



National
Academy
for Social
Prescribing

Supporting Integrated Care Systems to maximise the value of Social Prescribing

About the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP)

The National Academy of Social Prescribing is a charity funded by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to advocate for social prescribing, by developing guidance, sharing knowledge and best practice in order to advance social prescribing. It is our core purpose to ensure consistency and high quality social prescribing is delivered at scale and will therefore support to implement NHS England Social Prescribing best practice and Community Based Support guidance.

Social Prescribing and value to Integrated Care Systems (ICSs)

Social prescribing provides a way for health and care systems to connect people to community-based activities and support to address practical, emotional and social issues affecting their health and wellbeing.

The 2019 [NHS Long Term Plan](#) committed to rolling out social prescribing across primary care networks in England via the roll out of social prescribing link workers. There are nearly 4000 Additional Role Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) funded link workers in England and many Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are also developing social prescribing in other parts of the NHS and addressing the role of ICSs as well as Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in maximising the value of social prescribing.

When commissioned and implemented strategically social prescribing and community-based approaches can:

- Improve health and wellbeing¹
- Tackle health inequalities (e.g. COR20PLUS5 Community Connectors)
- Reduce pressure on service and result in significant return on investment when commissioned and implemented strategically².

NASP are fully committed to supporting ICSs and PCNs to realise the full value of mature social prescribing. We have strategic partnerships with national bodies including NHS England, NAVCA, Natural England, Arts Council England (ACE), Sport England and Independent Age, and so are uniquely positioned to enable integrated care systems realise the potential of these strategic partners to support integrated community-based approaches to health and wellbeing.

In order to support ICSs, we have recently recruited a national team of expert Senior Advisors with high level experience of system change management and integrating social prescribing in both health system and VCSE. Our senior advisors

¹ [Evidence - National Academy for Social Prescribing | NASP \(socialprescribingacademy.org.uk\)](#)

² [Building the economic case for social prescribing report \(socialprescribingacademy.org.uk\)](#)

will support ICSs to develop mature, integrated social prescribing and community approaches to health and wellbeing.

NASP Core ICS offer

We set our offer to ICSs, resourced through our Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) funding, and therefore at no cost to systems. We offer our internal faculty, including Senior Advisors to support and access a wide range of resources and support to lead, commission, deliver and evaluate social prescribing. This includes sector specific and thematic support, such as toolkits for ‘Green’ nature-based social prescribing, development guides on Children and Young People’s (CYP) social prescribing and health condition specific evidence and guidance.

Strategic development and leadership

- Initial assessment of current service provision and an overview of maturity against the NHS England maturity framework, This will include a stocktake of workforce numbers (both ARRS and non ARRS funded roles), identifying gaps and identifying challenges in systems.
- Guidance on expanding social prescribing into new areas such as:
 - Major Condition Pathways in line with the [Major Condition’s Strategy](#)
 - Children and Young People (CYP)
 - Green social prescribing
 - Arts, Culture & Health
 - Physical Activity
 - Financial wellbeing
 - Older people
- Engaging senior leaders across sectors and Government Departments.
- Support to connect to regional infrastructure of wider sectors via our national partnerships, including Sport England, Historic England, Natural England and Arts Council England.
- Communication materials to promote social prescribing to the public and healthcare workforce.
- Expert speakers to attend meetings, conferences and events to share knowledge on social prescribing and latest national policy developments.
- Access to webinars, conferences and digital guides.
- Access and participation to communities of practice and Innovation Network Hub.

- General guidance on policy, evidence reviews and newsletters to share the latest knowledge, new developments and best practice, for example, utilising social prescribing to improve GP access.
- Access to investment programmes such as our ‘Power of Music’ fund for people with dementia, targeted at Integrated Care Board (ICB) led partnerships.

Planning and commissioning

- Sharing principles of best practice in commissioning social prescribing including developing shared investment models. We will work with 1-2 ICSs to pilot shared investment models
- Supporting with development of strong business cases for social prescribing and community approaches
- Guidance on existing outcomes and evaluation frameworks to measure impact

Data and digital

- Offer guidance on implementing the national social prescribing information standard (through a national webinar)
- Advice and guidance on data sharing and interoperability of systems

Evidence and impact

- Guidance on developing benefit realisation models.
- Sharing research and evidence on social prescribing, including on the economic benefits and return on investment, to enable development of business cases and commissioning, including primary care, secondary and acute care and wider community.
- Guidance on return-on-investment models, impact evaluation, measuring outcomes and data collection.
- Guidance for VCSE providers to measure the impact of their social prescribing services and activities to enable more robust reporting.

Workforce Development & Clinical Education

- Engaging and supporting clinicians and other health staff through the Social Prescribing Champions programme to increase knowledge, awareness and support for social prescribing across the health and care system.

- Advice and guidance to utilise NHS England workforce development plan, specifically the competency standards, to improve recruitment, retention, training and development and career progression.
- Support to develop integrated workforce development strategies across health Local Authorities and Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise (VCSFE).
- Guidance on embedding link workers in integrated neighbourhood teams
- Guidance on utilising our NHS Social Prescribing Champions scheme.
- Access and guidance on use of our workforce guidance such as Link Worker Induction pack, CYP ARRS guidance and Financial Advice ARRS guidance
- Access to our Link Worker Advisory Group (LWAG) to offer guidance on real-time Link Worker input.
- Guidance on retention via our LWAG and workforce support offer.
- Support with local training to wider NHS colleagues and Medical/AHP students via training hubs, universities and vocational training schemes (VTS) such as GP VTS - maximise our in house guides and assets.
- Wider workforce infrastructure (buddies, volunteers, men's sheds connectors) support through guidance such as community connector toolkit guidance.

Knowledge share

- Our senior advisors have knowledge and expertise in relevant social prescribing national policy, best practice and can help systems to access and use NHS England and best practice guidance, materials, toolkits and case studies from around the UK and internationally to plan, develop and commission social prescribing services and pathways. This will include guidance on:
 - Population Health Management
 - CORE20PLUS5 & social prescribing
- Guidance on Whole System Approach and inclusive practice of meaningful collaboration at ICS and neighbourhood level, drawing on guidance as set out in the [Fuller Stocktake report](#).
- Access to thematic evidence summaries including physical activity, natural environment, older people, children and young people, to guide policy and practice.

NASP Consultancy offer

NASP also offers a bespoke consultancy service to support strategic commissioning and implementation, evaluation and research.

Strategic development and leadership

Deep dive review of system overview of social prescribing, including in depth analysis of:

- Workforce infrastructure
- Workflow process
- Population Health Management support (stratification of relevant population groups to support local priorities)
- Support with addressing gaps and opportunities to reduce health utilisation, cost savings and cost avoidance and other health outcomes or local priorities
- Following review, offer support to co-design a cost effective SP pathways
- Tailored and expert advice on full implementation of specialist social prescribing pathways into new areas such as:
 - Major condition pathways in line with the major condition's strategy
 - Children and young people (CYP)
 - Green social prescribing
 - Arts, Culture & Health
 - Physical Activity
 - Financial wellbeing
 - Older people

Planning and commissioning

- Development of strong business cases for social prescribing and community approaches
- Co-develop local system level outcomes and evaluation frameworks to measure impact

Developing the workforce

- Bespoke training programmes for Link Workers and leadership development skills for social prescribing
- Deliver tailored Training Needs Analysis of workforce and deliver an assessment of needs report

Data and Digital

- Full delivery of implementation of digital social prescribing case management systems at a place and/or systems level

Evidence and impact

- Evaluation of local services
- Evaluation of social prescribing services at ICS level
- Design and develop benefit realisation models.
- Design return-on-investment models, impact evaluation, measuring outcomes and lead on data collection and data/econometric analysis.