial 12-month period. The experience highlighted to me the importance of being flexible and adaptive to circumstances, whilst keeping an eye on the core objectives.

Highlights:

- Developing two mental health wellbeing projects in conjunction with the Lowestoft Mental Health Ambassador hosted by the Trust, to be based within our flagship so enterprise café.
- Learning about the outcomes of Lowestoft Solutions, the social prescribing model currently being rolled out in 8 GP surgeries in Lowestoft, and their experiences from the initial pilot.
- We won the tender - against very stiff competition from several other organisations, which I think vindicates the strength of our bid to deliver a “well rounded” service which has something for everyone.

