

Social Prescribing

In Children and Young People, and Their Families

Social prescribing is an evidence-based, person-centred approach that connects people to community activities, and supports their interests—like exercise, art, or volunteering—through co-created care plans, to improve health and wellbeing through connection and belonging.

It focuses on the social side of health, recognising that feeling connected can positively influence many areas of life.

How It Works

1. Identify needs

A health professional or trusted person notices social, emotional or practical issues

2. Refer

Connect the person with a local Link Worker

3. Plan

The Link Worker listens and co-creates a plan around what matters most

4. Connect

The person is linked with local activities, services and supports for their interest

Examples of Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is tailored to individual needs and desires – examples include whatever matters to the person or makes life more wonderful!

- Exercise or walking groups
- Art, dance, or music programs
- Volunteering opportunities
- Peer support groups
- Pathways to education, housing or employment

Why It Matters

- 1 in 3 Australians experience loneliness.
- 2 in 5 young adults report feeling isolated.
- The health impact of loneliness is comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, increasing the risk of heart attack, stroke, depression, and early death.

For more info, see:
*Inquiry into social isolation and loneliness in Queensland**

Social prescribing helps address these risks by building connection and capability, leading to better mental, physical, and social outcomes.

What the evidence shows

- **Improves** quality of life and wellbeing - up to 97% report improvement^{1,2,3,5}
- **Reduces** loneliness by up to 69%^{3,4}
- **Decreases** hospitalisations (up to 80%) and GP visits (20-68%)^{3,4}
- **Increases** work readiness and social participation^{1,2,7}
- Delivers a **\$3.84 return** for every \$1 invested^{1,4,7}

Social prescribing is **not** a replacement for medical care, case management, or complex social work — it complements them by addressing the social side of health.

- **Ask the question: "What matters to you?"**
- **Refer or connect: Link your patient or client with a local Link Worker**
- **Partner with us : Build stronger referral pathways and community partnerships**

Together we can strengthen community connection and help people live healthier, more meaningful lives.

¹<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Tabled-Papers/docs/5721t2070/5721t2070.pdf>
²<https://doi.org/10.25082/AHB.2020.01.001> ³<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-020-00631-6>
⁴<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.902199> ⁵A review of the evidence assessing impact of social prescribing on healthcare demand and cost implications | The Essence Project
⁶<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1359855> ⁷<https://doi.org/10.1177/1757913920967040>
⁸<https://doi.org/10.1177/02692155241258903>