

AGENDA ITEM NO.

TO: COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 1 APRIL 2003

SUBJECT: GP REFERRAL - UPDATE ON PACE SCHEME

FROM: LEISURE AND AMENITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Community Scrutiny Committee have received reports in the past on the progress of the GP Referral scheme operating in Warwick District Council leisure centers. This report is to bring members up to date with recent developments in the scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Warwick District Council leisure centers have now been operating a GP referral scheme for 10 years aimed at encouraging members of the public with specific diagnosed conditions to take up a more physically active lifestyle that would benefit their medical condition.

2.2 Since 1997 the local schemes have been included in the Warwickshire PACE scheme together with other referral schemes throughout the county. This has resulted in a more coordinated and professional approach to the management of the schemes and set up an evaluation process that can draw on results from 5 schemes.

2.3 The Warwick district schemes are currently operating at Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre and St Nicholas Park Leisure Centre. Patients are being referred from Cubbington Road Surgery and Croft Medical Centre to Newbold Comyn, and from Priory Medical Centre, Budbrooke Medical Centre, and Lapworth Surgery to St Nicholas Park Leisure Centre. Croft, Budbrooke and Lapworth practices are relatively recent partners in the scheme and have helped to broaden the geographic scope of the scheme within the district and consequently increase the number of patients able to benefit from the scheme.

2.4 The impact of the scheme was also increased some 18 months ago when the referral criteria were reviewed and extended to include people with diagnosed osteoporosis or with a medically proven high risk of coronary heart disease.

2.5 Work is ongoing to increase to the number of practices involved in the scheme. Health Promotion officers from the Warwickshire Health Promotion Service are leading on this recruitment drive and discussing the benefits to patients with GPs and practice nurses. Members may recall the previous reluctance of Kenilworth practices to be involved in the local scheme. Work continues to bring these practices on board in the future.

2.6 Initially the scheme was designed around exercise in the gyms at the leisure centers. More recently, and based on feedback from patients and practice nurses, it was recognized that this feature could be deterring some potential scheme members. Hence the scheme was revised to allow patients to chose swimming or other activities in the centre providing that they had completed the first three sessions in the gym where they could be closely monitored and supported by trained staff. They are also encouraged to do one session per week in the gym to continue this support from staff. It had been hoped that a supported "walking scheme" could be added to the scheme to provide further choice. This was included in the Sports Facilities workplan 2002 - 04. No progress has been made to date on this development to date due to lack of officer resources.

3. **POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK**

3.1 The GP referral schemes contribute to the Community Plan by improving the health of local people and encouraging local people to become more active through participation in sport and recreational activities.

4. **OUTCOME(S) REQUIRED**

4.1 Members are asked to note the progress against the Sports Facilities Workplan 2002 - 2004

**Rose Winship
Sports Facilities Manager**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Sports Facilities Workplan 2002 - 2004

Areas in District Affected: All

Executive Portfolio Area and Holder: Councillor Cheryl Flanagan - Cultural Services.

For further information about this report please contact:

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