Social Prescribing: Evidence of Keys to Success

Through Social Prescribing, a Manitoba health care provider can refer a patient/ client to a Senior Resource Coordinator (SRC) who will work with the client, to jointly identify and consider-community-based programs or services that can improve the client's social connections, health and well-being.

But what approaches work to get clients / patients willing to be referred to a SRC? And under what circumstances do clients start, and continue recommended activities?

This fact sheet gives of summary of research evidence of three key stages of social prescribing and the factors that contribute to success[1] .

[1] Husk, K., Blockley, K., Lovell, R., Bethel, A., Lang, I., Byng, R., & Garside, R. (2020). What approaches to social prescribing work, for whom, and in what circumstances? A realist review. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, *28*(2), 309–324.

Social Prescribing Manitoba is led by the Manitoba Association of Senior Communities. For more information see: manitobaseniorcommunities.ca

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Keys to Success

1. The client / patient agrees to be referred to a SRC

Patients/clients are more likely to be willing to be referred to a SRC IF:

- they believe the referral will help them
- the referral matches their needs and expectations

2. The client is willing and able to participate in programs

Patients/clients are more likely to attend a program recommended by the SRC IF:

- the program is accessible; for example, it is within walking distance, or there is transportation, and it is affordable for the person
- attendance at the first session is supported; for example, if there is a 'buddy system' so that the SRC or another person accompanies the person to the first session; or the SRC makes a follow-up call after the first session.

3. The client continues to participate in programs

Patients/clients are more likely to continue participating in a program IF:

- the program leader(s) is/are skilled; for example, friendly, helpful, motivating, encouraging
- the person sees a positive change with regard to the problem that led to the referral

Example

James sees his physician on a regular basis for a chronic condition. He knows that being more physically active would be beneficial. When the physician suggests a referral to a SRC to find out what activity programs might be suitable for him, James agrees to be referred.

The SRC contact James and recommends a few fitness programs. Because James does not drive anymore, the SRC also indicates that he can access a volunteer driving program.

James starts to regularly attend a fitness program and finds that his physical and mental health is improving.