

# Case Study

## Regular interventions from Social Prescriber put Don\* back on track

### Background

Don, a man in his 80s, was referred to Herefordshire Social Prescribers as he was suffering from stress and depression, which exacerbated his chronic COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease).

Don had been a career soldier and therefore an intermittent parent. This had led to an estrangement from his children and social isolation.

### How we helped

Don was used to being self-reliant, which had made it difficult for other agencies to engage with him. However, the Social Prescriber (SP) was able to devote time to Don which broke down those barriers and enabled a trusting relationship to be formed. This meant that she was able to introduce appropriate support, including the British Legion, Age UK and the local good neighbours'scheme.

**Perhaps most importantly, the SP got Don to recognise that accepting help is not a sign of weakness.**

One of the most important elements of the support that SPs can provide is a long term engagement that recognises the individual need of the person supported. A common factor is that support can be fragile in the early stages and can frequently break down because of some minor issue. Don's Social Prescriber was alive to this possibility and made frequent checks to ensure that progress, which was not always smooth, was maintained.

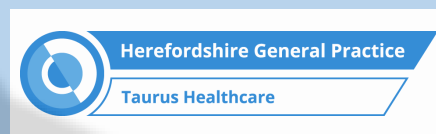
The link has now been of several months duration and, while it isn't perfect, it has brought a whole range of services into contact with Don, considerably improved the quality of his life and reduced the need for unplanned interventions. Don also now recognises that a measure of personal responsibility rests with him. With our support, he can take on that task

Issues on referral

Chronic physical illness

Mental health issues

Social Isolation



Herefordshire Social Prescribing is a joint initiative between Herefordshire General Practice (supported by Taurus Healthcare) and Herefordshire Council.

Taurus Healthcare is a Federation owned by all Herefordshire GP practices.

[www.taurushealthcare.co.uk](http://www.taurushealthcare.co.uk)

\* Not his real name