



National
Academy
for Social
Prescribing



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

Movement on Prescription



pathways to meaningful movement through social prescribing

Neighbourhood Health & Social Prescribing: The Role of the Physical Activity Sector
15th of October 2026

Thank you for joining us. The webinar will begin shortly.

Housekeeping



MOVEMENT ON PRESCRIPTION / WEBINAR SERIES

- We are **recording** this webinar *(you will be sent the slides and the link to the recording, and they will be on NASP's website)*
- There will be a **Q&A** at the end. Please submit questions via the Q&A function.
- Please use the **chat function** for introducing yourself and networking. If you have any technical issues, please raise these in the chat, and a member of the NASP team will assist.
- **Closed Captions** are available *(turn these on at the bottom of your screen)*
- Your pre-submitted questions have helped shape today's webinar. Afterwards, we'll share a **webinar learning summary** capturing the key points and, where possible, addressing questions and themes we haven't been able to cover during the session.

Agenda

12pm - Welcome to Movement on Prescription

12:10pm - Neighbourhood Health and Physical Activity

12:20pm - Why connections matter

12:35pm - The local pathway

12:45pm - Discussion

12:58pm - Close and Poll

Movement on Prescription

A national programme led by NASP and funded by Sport England

The Challenge

Creating active communities needs a person-centred approach. Movement opportunities and health pathways are not consistently connected.

Our Purpose

Help partners embed meaningful movement through the power of social prescribing and neighbourhood health approaches, connecting effective pathways.

Our Approach

Whole-system approach that strengthens the infrastructure, the relationships and the local capacity needed to connect people to movement through social prescribing.

Health inequalities are expected to persist over the next two decades: people in the 10% most deprived areas can expect to be diagnosed with major illness a decade earlier than people in the 10% least deprived areas. [Health inequalities in 2040](#)

For movement: who is missing out locally, and what needs to change so they can take part?

Neighbourhood health: An opportunity, not a guarantee

personalised, integrated, proactive care delivered closer to home

Proactive support

Use local data and community knowledge to identify unmet need and offer support earlier.

Joined-up support

Coordinate around the whole person, across health services, councils and community organisations.

Local influence

Residents and community partners help shape priorities, services and opportunities.

It gives movement a place in how we support people to live well. Everyday community provision becomes part of the prevention conversation.

“As of the end of 2023, an estimated **9.4 million GP** consultations in England have involved social prescribing codes, and 5.5 million consultations have specifically led to social prescribing referrals. In 2023 alone, an estimated **1.3 million** patients were referred to social prescribing”

Different roles contribute to a shared response around the person

Residents and communities

Set priorities, identify barriers and shape what support feels useful.

Health and care partners

Identify needs, coordinate care and contribute clinical advice where needed.

Link workers and connectors

Explore what matters, help navigate support and enable trusted introductions.

Activity and community providers

Explain their offer, welcome people and agree realistic adaptations and capacity.

Active Partnerships

Can help connect the physical activity sector with wider local partners.



Craig Lister

Strategic Lead - Active Systems / Be Active

What we'll explore

- Why movement matters within neighbourhood health
- The wider value of social prescribing
- The need to evidence AND demonstrate the total impact to shine within the tough funding environment and competing priorities

“PA, not less necessary than food...”

Habitual persistent PA has a positive impact on the following independent from any weight change:

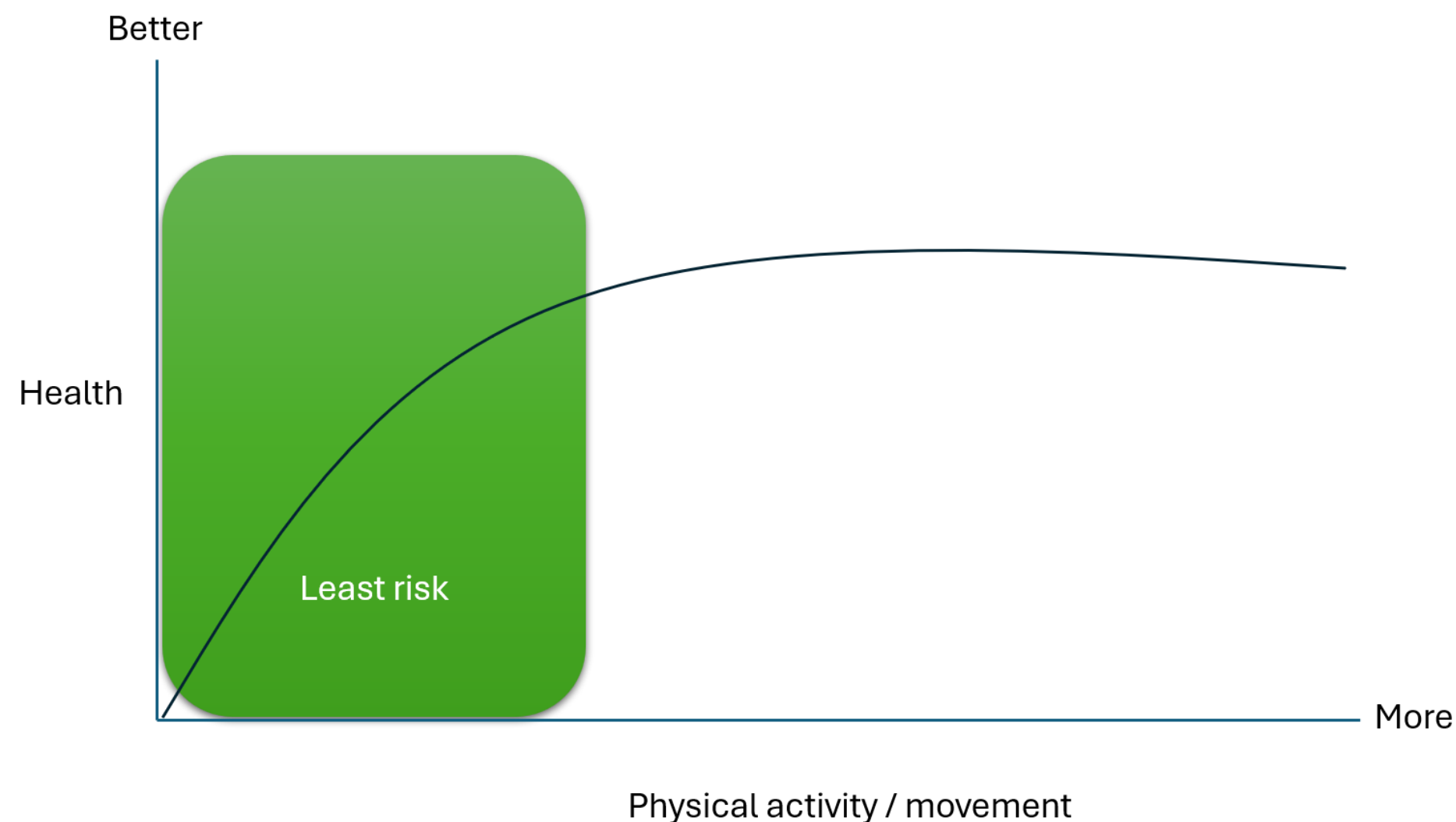
- Metabolic variables, blood flow & mitochondrial density
- Mood and wider mental health issues
- Strength, Bone Mineral Density, reduced likelihood of falls, reduced likelihood of musculoskeletal issues
- Enhanced endocrine functions involved in body weight regulation, low-grade inflammation, insulin sensitivity, suppression of tumour growth, and improvement of cognitive function¹
- Energy balance
- Improved sleep (sleep is recognised as an independent factor in good health and weight regulation)
- Some cancers (i.e., colon, prostate and breast) > quality of life and outcomes before, during and after treatment²

Natural forces within us are the true healers of disease. Hippocrates

Social prescribing considers the whole of the person, as all of medicine once did, before we were moved to a biomedical health model. The value of social prescribing is that it enhances health and wellbeing in the broadest sense, improves social relationships and can support social cohesion. It starts with what matters to the person and helps them access relevant community support alongside clinical care.

Cost, accessibility, confidence and other circumstances can make participation difficult. Strong local partnerships can help address these barriers and connect people with opportunities that support wellbeing and social connection.

Maximum benefit lowest risk*



* Moving Together

Green Gym showed strong continued engagement and health improvements at >13 months post intervention.

What next?

01

Risk*

Look out for communications from Movement on Prescription.

02

Evidence

Demonstrate the value of your work against other commissioned services - few, if any, have the breadth of SP.

03

Be vocal

Make your offer visible to health and community partners, including who it supports and how people can access it.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Shine your light or sit in the shadow
- Promote the wider/lasting benefits of SP over any single intervention
- Using patient/person testimony, especially in video* is very powerful

* With permission



Hannah McDonald

National Partnerships Lead (Health and Wellbeing)
Sport England

Sport England – Why stronger connections with Social Prescribing matter for Physical Activity

How social prescribing connects with sector & Sport England's priorities, particularly reaching people who face barriers to being active, and what the sector contributes in return.

Why this matters now?

We often hear...

‘Physical Activity is just a nice to do and sits separately from other health pathways ‘

‘Getting active means people need to go to the gym or start going to a sports club’

‘If someone has a long-term health condition it’s usually better for them to not exert themselves’

But actually, we know that...

Physical activity is a vital health pathway that prevents chronic disease, extends life expectancy, and improves mental well-being – **World Health Organisation**

Getting active can mean taking small steps to moving more throughout your day. Any activity is better than none and more is better still! – **CMO guidelines**

Movement supports prevention and management of long-term health conditions - **Health and Social Care select committee**



What Social Prescribing brings

Social prescribing is about recognising that people's health and wellbeing are shaped by much more than clinical care alone. It creates space for conversations about what matters to people, what is affecting their lives, and what kind of community-based support might help.

That might include support with loneliness, debt, housing, confidence, mental wellbeing, long-term health conditions, or simply finding a way back into community life. Social prescribing link workers and wider social prescribing teams can help people navigate that support in a way that feels relevant and manageable.

For the physical activity sector, this matters because many of the people who could benefit most from moving more are also the people least likely to engage with traditional activity offers. Social prescribing can help create a bridge between people's needs, local community assets, and opportunities to be active in ways that make sense to them.

The opportunity through social prescribing

From a health conversation to movement that fits.

1

HEALTH CONVERSATION

“What matters to you?”



2

TRUSTED CONNECTION

Link workers and local
community support



3

ACTIVITY THAT FITS

Walking, gardening,
swimming + more

MOVEMENT ON PRESCRIPTION

National programme led by NASP • funded by Sport England

Source: National Academy for Social Prescribing

Availability is not the same as Accessibility



Physical activity can support a wide range of outcomes. It can help people build confidence, manage stress, connect with others, improve mobility, support independence and feel more in control of their own wellbeing.

But we also need to be honest that simply having an activity offer available is not enough. **An offer can exist for people — and still feel out of reach.**

For many people, the barriers are not just about information or motivation, they can be -

PRACTICAL BARRIERS

Cost
Transport
Childcare
Accessibility

EMOTIONAL BARRIERS

Low confidence
Fear of judgement
Past experiences

SOCIAL + CULTURAL BARRIERS

“Not designed for me”
Unfamiliar language
No trusted welcome

A route from what matters to a person to support that feels relevant and manageable.

Shared Priorities

This is where the connection with Sport England and sector priorities becomes really clear. We are all focused on helping more people to live active lives, but especially on reaching those who face the greatest barriers and those who are least likely to be active.

Social prescribing shares that focus. It is rooted in listening to people, understanding the wider determinants of health, working with local assets and supporting prevention. That makes it a natural partner for the physical activity sector.

At its best, this relationship can help us move from activity being something people are told they should do, to something that is connected to what matters to them — whether that is getting out of the house, managing pain, meeting people, feeling stronger, improving mood, or simply finding something enjoyable in their local community.

What the physical activity sector brings



The sector contributes

Local knowledge of people and place

Trusted relationships and organisations

Skilled people who can welcome and adapt

Welcoming spaces across communities

Practical opportunities to move more



Stronger links return

A clearer view of demand and unmet need

New routes to reach people

More inclusive design around real lives

Stronger evidence of wellbeing outcomes

What does stronger connection look like in practice?

It isn't about

- Just sending more referrals to Physical Activity offers

It is about

- **Building mutual understanding** between social prescribing teams and the physical activity sector,
- **Creating clearer local pathways**, co-designed around people, not expecting them to fit existing systems.
- **Neighbourhood health** offers a great opportunity to do this as it provides the local delivery model—bringing health, social prescribing and community activity partners together around people's lives.
- **Improving knowledge** of what physical activity offers exist.
- **Using shared language** to make conversations more accessible – moving more, feeling better, getting out
- **Taking time to understand** what would really make the first step to being more active easier.

‘Movement on Prescription can help make physical activity a practical part of neighbourhood prevention, personalised care and support closer to home’

The call to action

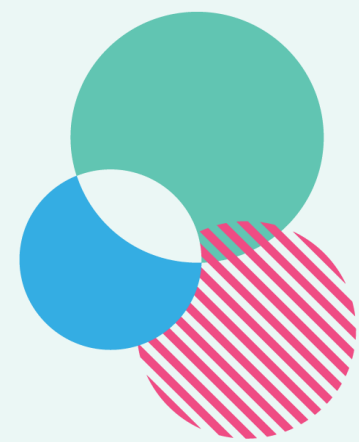
To make Physical Activity a stronger, more visible and more trusted part of Social Prescribing – we need to...

Build the relationships so there is shared understanding and collaboration

Make the physical activity offer easier to navigate

Remove barriers together, co-designing activity opportunities that are relevant, inclusive and realistic

By doing this we can connect people to the right activity, in the right way, at the right time.



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Sian Brand

**NASP Associate and Independent Social Prescribing,
Health & Wellbeing Consultant**

CONNECTING WITH THE LOCAL PATHWAY

Relationships before targets/outputs

Trust takes time.
Start with a conversation, not a referral target.



01

GET TO KNOW

Link workers • PCN teams
Practice staff • Residents &
VCFSE/Community

MAKE ENGAGEMENT EASIER

Understand each others world

01

PEOPLE

Who does what?
Who has capacity?
Work with the willing



02

PRESSURES

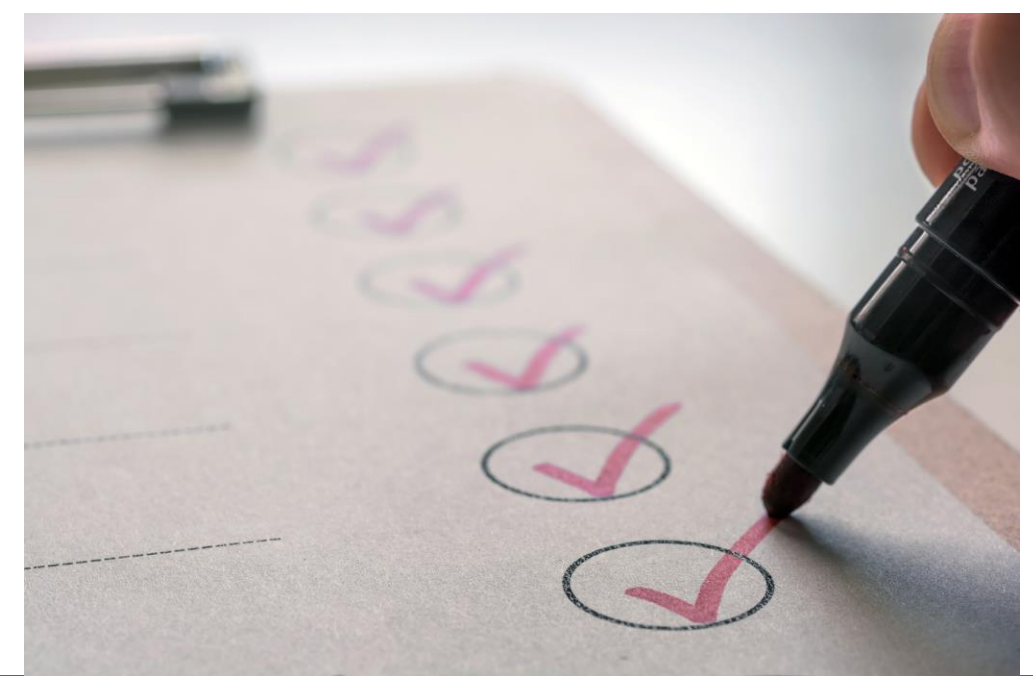
Timing matters.
Think winter demand,
think clinical pressures



03

PRIORITIES

Diabetes? Asthma?
Frailty?
Get to know local
priorities



THREE PERSPECTIVES, ONE AMBITION

Find your shared purpose

01

PRIMARY CARE

Needs • clinical context
Personalised support • MDTs

02

ACTIVITY PARTNERS

Skills • spaces
Community connections • PA
expertise

03

PEOPLE

Lived experience
Strengths • choice

NEIGHBOURHOOD MODELS - INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

What matters to all of us?

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Co-design WITH, not FOR

START WITH STRENGTHS

People + relationships + local assets

“Never do for others what they can do for themselves.”

Invite residents early • Explore PPGs where they exist



AN ILLUSTRATIVE LOCAL PATHWAY

Start small. Learn. Adapt.



01

LISTEN

Local priority +
resident voice

02

DESIGN

Accessible movement
offers

03

AGREE

Safety + warm
handover

04

LEARN

Experience +
participation

Named contacts • appropriate screening • consent • feedback

TAKE ACTION LOCALLY

One practical ask for the next 30 days

01

CONNECT

Meet one link worker / PCN colleague or Active Partnership colleague

02

DISCOVER

Ask what matters to them and residents

03

TRY

Co-design one small, achievable step

Relationships → trust → opportunities people can use

TAKE ACTION LOCALLY

People are at the heart of what we all support



The same people, the
same neighbourhoods

RELATIONSHIPS
MATTER

Q&A

We'd love to hear your questions

We'll start with questions submitted ahead of the webinar, before moving onto live questions.

Please use the Q&A box to submit your questions.

Keep the momentum going

Social Prescribing Essentials

Explore NASP's introductory e-learning course.

Today's resources

A webinar summary, slides and recording will be shared soon.

Stay connected

Discover future Movement on Prescription and NASP webinars and events.



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