



National
Academy
for Social
Prescribing

The Social Prescribing Student Champion Scheme: 7 Years On

Programme impact and case studies
2016-2023

Foreword

Since its inception in 2016, the *Social Prescribing Student Champion Scheme* has embarked on an ambitious mission to embed social prescribing within the foundation of future healthcare professionals' education. As we pause to reflect on our journey thus far, we are overwhelmed with a sense of pride, gratitude, and inspiration.

From the establishment of the *#SocialPrescribingDay* campaign in 2018 to the integration of social prescribing in medical school and university curricula across the UK, we have witnessed the profound impact and reach of our programme. This progress would not have been possible without the dedication and tireless efforts of thousands of trainees and student champions over the past 7 years.

This transformative journey reminds us of the power of collective vision and the endless possibilities when passion meets purpose. As we look forward to the future, we remain committed to championing social prescribing as a cornerstone in our healthcare strategy, moving beyond the traditional sick care model. Our mission is to reimagine medicine, placing a heightened emphasis on community-based interventions, where health and wellness are fostered not just within hospitals, but also at home and throughout our local communities.

Together for a healthier future,
The Social Prescribing Student Champion Scheme Team





“Embarking on my journey with the Social Prescribing Student Scheme right from the start in 2016 was a decision that profoundly shaped my medical career. Over five transformative years, the programme ingrained in me a deep appreciation for holistic healthcare approaches, emphasising the human side of medicine beyond diagnosis and treatment. Now, as a junior doctor, this approach is integral to my clinical work. It’s not just about treating conditions but understanding patients’ unique stories and environments, which has become a cornerstone of my daily clinical practice.”



Dr Daisy Kirtley
(Junior Doctor)

Contents

“The scheme is one of the things I am most proud of from my time as a student. In leading the Allied Healthcare Professional branch of the scheme, I really got a sense of multidisciplinary working, learning about the other professions I now work along side clinically. And of course, it helps cement in my mind the power of social prescribing, and thinking outside our NHS box when working with patients.”



Anya de longh
(Occupational
Therapist)

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Background and Aims

Programme Background

The Social Prescribing Student Champion Scheme has been established in 2016 to engage the next generation of healthcare professionals in promoting social prescribing. The Scheme is now a multi-centre national project led by healthcare trainees and students representing all UK medical schools, with support from key national organisations including NHS England, the National Academy for Social Prescribing, the College of Medicine, the Social Prescribing Network, the Personalised Care Institute, Arts4Dementia, and several others.

Since its establishment, it has engaged with thousands of medical and Allied Health Profession (AHP) students from all over the United Kingdom to spread awareness of social prescribing through teaching and focusing on aspects of lifestyle medicine that can improve person-centred care.

Programme aims

Since its establishment in 2016, the fundamental objective of the programme has been to modify university curricula, ensuring that social prescribing, personalised care, and social determinants of health are integral components of the foundational education for medical students, as well as for nursing, midwifery, and various allied healthcare professional graduates.

The mechanism of achieving this aim has been establishing a student movement focused on health creation and disease prevention, advocating for social prescribing and personalised care through peer teaching at UK-based universities.

Programme Structure and Governance

With funding and support from the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP), the scheme enlists a team of student leaders to form a yearly national student committee. Under strategic support from NASP, the student committee is responsible of managing a large number of student champions representing each UK-based medical school and university. Champions act as representatives, disseminating the value of social prescribing by running events at their respective universities.

"I joined the Social Prescribing Scheme in my first year of medical school, working through the scheme from a champion all the way to General Secretary. Four years on, I'm now in my second year as a doctor and use the skills and knowledge I gained throughout the social prescribing scheme every single day. In my current job in primary care, my practice has an amazing social prescriber and I utilise their expertise for patients that the traditional medical model falls short for. My understanding and appreciation of their role, all developed through my work within the Scheme, means I can utilise their skills to optimise patient outcomes which I have had the privilege of now watching firsthand."

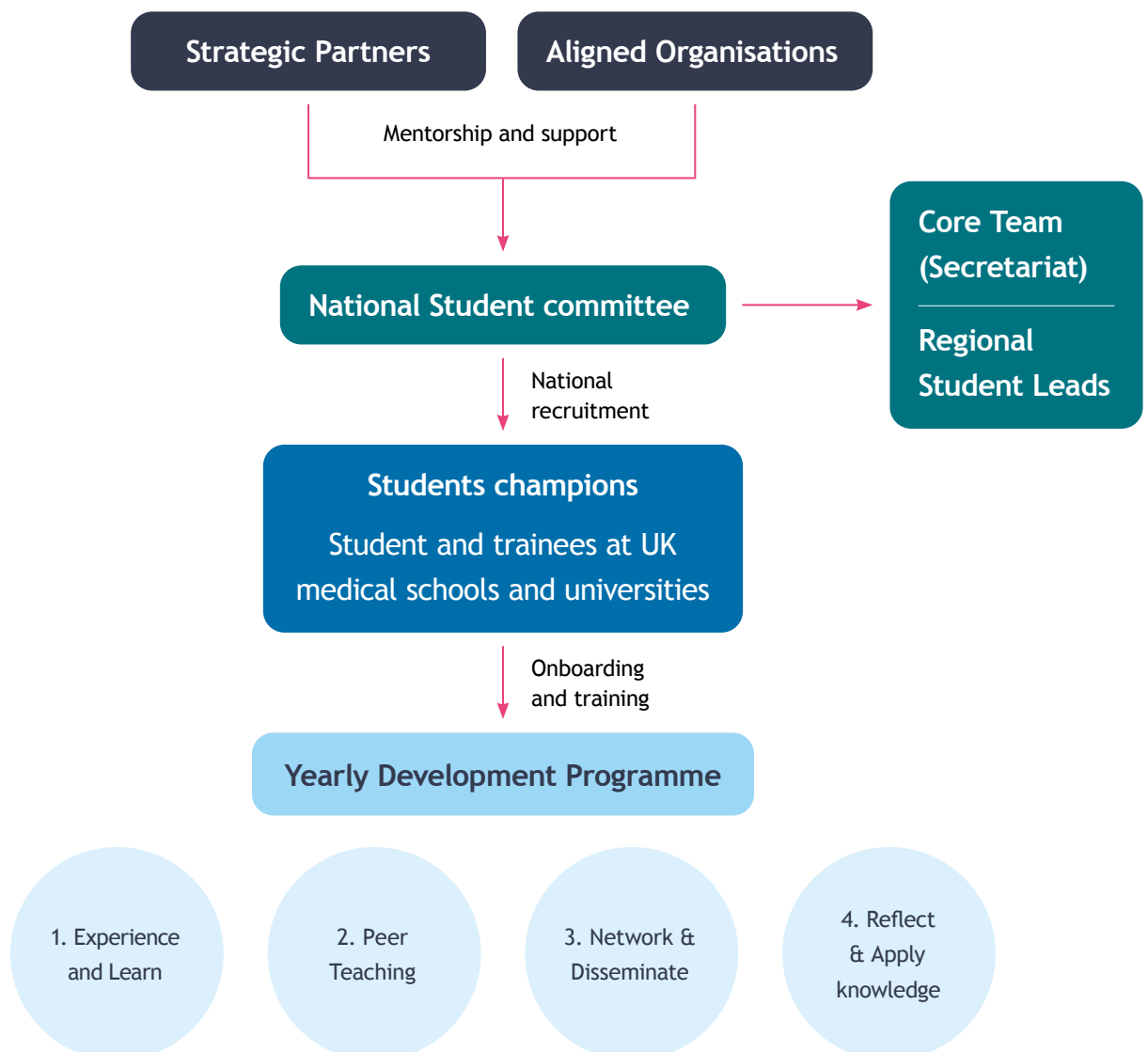


Dr Leah Crabtree
(Academic
Foundation Doctor)

Student champions join a yearly development programme where they have to:

1. Learn about and experience social prescribing first-hand;
2. Teach their peers through workshops, small or large group teaching sessions;
3. Network and disseminate their learning at conferences and through academic publications;
4. Reflect and apply what they have learned to benefit their daily current and future practice.

Figure 1 represents a diagram detailing the structure of the scheme.



Programme Highlights: 7 Years On



782

student champions
recruited to date



20,000+

healthcare trainees and
students engaged



1,500+

teaching sessions
delivered across
UK universities



50+

Conferences and
published multiple peer-
reviewed publications
presented by Champions



3x

National Conferences
with over 500 attendees



83

Universities involved

Launched world's first
#SocialPrescribingDay
awareness campaign (2018)

Social prescribing is now being
taught at **all UK-based
medical schools**

“Every day within the hospital walls, I find myself leveraging the invaluable skills nurtured by the scheme. It’s not just about medical charts and diagnoses; it’s about conversations, about understanding lives, and about nurturing trust. The hospital corridors have transformed into avenues where I don’t just treat; I connect, I listen, and I empower. This holistic approach has become an indispensable part of my toolkit in patient care, allowing me to bridge the gap between medical practice and the human experience. For this profound shift in my professional journey, I remain deeply thankful to the SP student champion scheme.”



Dr Caitriona Rafferty
(Junior Doctor)

Integrating Social Prescribing into UK University Curricula

Historical data indicates that at the scheme's inception, [93% of medical students \(n=848\) were unfamiliar with the concept of social prescribing.](#)

Over the past 7 years, over 782 student champions have been recruited at **83** universities across the UK. With materials and support from strategic partners such as NHS England and the National Academy for Social Prescribing, students were able to deliver over 1,500 peer-teaching sessions using medical societies, small and large group teaching sessions. Several students provided formal support for mandatory teaching at UK-based medical schools and universities.

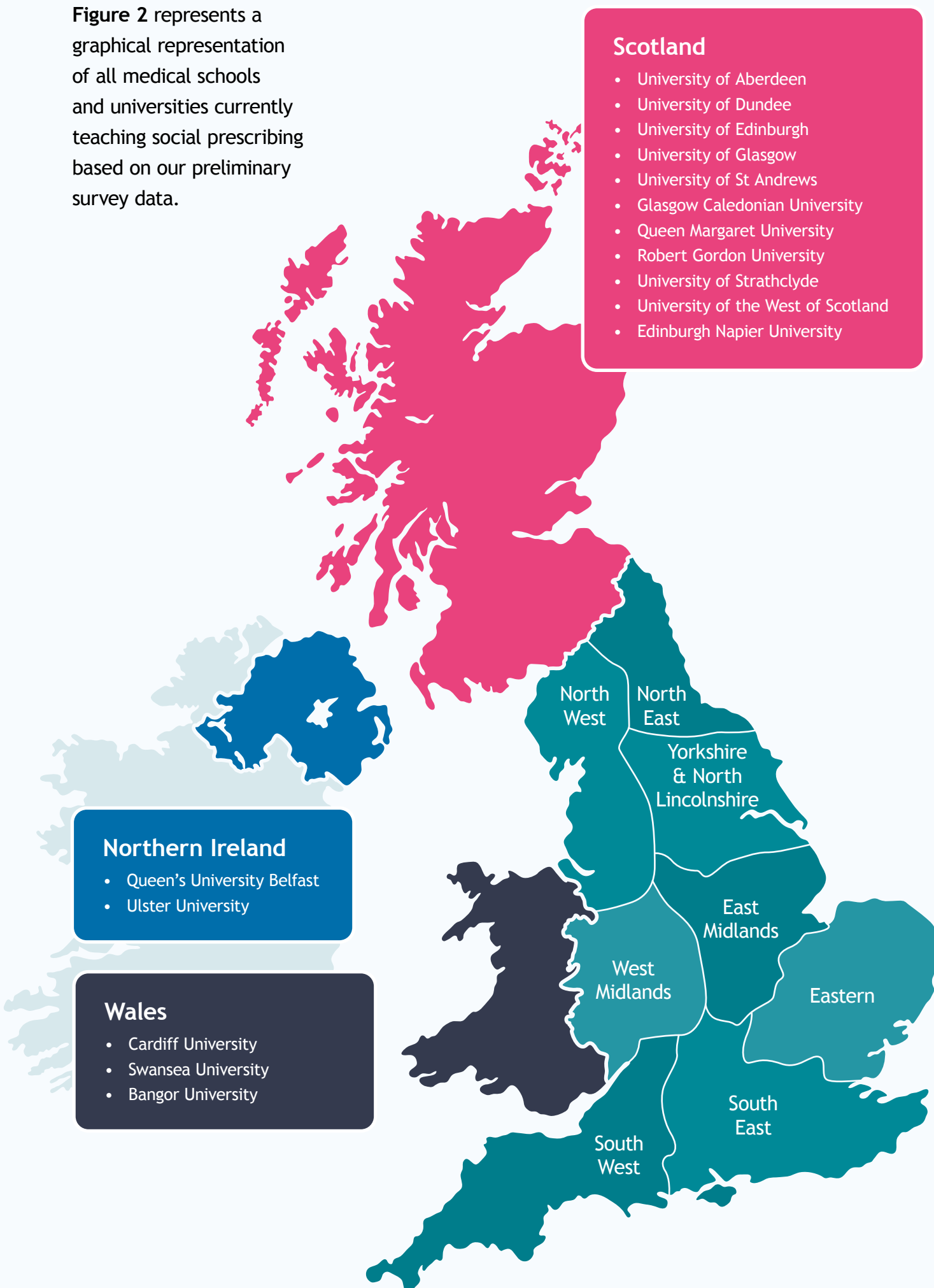
Over time, student champions collaborated with key stakeholders and contributed to the successful integration of social prescribing within the official medical school and university curricula. A few examples include:

- Developing and implementing a novel web-based educational tool to facilitate social prescribing teaching at King's College London
- Developing compulsory learning materials used as part of Exeter Medical School lectures and modules
- Supporting the development and delivery of the Special Study Unit on Social Prescribing at Imperial College London

Such examples are spread across all **83** universities involved where the shared leadership of trainees and students has been translated in practical curriculum changes to ensure key principles of personalised care and social prescribing are being taught at UK-based universities.

Preliminary data from our latest national survey shows that social prescribing is being taught at all UK-based medical schools and additionally at over 20 universities teaching nursing, midwifery, and allied healthcare students. Current results are based on any type of teaching including an array of clinical placements, lectures, special study units or peer teaching sessions at the aforementioned universities. An in-depth research study on the topic of social prescribing and personalised care teaching at UK-based universities is currently underway.

Figure 2 represents a graphical representation of all medical schools and universities currently teaching social prescribing based on our preliminary survey data.



“I became the AHP coordinator for the scheme in November 2021 when I started my MSc in Occupational Therapy at UEA and have been a member since! I have loved raising awareness of the usefulness of social prescribing for AHPs by delivering lectures, speaking at the national social prescribing conference, and publishing research on best practice for teaching AHP students about social prescribing.”



Kirstie Goodchild

(Occupational Therapy Student)

England

North West:

- University of Bolton
- University of Central Lancashire
- University of Liverpool
- University of Manchester
- Lancaster University Medical School

North East:

- Newcastle University
- University of Sunderland
- University of Teesside (Teesside University)
- University of Northumbria at Newcastle

Yorkshire and The Humber:

- University of Leeds
- University of York
- Leeds Beckett University
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Hull York Medical School
- University of Huddersfield

West Midlands:

- University of Birmingham
- Keele University
- Coventry University
- University of Wolverhampton
- Aston University
- Birmingham City University

East Midlands:

- University of Derby
- University of Leicester
- University of Nottingham

East of England:

- Anglia Ruskin University
- University of Essex

- University of Hertfordshire
- University of East Anglia (Norwich Medical School)
- University of the East of Anglia

London:

- University College London (UCL)
- Imperial College School of Medicine, London
- King's College London
- St George's, University of London
- University of East London
- Kingston University
- Middlesex University
- London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (Postgraduate Medical School)
- Roehampton University

South East:

- University of Southampton
- University of Brighton
- Canterbury Christ Church University
- University of Greenwich
- University of Sussex (part of Brighton and Sussex Medical School)
- Oxford Brookes University
- University of Oxford
- University of Surrey
- Anglo European Chiropractic College

South West:

- University of Exeter
- University of Plymouth
- University of Bristol
- Bournemouth University



Events, Campaigns, and Publications

Students and trainees played an important role in raising the profile of social prescribing through several local, regional, national and international events.

Launching the #SocialPrescribingDay Campaign (2018)

Most notably, the student group founded the international #SocialPrescribingDay campaign in 2018. This represented a humble offering from tomorrow's doctors and health professionals on the NHS 70th birthday. The campaign was officially launched during a [keynote presentation](#) at the King's Fund annual conference.

#SocialPrescribingDay has since been deeply rooted as a flagship yearly event, capturing an audience of over 60 million people on social media over the past few years with thousands of events both nationally and globally. From ministerial roundtables to community-based activities, taking place each year in March, the #SocialPrescribingDay campaign has been key to bringing key stakeholders together locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. For further articles and information on the campaign please visit Twitter or Google #SocialPrescribingDay. The next official date of the campaign is 14th of March 2024.

"Joining the SP Student Champion Scheme in 2018 was a transformative experience in my medical education. The lessons I learned from the programme - both as a Champion and later as Scottish Regional Lead for 3 years - are evident in my daily practice, allowing me to empathise with my patients and offer a level of care that is expansively informed by the realities of their lives. As a Foundation Year doctor based in secondary care, I see several in-patients who benefit from social prescriptions on discharge, and are projected to live better as a direct consequence of these efforts. The journey with the SP scheme has been invaluable, shaping me into a leader and a healthcare provider who sees beyond the medical chart."



Dr Rania Fernandes
(Junior Doctor)

“I joined the programme at its inception in 2017 and I am so glad I did. Being part of the programme for over four years during medical school taught me the importance of striving for personalised care, and making sure that what matters most to our patients is being considered. Pushing past the biomedical sphere, adapting my practice to focus not only on the management of the condition patients are presenting with, but also taking into account how that might be impacting their life and the people around them.

As a junior doctor, these skills are applicable to any specialty and clinical setting and I used them daily in my clinical practice when working in both surgical and medical specialties during my foundation years.”



Dr Lucia Lazzereschi
(Specialty Registrar)

National student conferences and events

With support and funding from NHS England, the scheme delivered a total of three national student conferences. Two were delivered in person at the Royal College of GPs (2018) and the Royal Society of Medicine (2019). One conference was delivered online during the Covid19 pandemic (2020). The scheme further delivered a webinar series between 2021 and 2023.

Academic publications and knowledge sharing

Furthermore, students presented at over 50 national and international conferences as well as publishing multiple peer-reviewed publications. A few examples are included below:

- [Evaluating student perceptions and awareness of social prescribing](#)
- [Social prescribing student champion scheme: a novel peer-assisted-learning approach to teaching social prescribing and social determinants of health](#)
- [Implementing a novel web-based educational tool to facilitate social prescribing teaching](#)
- [Empowering undergraduate students to pioneer public health education: a call for action](#)



Student Growth and Workforce Development

At the end of each year, student champions were prompted to complete a self-reflection and evaluation form analysing their personal growth due to their involvement in the scheme. Their feedback resonated strongly with the objectives of the initiative, a significant observation. The areas of development they highlighted include:

- Being part of a student-led movement.
- Opportunities for professional and career advancement.
- Enhanced understanding of social prescribing and its key success elements.
- A boost in morale.
- A deeper grasp of personalised care and the broader social determinants of health.
- Strengthened connections at local, national, and international levels.
- A heightened sense of confidence in taking action.

Additionally, it's worth noting that numerous champions began their journey with the programme as students and have since matured into practicing doctors, nurses, midwives, and other healthcare professionals. They are now incorporating the insights gained from the social prescribing student champion scheme into their day-to-day roles.

To provide a detailed perspective on the profound impact of the programme and the array of skills champions have cultivated, a collection of case studies can be found towards the conclusion of this document.

“As a medical student, becoming a Social Prescribing Student Champion opened up a new avenue to understand how medicine can be used to create a sense of long-term wellbeing for patients beyond the absence of illness. As a volunteer at a weekly social prescribing drama workshop for early-stage dementia patients, I saw first-hand the impact of drama workshops designed with evidence-based cognitive exercises for memory reinforcement. I saw how social prescribing can provide a space for patients to reconcile with a new-found sense of self not defined or burdened by diagnoses. For the first time, I saw dementia beyond the clinical gaze of neurofibrillary tangles and amyloid plaques, and found vibrancy in many who persisted through a disease that is otherwise too easily marked by loss and deficit. My experience in social prescribing renewed an empowering understanding of my role as a future doctor: We can improve illness and also create health in our patient’s lives.”



Hamaad Khan
(Medical student)

“Engaging with the SP champion scheme at medical school shaped my perspective on being a doctor. I became more aware of the social determinants and my role in tackling health inequalities. It encouraged me to approach healthcare with empathy, compassion, and aiming to address the root cause of health issues. Witnessing the empowering impact of social prescribing on individual patients, but also the shift within professions and institutions towards a more comprehensive model of care was inspiring.”



Dr Aimee Dowek
(Junior Doctor)

Global Student Initiatives

Beyond its national success, the social prescribing student champion scheme has paved the way forward and inspired the development of several international student groups across the world. Examples include the Australian Social Prescribing Student Collective launched by the Australian Medical School Association, the Canadian Social Prescribing Student Collective, the Portuguese Social Prescribing Student Collective, and the USA National Student Chapter on Social Prescribing to name a few. In collaboration with the UK student champion scheme, student leaders across the world have developed a global social prescribing student collective in order to share best practice, influence and support medical education changes on a global scale. The student group has created a [step-by-step framework](#) for setting up an international social prescribing student champion scheme.

The National Academy for Social Prescribing continues its collaboration with the Harvard Global Health Institute at Harvard University. Each summer, three Harvard University students take part in a social prescribing internship in London and contribute to existing research and the development of further resources.

“The champion scheme introduced to an extraordinary facet of healthcare that forever changed my approach to medicine. It unfolded a world where care extends beyond mere medical prescriptions to touch the very lives and wellbeing of individuals, considering their social realities. Now, as a newly qualified doctor, these experiences serve as my compass. They inform every consultation, guiding me to practice medicine with an open heart and a broad mind.”



Dr Wentin Chen
(Junior Doctor)

Core partnerships

The success of the student champion scheme is deeply rooted in the mentorship and support received from partners over the past 7 years.

Most notably is the significant funding contribution made by the National Academy for Social Prescribing through the yearly [studentships](#) (bursaries) awarded to the national social prescribing student committee. In addition to this is the funding received from NHS England for the two in-person national conferences delivered by student champions in 2018 and 2019, as well as the formal partnership with the student programme in 2017. Furthermore, the scheme developed greatly under the mentorship of NESTA colleagues and as being part of the formal programme entitled [‘Social Movements for Health’](#).

Last, but not least, at the heart of the scheme has been the incredible mentorship and in-kind support from the College of Medicine, the Social Prescribing Network, Arts4Dementia, Dunhill Medical Trust, the Personalised Care Institute, the Royal College of General Practitioners and several other royal colleges within the UK.

Many thanks for your support over the past 7 years



"I joined the team in November 2020 as one of the social prescribing student champions at UCL Medical School. I had the role for two years before becoming a London Regional Lead. My proudest moment was organising events for students to learn about social prescribing including a panel of patients, link workers, researchers and GPs.

I'm currently a Foundation Year 2 doctor working in General Practice alongside link workers. It's a real full-circle moment, and my experience as a student champion helps me better address the social circumstances that make patients unwell."



Dr Vanessa Otti
(Academic
Foundation Doctor)

Conclusion and future direction

We conclude this report with our latest national survey findings showing that all UK-based medical schools and over 20 universities delivering health-related courses have now integrated social prescribing and personalised care as part of their core curricula. While the driving force behind this significant shift may not be solely attributed to the social prescribing student champion scheme, we believe that the myriad teaching sessions and the engagement of thousands of students have significantly contributed to reaching this pivotal point. With the programme's primary goal now realised, a natural progression and evolution of the scheme is on the horizon.

Our Renewed Vision and Direction:

Delving deeper into current pedagogical approaches, our focus is to discern HOW social prescribing is imparted to students, ensuring its continual refinement. This paves the way for nurturing the next generation of healthcare professionals, equipping them with essential tools and skills that will be invaluable in their future endeavours. Now hosted by the National Academy for Social Prescribing, the scheme's aims are aligned with the wider national strategy for social prescribing.

Empowering tomorrow's health professionals

As we strive to bolster our current national and international pursuits, our vision, supported by the National Academy for Social Prescribing, is to continue a select number of annual scholarships tailored for emerging student leaders. Through these studentships, our aspiration is for students to feel a renewed sense of empowerment and enthusiasm, encouraging them to delve deeper into these sectors, lighting the path for their contemporaries. Let this be the spark that ignites a passion for positive change and inspires future leaders in the realm of healthcare.

Bethany Carroll

Occupational Therapy Student, University of Sunderland



The reason I applied to become a NASP student champion initially is because I wanted to develop my confidence by delivering a teaching session about social prescribing to my peers. This will support my career portfolio for when I begin applying for jobs as it shows my time management between my university workload and the time spent on the NASP student champion scheme, as well as facilitation of learning and being proactive.

Occupational therapy and social prescribing share similar values and models of practice which is what initially made me interested in applying. I wanted to raise awareness of social prescribing so my peers know they can refer their patients to social prescribing link workers, as not everyone will be aware of social prescribers.

How I spread the word of Social Prescribing

I recorded a teaching session which could be easily distributed to raise my peers' awareness of what social prescribing is, the importance of it, the relevance of it and included case study examples (shared with permission) from a social prescribing hub I visited.

My lecturers have fitted this session into the timetables of 5 occupational therapy cohorts for them to watch as self-directed learning.

I spoke to a lead social prescriber to help explain the role of a link worker and the benefits it has on people.

On social prescribing day I shared tweets and Instagram posts regarding social prescribing to raise awareness regionally and nationally.



“

I wanted to raise awareness of social prescribing so my peers know they can refer their patients to social prescribing link workers, as not everyone will be aware of social prescribers.

What went well

Some personal wins have been attending all meetings both regionally and nationally, being proactive and making contact with a lead social prescriber from my local area to visit their hub and learn all about social prescribing on the local area - this information was used to support my teaching session about social prescribing, and finally recording and distributing the teaching session and receiving positive feedback from my lecturers is also a big win for me as it has shown how my confidence has grown.

I received great support from my mentor Sian Brand, regional lead Jessica Walker and from a lead social prescriber from my local area.

Future ambitions

My future ambitions are to graduate from my occupational therapy degree and gain a job upon qualifying. I have not decided which area I would like to work in yet but I will take what I have learnt as a student champion and apply it to my practice in future.

I have enjoyed being part of this scheme and have found it interesting learning about social prescribing and sharing what I have learnt.

“

Receiving positive feedback from my lecturers is also a big win for me as it has shown how my confidence has grown.

Emily Dean

Medical Student, Liverpool Medical School



I initially joined the scheme because, after hearing about social prescribing, I recognised it would have helped me in my struggles with an eating disorder. Structured activity with like-minded people would have helped me so much because the activity itself and the associated friendships positively impact mental and physical wellbeing and loneliness. My experience volunteering with adults with learning disabilities through activities such as gardening, cooking, art and sports also showed me that

community built through shared experiences changes people's lives.

My aim when joining the scheme was to introduce other healthcare students to the role of social prescribing link workers and how they provide access to activities, support and volunteering opportunities for patients. It's essential that we can utilise this amazing resource to benefit individual patients.

“

My experience volunteering with adults with learning disabilities through activities such as gardening, cooking, art and sports also showed me that community built through shared experiences changes people's lives.

How I spread the word of Social Prescribing

I co-produced a social prescribing conference on Zoom for healthcare students (medics and allied health professionals) in Liverpool and Manchester - including a brief introduction to social prescribing, experience of social prescribing in practice delivered by a link worker, interactive case discussions and a Q&A session.

After meeting a social prescribing link worker on my GP placement, I was able to keep in contact with them and they came to our event as a guest speaker. I worked with a group of ambassadors in Liverpool and Manchester - we were able to effectively plan the zoom conference, with everyone contributing to the process.

What went well

Through our 1 event we reached 19 students who engaged well with the content and gave great feedback about our event. The availability of our link worker meant we had to put the event on a date that clashed with events from a few large medic societies which reduced our outreach, but we were pleased with the attendance in light of this.

Feedback from the attendee after the events:

“The session was very informative and discussive”

“It’s eye opening to see how important a social prescriber is and will contribute to primary care and help patients with their non-medical issues. Amazing speaker and content! Great!”

“Really informative session about something I have never heard of before. Very helpful explanations and clear slides.”

Future ambitions

At the end of the zoom conference, we thought about ways in which all healthcare students could promote social prescribing and these form the basis of my future ambitions:

- Prompt educators to make referrals to social prescribers
- Conduct independent research to explore what community services and groups are available in the areas surrounding placement sites
- When chatting to patients be sure to ask them about their lifestyle, home environment and hobbies - care should be for the patient as a whole person, not just a set of symptoms!

Any Challenges?

We had difficulty organising meetings to plan for the zoom conference due to differing courses, timetables, and exam pressures. Persistence and people being willing to take on any job role even if they couldn’t attend the meetings, enabled us to put together a great conference.

Gemma Acton

Occupational Therapy Student,
University of Central Lancashire



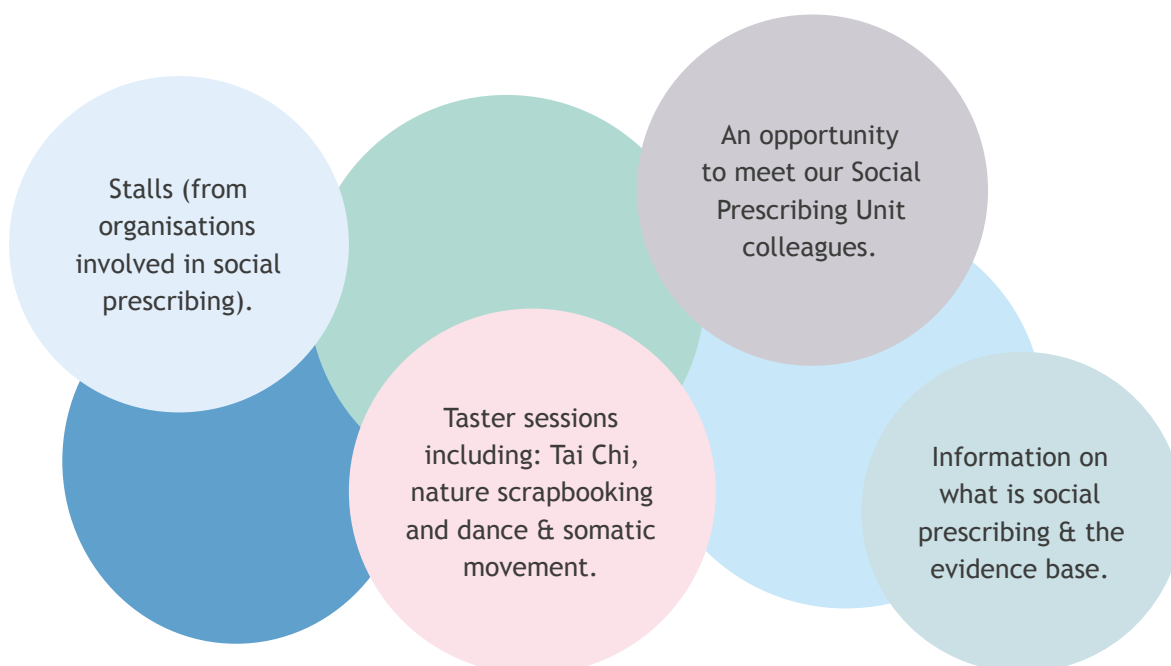
I initially wanted to join the Social Prescribing Champion Scheme as I wanted to learn more about social prescribing and the different work that other students, professionals, and community members do concerning social prescribing. I wanted the opportunity to be able to take everything I learned about social prescribing into my future occupational therapy practice.

Whilst I have been part of the studentship champion scheme, I have spoken to other students across the country about their work and what they aim to achieve. I have also used the experience I gained from the scheme to land myself a social prescribing placement at UCLan's Social Prescribing Unit. This was my final placement for my studies, and I was able to expand my knowledge and feed this back into the studentship scheme.

How I spread the word of Social Prescribing

I have been supported by the university team to organise and lead a large raising awareness event at UCLan coinciding with the celebration of Social Prescribing Day. Based at the Preston UCLan campus we have hosted.

More broadly, I have also been appointed to lead the social media campaigns around Allied Health Professional (AHP) Students involved in social prescribing.



“

Personally, my confidence has grown beyond what I thought possible. I have loved working with my team. They are all very dedicated and hard-working individuals that are working together to achieve a common goal.

What went well

Personally, my confidence has grown beyond what I thought possible. I have loved working with my team. They are all very dedicated and hard-working individuals that are working together to achieve a common goal. Initially, it was a tough adjustment as I needed more knowledge and experience with social prescribing but as a student champion, I have been able to access different resources and get support from team members throughout.

Future ambitions

My aim is to use everything I have learned from the scheme and the opportunities presented to take into my future occupational therapy practice. I am currently applying for occupational therapy jobs, and some are interested in beginning to bring social prescribing into their work environment. Thank you for letting me join this scheme, and I encourage others to do so.



Any Challenges?

Being the first to do social media for AHP students was a challenge as I had to learn more about what the different professions are doing to help the social prescribing movement. I asked my AHP lead and coordinator, as well as the social media medical officer, for support and assistance throughout the scheme. We worked well together and have been able to create content and use our social media accounts to spread the word.

NASP Student Champion Case Study

John Wells

Student Nurse, Liverpool John Moores University



I initially joined the scheme as I was very interested in social prescribing after completing a module on it in my university course. I had started

to make links in my local community and with some academic staff, who informed me that the post had been advertised.



I felt so proud to represent nurses and midwives within the scheme, especially as this was a brand-new role. I wanted to spread the word across all multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) about how amazing social prescribing is, and the dramatic changes in our patients that it can make.

How I spread the word of Social Prescribing

I have been helping spread the word to residents within the Merseyside area at various events but the most enjoyable one has been when I joined an event with Liverpool Libraries where I spent time with residents in the Central Library. It was an event that was advertised on Twitter and a local radio station and had stalls from various charities to help the people of Merseyside. I also developed an article for the Royal College of Nursing on social prescribing.



[Click here to view the article](#)



John winning 'Most Inspirational Student Nurse of the year' award at the Student Nursing Times Awards 2023.

What went well

It was a great event and allowed me to link with other charities for future event collaborations.

If I did another event soon, I think I would like a leaflet /hand out for people to take away. People did ask and instead I wrote some information down or emailed them with further information.

I was with the Liverpool Social Prescribing team and Knowsley Social Prescribing team, as well as dementia awareness charities and Alzheimer's UK. The event went well, and I think that having my laptop with an easy-to-understand video, really helped get the message across.

I later was contacted by one of the people that attended that day to tell me that he had contacted his local social prescribing base and they had organised him to meet with a link worker to help him deal with changing his living conditions.

Future ambitions

I hope that I can expand this in the future using a wider multidisciplinary approach. I have secured the local social prescribing hub manager to come to the next event. I am hoping to get some more take away information from the scheme and link with personalised care groups in the locality.

Any Challenges?

I plan to try and expand the knowledge to pre-registration healthcare students as well as people who have been in practice for more than two years. A lot of trained staff have heard of the term social prescribing, but they have no full understanding and with the lack of training in the NHS and private sectors, this will not improve. The scheme needs to be the driving force to make changes in this area.

NASP Student Champion Case Study

Sarah Bailey

MSc Physiotherapy (pre-reg), University of Bolton



I had little knowledge of social prescribing (SP) upon finding out about the Student Champion (SC) role. In the reading I was able to fit in prior to the application, I became interested in the success and potential of SP, the driving forces and impact at person, community and wider levels.

Exploring the idea that biopsychosocial and some more holistic and community-based approaches to healthcare are not in competition with current treatment modalities but to be explored and perhaps utilised for the benefits that they can offer service users and healthcare professionals alike.



I wanted the opportunity to further my experience in a leadership, teaching and champion role; but to foremostly bring the passion that I have for this approach to healthcare.

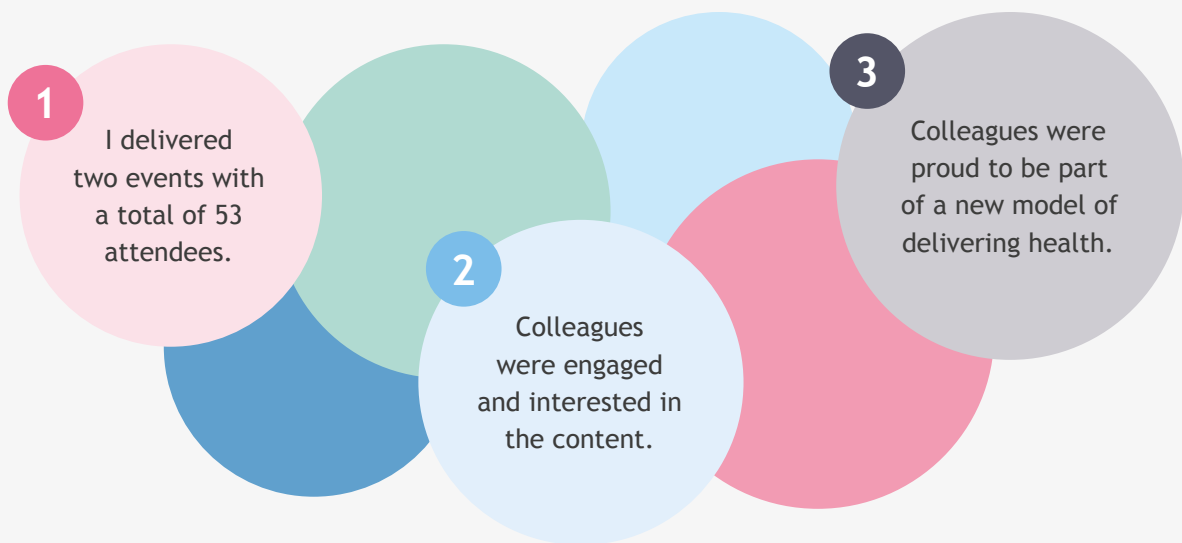
How I spread the word of Social Prescribing

After successfully obtaining the SC role and speaking to my peers on this topic I realised there was no real awareness of it at all on campus. With that in mind, I spoke to an academic at my university about the possibility of running some presentations within lectures for allied health professional (AHP) students, especially since I've seen a crossover in the teaching content of my lectures and the impact of SP.

I ran 30-minute presentations for the first-year students of BSc Physiotherapy and MSc Physiotherapy

(pre-reg) cohorts at The University of Bolton. Since I am a Physiotherapist, I was able to tailor the presentation to the physiotherapy role to foster some great engagement from the students and understanding of how SP may show up in their careers and how to start the conversations with multi-disciplinary team (MDT) members either on placements or within working roles. The students were well engaged and happy to participate in the interactive parts of the presentation.

What went well



4. My mentor assigned by NASP was in touch offering valuable support.

5. Upon leaving the presentations the feedback was great from students

6. I felt inspired after each meeting provided within this role.

7. My personal tutor academic was invaluable in arranging the lecture time that I used to deliver the presentation.



Physiotherapy student attendees post-teaching session.

Future ambitions

I hope to be considered for the continuation of this role next year since I have the materials in place for the presentations and hope that after the success with both cohorts this year that I would be able to reach more AHP students next year. Along with building a stronger relationship with the Students Union at my university. I am highly passionate about the subject and I continue to seek out leadership opportunities as they cross my path and chat informally about SP when appropriate.

Thank-you for this opportunity to deepen my knowledge of SP and its profound effects on healthcare outcomes. I have enjoyed the challenges of this role and gained invaluable experience.

Any Challenges?

- Difficult initial momentum - reached out to several academics from each AHP course at the university with little to no response or interest in SP
- Struggled to involve wider Student Union at my university due to preconceived notions with regards to previous student projects
- I found time management a challenge with my FT study since SP Day coincided with a deadline. I am also a single parent and working part-time, but I feel as though I overcame this with my passion for this topic and holistic approach.

Acknowledgements

Authors and Contributors

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"I joined the scheme in 2021 as the London Regional Lead. I was able to learn about social prescribing, expand my professional network and guide new champions - a role I found immensely fulfilling. As a newly qualified Orthoptist, the skills I have learnt have been vital to ensuring I gain the most out of each consultation with patients. I'm very grateful to be in a position where I am confident and have resources to connect patients to."



Eden Nabiyoun
(Orthoptist)

Core student champion leadership team 2022-2023

Wentin Chen
Matthew Heneghan
David Phillipps
Kirstie Goodchild
John Wells
Katie Rennie
Gemma Acton
Veronica Faluyi
Zoe Constantinou
Tamzin Ogiliev
Sai Ramesh
Rania Fernandes
Serena Hamilton
Cara Bennet
Jess Walker
Kartik Goyal
Manika Kaur Ghattarody
Beth Daire
Naabil Khan
Eden Nabiyou
Vanessa Otti

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Matthew Heneghan
Naabil Khan
Rania Fernandes
Sai Ramesh
Serena Hamilton
Tamzin Ogiliev
Vanessa Otti
Veronica Faluyi
Wentin Chen
Zoe Constantinou

“Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to the hundreds of student champions who have been the backbone of this scheme for the past seven years. A special acknowledgment is due to those in formal leadership roles and our esteemed mentors. While space doesn’t permit us to list everyone, please know that each contribution, from thousands of dedicated individuals, has been invaluable. Your collective efforts have forged this programme’s success, and for that, we are endlessly thankful.”



Dr Bogdan Chiva Giurca

Founder and Chair, Social Prescribing Champion Scheme

For further details,
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