



Dorset
National
Landscape

Mental Health Levels: Guidance for Referrers and Participants

The Mental Health Levels outlined below have been developed with the National Association of Social Prescribing GreenSpace Mental Health Lead to enable groups and organisations to identify the level of need that they are able to support. You should refer to these levels when assessing whether a provider or activity is suitable to meet the needs of the person you are referring to Nature Buddies. When you are choosing an activity, use the level to help you to work out whether this group has the support in place that will help you. If the person you are working with needs additional or more personalised support beyond what these scales suggest, it may be possible for a carer or support worker to attend an activity. Please contact the provider directly to discuss more personalised support before attending for the first time.

Guidance for Referrers

- Level 0
 - A person who has taken their own decision to improve their mental wellbeing through engaging in an activity or independently accessing advice or self-help resources.
- Level 1
 - A person who is receiving support from their GP and/or or a link worker and want to be able manage their mental well-being through social prescribing pathways.
- Level 2
 - A person who needs GP support and access to psychological therapies, short term medication and/or ongoing monitoring and intervention, and are able to manage their mental health with this support. This person may need initial support to access provision through social prescribing pathways

Levels 3 & 4 are more likely to be specialist provision

- Level 3
 - A person who has more complex needs and requires more than one area of support, including specialist and local mental health team support. This person needs support to access provision through dedicated social prescribing pathways; provided by services with resources and expertise tailored to people with more with complex mental ill health
- Level 4
 - A person who is experiencing acute mental health crisis and receiving inpatient or intensive support, or a person who has a long-term serious mental illness which affects how they function and need regular care and support. This person will access specialist provision, delivered by mental health professionals.

Guidance for Participants

Most activity provision will be level 0-2

- Level 0
 - You are feeling well
 - You want to look after your mental and physical health
 - You want to try a green or nature-based activity
- Level 1
 - You are seeing your GP about your mental health or are having some support from a health worker or social prescriber
 - You feel lonely, you have a low mood and/or lack of motivation/structure/routine
 - You are experiencing symptoms of anxiety and/or mild depression
 - Your mood/feelings are having a negative effect on your wellbeing
- Level 2
 - You are currently getting support from your GP and receiving psychological therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or counselling
 - You are taking short term medication and/or under ongoing monitoring, and this support is helping you to manage your mental health
 - You feel a 'Nature Buddy' would help you to go along to the first couple of sessions and to help you settle in
 - You need specific sessions designed to include more support or have a specific focus on wellbeing
 - You would benefit from a volunteer to help or work alongside you during the sessions to help you feel more comfortable and at ease in the group
 - You have identified recovery goals with your health care professional that you can work towards during the activity

Levels 3 & 4 are more likely to be specialist provision

- Level 3
 - You have complex needs and need more than one area of support, including specialists and a local mental health team
 - You need support to take part in sessions (if you have a support worker then they can attend with you)
 - You need a short-term programme of activity, or a package tailored to meet your individual needs

- You need support from a team that specialises in working with people who have long-term and/or complex mental ill health
- Level 4
 - You are experiencing an acute mental health crisis which requires you to receive inpatient or intensive crisis team support
 - OR**
 - You have a long-term serious mental illness, and you need regular care and support
 - You need an activity in a hospital-based location, such as a hospital community garden or therapy garden
 - You need an activity provided by a specialist team that will make sure you get the help and support you need to get the most out of the sessions (this might include doctors and nurses and other people who have expertise in working with people with a range of complex mental health needs, both long term and acute)