



# Core Standards and Values for Social Prescribing in Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Improving community support across Wales



A summary for  
young people



## ➔ Social prescribing

Social prescribing connects people to local community support that can help with health and wellbeing.

Most social prescribing services are for adults aged 18 and over.

But some services also support children and young people.



## ➔ What community support looks like



Community support can be:  
**face-to-face** or **online**.



It can be:  
**formal** or **informal**.



It can happen **indoors** at places like community centres, health centres or sport clubs.



It can happen **outdoors** at places like parks, gardens or on open water.



It can include **groups** that improve your physical and mental wellbeing like:



- youth clubs
- drama groups
- healthy lifestyle groups



- befriending groups
- running or sports groups
- groups for older people



- local choirs
- community food projects or gardens.



It can include **support** for specific needs like:



- financial and housing advice
- dance to help older people keep their balance and reduce the chance of them falling
- art therapy groups to support mental health.

## ✓ Social prescribing can help people:

- manage their health and wellbeing

- feel more in control by choosing support that suits them

- get advice on things like debt, housing or loneliness

- reduce anxiety and improve mental health

- get support earlier, so problems do not get worse

- access support more fairly, so fewer people are left out.

- feel less isolated by connecting with others



It can also reduce pressure on healthcare services.



### Ellen is a mum.

She feels worried about money and it affects her sleep.

She talks to her GP. The GP connects her to social prescribing.

Ellen gets help with financial advice and local support.

Now she's feeling less stressed and more in control.

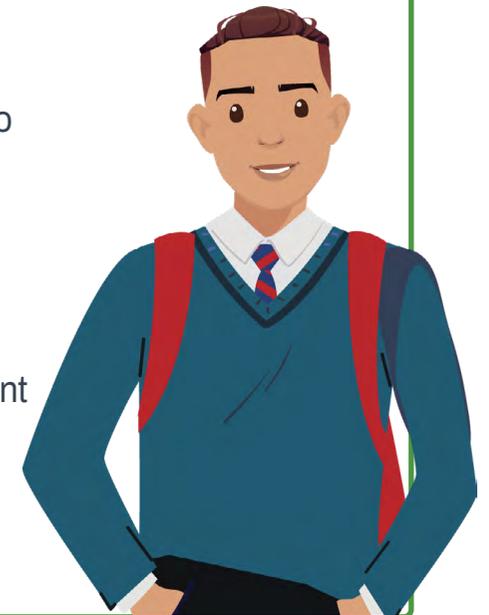
### Sam is 14.

He feels low and finds it hard to connect with people.

He talks to a teacher, who tells him about local groups.

Sam joins a running group.

Now he's feeling more confident and he's making friends.



# Standard 1: Putting people first

People should come first. Their needs, wishes and goals should shape the support and how it is given.

Children and young people should be treated with respect. Their views, needs and goals should be listened to and taken seriously.

## Social prescribing should involve:

➔ building a good relationship and taking time to get to know the person

➔ starting with “what matters” to people and helping them make choices

➔ respecting people’s values, beliefs, culture and personal wishes

➔ including others in support like family, friends, and professionals they trust

➔ building on people’s strengths and what they already do well

➔ sharing information clearly, in the right language, and making it easy to give feedback

➔ helping remove barriers like cost, travel, time, or caring responsibilities

➔ making plans together and checking in, so support can change when needed

➔ offering people different options of support at different times in their lives

➔ listening to feedback and using people’s experiences to improve support.



## Standard 2: Dealing with inequalities

Everyone should be able to get the right support, whatever their age, background, ability or life situation. Fair support means giving people what they need. It doesn't always mean treating everyone the same.

### Social prescribing should involve:

➔ reaching people who are often left out through outreach, events and community groups

➔ removing barriers that stop people getting support — transport, digital access, money worries, language needs and more

➔ supporting people who face stigma or don't feel included because of homelessness, mental health illness or problems with drugs and alcohol

➔ being trauma-informed and culturally aware so people feel safe and understood

➔ understanding how some people need more support than others and be flexible, with extra time and care

➔ responding in the right ways when people are struggling with more than one challenge

➔ using information and data to spot where support is most needed.

**i Inequalities** – when life is harder for some people than for others, in ways that are not fair.

**i Stigma** – being judged or treated unfairly because of who you are or what you have been through.

**i Trauma-informed** – offering support in a way that feels safe and understands that past experiences can still affect people today.

**i Culturally aware** – respecting people's backgrounds and making sure support fits their needs.



## Standard 3:

# Keeping people safe and managing risks (Safeguarding)

Everyone should be kept safe from harm. This includes children, young people and adults who may be at risk.

### Social prescribing should involve:

➔ following the law and making sure support is safe from the start

➔ having clear rules and ways of working, so people can act quickly if someone is at risk

➔ making sure staff are trained and supported to work safely with people of all ages

➔ making sure staff and volunteers understand their role and have safety checks

➔ making sure information and referrals are made at the right time and shared in the right ways

➔ making sure referrals are suitable and include all the important information needed to support someone safely

➔ sharing the right information at the right time to keep someone safe, while respecting their privacy

➔ checking that support is working and making changes if needed

➔ reporting any concerns about abuse, neglect, or exploitation, even when it is hard to spot or something doesn't feel right

➔ giving community groups support to understand their role, what they are responsible for, and what is not expected of them

➔ working together and communicating clearly so everyone knows what to do and people are not put at risk.

**i Referrals** – helping someone move to the right service for support.

**i Exploitation** – when someone takes advantage of another person.



## Standard 4: Trauma-informed support

Trauma is when difficult things someone has been through affect their feelings, body or behaviour.

People may feel stressed, overwhelmed or find it hard to trust others. Support should feel safe and not cause anyone any extra harm.

### Social prescribing should involve:

➔ creating spaces that feel calm and safe with quiet areas

➔ offering activities that can help people feel grounded and calm like walking, art, time in nature and creative activities

➔ building trust over time and understanding that past experiences can affect how safe support feels

➔ making sure everyone working across services understand trauma and work in ways that are safe

➔ supporting staff to learn and improve their work.



# Standard 5: Supporting people through all of life

Most social prescribing services are for adults aged 18 and over. We want social prescribing to also support children and young people.

This is about supporting people early, so they can grow, feel well and thrive in their communities. It also helps make sure children's rights are respected.

## Social prescribing should involve:

➔ respecting children's rights (UNCRC)

➔ using a "no wrong door" approach

➔ supporting children and young people's health and learning by giving them extra help outside of schools or health care

➔ connecting children and young people to local activities, groups and services

➔ planning activities for children close to their home, family, carers, and community

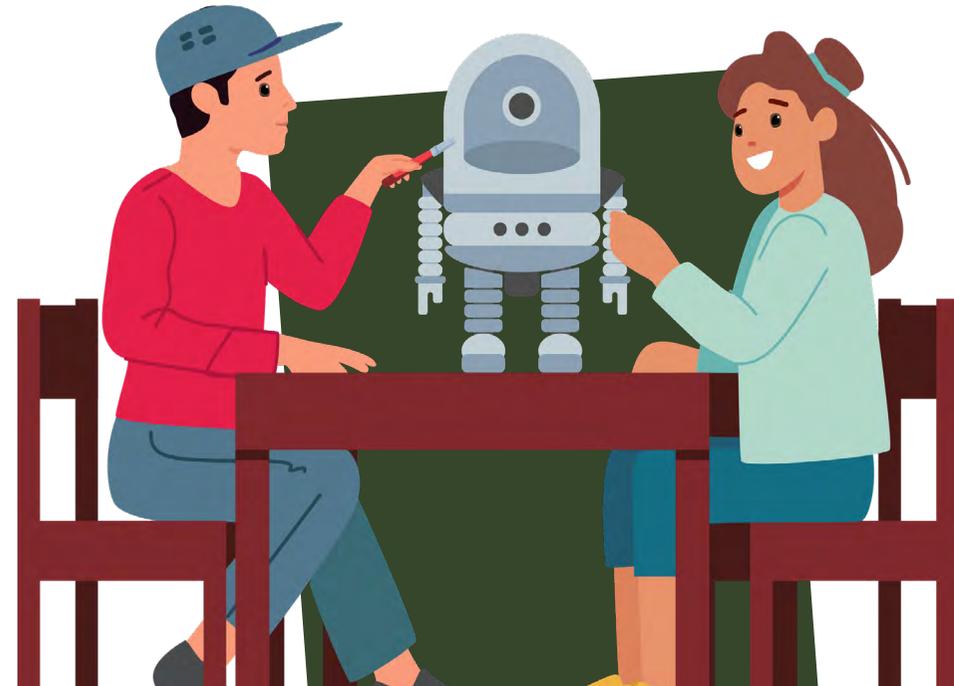
➔ supporting families early to build healthy habits and stop problems getting worse

➔ putting play at the centre of support for children and families

➔ helping older people stay involved in their communities, feel valued, and live well as they age.

**i UNCRC** – The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – a set of rights that says how children should be treated and cared for.

**i "No wrong door" approach** – no matter which service someone contacts first, they should be listened to and helped to get the right support.



## Standard 6: Welsh language

People have the right to use Welsh when getting support. This is about need and fairness, not just choice.

### Social prescribing should involve:

➔ offering Welsh from the start, without people having to ask. This is called 'an active offer'

➔ treating Welsh equally to English in services

➔ planning Welsh language services better

➔ following Welsh language laws and guidance

➔ sharing good ideas and improving services.



# What will help social prescribing work

Social prescribing works best when people understand it and services work together.

To help this happen, social prescribing needs:

- to be built to last and cope with change
- staff with the right skills, knowledge and support
- strong leadership that helps services work together, share learning and support staff
- community assets used in the right ways, without harming the spaces and environments people enjoy and depend on.

Social prescribing also needs:

- clear communication and strong working relationships between professionals and community groups
- information that people understand so they know what support is available locally.

**i Community assets** – local people, groups, places and activities that support wellbeing and connection. This can include clubs, charities, parks, libraries and community organisations.



# Core values

We want everyone to work together to protect and support local community groups, places, and resources that help improve wellbeing now and in the future.



**People** getting support should:

- be treated with respect and dignity
- have a say and be listened to
- be involved in decisions about their support
- be treated with kindness and understanding
- have their privacy protected
- get help across all areas of their life
- be able to trust the support they are getting.



**Professionals** who connect people to support should:

- respect everyone they work with
- keep people safe and not cause harm
- be clear about what is happening and why
- take responsibility and act fairly
- listen and try to understand how someone feels
- follow all laws and rules
- keep improving their work.



**Community assets** that people use should:

- feel welcoming and open to everyone
- respect different cultures, backgrounds and ways of life
- be safe, fair and well run
- be able to change when people's needs change
- listen to people who use services so they can improve.

## Checking it works

Checking how well things are working helps services improve. It helps build trust with everyone involved and encourages others to offer support. It also shows others why social prescribing is worth using.

Social prescribing can help people in many different ways, so the results are not always the same for everyone.

Some people may feel happier or healthier, while others may gain confidence, skills, or practical support.

This can make it harder to measure and spot what works well, and what doesn't.

So, we have written guides to help services check how well things are working.

They should collect:

- **Quantitative data** — information they can count, like numbers and facts.
- **Qualitative data** — what people say about their experiences, their story, their feelings and opinions.

## Celebrating success

Celebrating success helps people feel valued and encourages services to keep improving. Sharing positive stories also shows how social prescribing is helping communities.



**Social prescribing  
should work for you, in  
your community, in a  
way that feels safe, fair  
and right for your life.**



## Thanks for reading

You can read more about social prescribing here:

[gov.wales/national-framework-social-prescribing](https://gov.wales/national-framework-social-prescribing)