



Wales Social Prescribing Research Network 2018-2019 Brief Summary of Activity

Thanks you to the steering group members for their contribution to this report.

Members: Carolyn Wallace (co-chair/academic lead), Judith Stone/Sally Rees (co-chair), David Pontin, Emma Davies-McIntosh, Freya Davies, Glynne Roberts, Joyce Kenkre, Judith Stone, Liesbeth Beeckman, Mark Griffiths, Mark Llewellyn, Mary Lynch, Megan Elliott, Nina Ruddle, Rebecca Evans, Ruth Northway, Sara Thomas, Sarah Wallace, Soo Vinnicombe, Steve Smith.

The social prescribing programme of work commenced December 2018 with a 10k grant from Wales School for Social Care Research. The aim was to set up the Wales Social Prescribing Research Network (WSPRN) and start to build the evidence base for social prescribing in Wales. It is co-chaired by Prof Carolyn Wallace (USW/PRIME) & Judith Stone/Dr Sally Rees (WCVA). It is a cross agency/multi-professional group. The research network has 296 members, of which a steering group of 20 are research active. It supports three communities of practice in north, west and south east Wales and uses a translational model of research.

In 2018 it conducted two All Wales consensus events. In May 2018 in Cardiff it agreed and set its social prescribing (SP) research priorities for Wales. In October 2018, it agreed an outcomes framework. What has become apparent is that Wales (similar to Ireland and Scotland) has multiple models of SP which include community development/ community navigators, wellbeing centres, Link workers in primary care and self-referral. The third sector is the dominant provider of SP in Wales as opposed to the NHS in England.

In April 2019 an application was made to Health and Care Research Wales for Infrastructure funding to support a 'Wales Institute for Social Prescribing Research'. We have since had conversations with the funder and await a decision on funding for 2020.

Funding income

A number of grants have been directly secured as a result of our work totalling over £720,000. The following are led or have a member of the steering group on the team.

- SPRING (Social Prescribing in Mental Health) a mixed-methods evaluation of a brief social prescribing intervention for people with low-moderate mental health issues with Mind Cymru (Prof. Mark Llewellyn lead)
- PROSPECT (Improving Mental Health through Social Prescribing) a mixed-methods evaluation of an intensive social prescribing intervention for people with low-moderate

Prof Carolyn Wallace & Megan Elliott (December 2019)

mental health issues and frequent attenders in primary and secondary care with British Red Cross (Prof. Mark Llewellyn lead)

- HCRW Pathway to Portfolio (Dr Sally Rees lead). A consensus workshop to identify key priorities for 'creating sustainable community assets/social capital within the context of social prescribing'. Workshop findings will lead to the development and submission of one large grant application and 1-2 smaller grant applications.
- Health Education and Improvement Wales - SP learning needs for Wales (Prof Carolyn Wallace lead). A Group Concept Mapping study which identified important learning needs which were available and not available, and important, along a timeline from pre-induction to 1 year and ongoing.
- RESPECT (Realist evaluation of social prescribing with time credits) – research collaboration between Cardiff University, Leicester University and Bangor University. (Dr Mary Lynch co-applicant, Prof Carolyn Wallace as steering group expert advisor).

KESS funded PhD and MRES students:

- Tom Roberts (PhD at University of South Wales) - Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB, commenced Jan 2019. Study focus on the role of the link worker.
- Susan Beese (PhD at University of South Wales) - RCT Interlink, Commenced Jan 2019. Realist Evaluation of SP community assets.
- Leanne Hadley (MRES at University of South Wales) – The Madeline Project and Cardiff & Vale UHB, Commenced April 2019. What matters to me when I'm paying for care - developing a person centred model of communicating information about social and NHS funded care.
- Abraham Mankanjuola (MRES at Bangor University) – An evaluation study to investigate recruitment information into social prescribing interventions and explore the skills sets of link workers in dealing with complex case referrals.
- MRES at Bangor University, commencing April 2020 – Developing a theory of change for a complex programme; a systematic framework for ensuring delivery of outcomes in a new Wellbeing Hub in Nantlle Valley.
- MRES at Bangor University, commencing April 2020 – Developing a conversation about identifying community needs to embrace well-being through social prescribing interventions.

Other activity

- Consensus event in Crai, Powys to co-create an operational and evaluation plan for a new social prescribing and sleep initiative. The workshop generated many interesting ideas and a report has been shared with attendees for consultation.
- Building research capacity in the third sector through collaborating with partners in the network including; the Wales Arts Health and Well-being Network, Small Woods, Grow Well, Cardiff & Vale Chaplaincy and others.
- Dissemination of social prescribing work at national and international conferences in 2019 including; the Rural Health and Care Conference, Economic Social & Research Council (ESRC) 2019 Festival of Social Science, Wales School for Social Care Research Capacity Building Event, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) Social Prescribing conference and the 2nd International Social Prescribing Network Conference in Westminster.
- Sara Thomas is chairing the Cwm Taf Regional Partnership Board sub-group for social prescribing and Prof Carolyn Wallace is representing the WSPRN network and research and evaluation elements on this work. The first meeting was in October.

- Collaboration with academic partners in Swansea University, Glyndwr University and the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care with a focus on student wellbeing and social prescribing.
- BBC interview and film of Prof Carolyn Wallace and Sara Thomas (Public Health Wales) discussing the social prescribing programme, benefits of the scheme for physical and mental health, types of activities that are involved, how to get involved with social prescribing and the economics of social prescribing.
- WSPRN is the social prescribing circle of interest for Regional Centre for Expertise (RCE) Cymru, one of the 150 United Nations universities network. In 2019, Prof Carolyn Wallace facilitated a workshop for RCE Cymru and others in the UK to agree principles of collaboration going forward.
- WSPRN has links with international colleagues in Spain, Italy, Poland and Northern Ireland.

Wales Social Prescribing Research Network in the context of other organisations in Wales

