





SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

IN PRISON & THE COMMUNITY











Who is Recoop?

Recoop believes in a future where older people, who come into contact with the criminal justice system, can lead healthy, dignified and fulfilling lives.

Recoop is the specialist provider of services for the over 50s who come into contact with the criminal justice system, their supporters and the staff who work with them. We use the views of the people we work with to influence and direct the services we deliver.



We deliver a number of services for HMPPS, both in custody and community settings, as well as exploring innovative and low or zero cost solutions for the challenges faced by this growing group.

Our two peer-led support services (Buddy and Threads Maps) offer robust, award-winning formalised training and on-site management. We provide a reliable, professional and responsible workforce that promotes pro-social modelling. We also provide a selection of independent and purposeful activities that help improve both the physical and mental health of older people.

Contact us

To find out more about our services

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An Introduction from our Chief Executive Officer

Social Prescribing can provide a wide range of simple and easily accessible interventions, even in a prison setting. The usual community model is GP led, using link workers who are able to prescribe activities and non-clinical interventions to support physical health and emotional wellbeing.

In a prison environment, there are a wide range of service providers and peer support models, that can strengthen the social prescribing offer and its impact.

Peer supporters, who are often located on wings and landings, are well trained to support individuals with inclusive activities. From 15 years of experience of upskilling we know from our Recoop Buddies and Threads Maps Champions who deliver support sessions and interventions through structured on wing activity, just how important this workforce extension is to support others struggling with daily living or their own wellbeing.

We have developed a range of versatile, flexible resources that can be used as social prescribing tools. We hope they will help you visualise how they can be used easily, the impact they have and the ease in which you can access these resources to strengthen internal partnerships, referral processes and social prescribing support.

Paul Grainge, Recoop Chief Executive Officer



Peer support and social prescribing

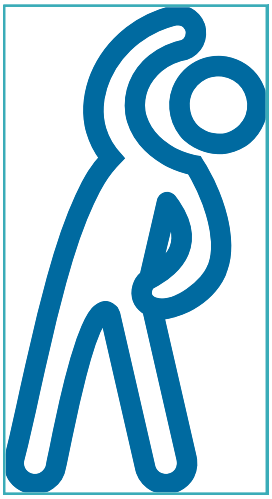
Social prescribing can be offered by any member of staff who identifies a need for intervention, referral or distraction. In many prisons there are teams of peer supporters who can be tasked with both identifying need and socially prescribing a range of activities to assist other prisoners. This form of support is based on shared experiences and mutual understanding among individuals facing similar challenges. Peers offer mentoring, practical assistance, advocacy or emotional support.

Through peer support programmes, individuals can access resources, develop coping strategies and navigate complex issues such as mental health, addiction, or reintegration into society. This approach not only enhances emotional wellbeing and resilience, but also fosters a culture of collaboration and positive peer influence, ultimately contributing to a safer and more rehabilitative prison environment.

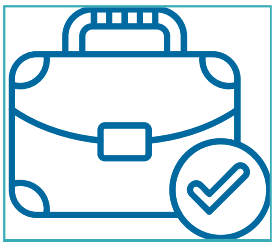
Types of peer supporters who can deliver social prescribing:

- Orderlies
- Listeners
- Equality representatives
- Buddies
- Threads Maps Champions
- Volunteers

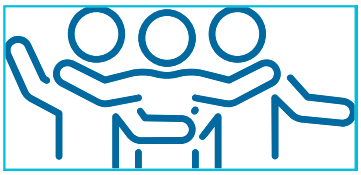
Social prescribing isn't just signposting, it can offer:



Physical health support



Employability support



Social support



Mental health support



Diet and nutrition advice

Benefits of Social Prescribing



Improved physical health

The promotion of regular physical activity has numerous benefits for heart health, weight management, and overall wellbeing.



Improved behaviour

Engaging in meaningful and purposeful activities can positively impact behaviour and lead to a co-operative atmosphere.



Improved mental health

Many people in prison face mental health challenges. Social prescribing interventions, such as group counselling, arts & crafts, or mindfulness activities, can reduce stress, anxiety and depression.



Enhanced rehabilitation

Social prescribing supports the rehabilitation process by promoting positive behavioural changes and helping individuals develop coping mechanisms.



Reduced costs

Social prescribing activities can help improve the physical & mental health of individuals, resulting in a reduced need for costly prison staff or Healthcare intervention.



Encouragement of personal responsibility

Social prescribing empowers people to take an active role in their rehabilitation. By providing choices and fostering a sense of agency, it encourages accountability for one's own wellbeing.

Purposeful Activity

As part of Prison Service Instruction 38/2010, prisons are required to provide prisoners with purposeful activity. With low staffing levels and other day-to-day challenges, we understand that it may not always be possible to provide the level of activity that people need. This is why Recoop has designed a range of activities that can be provided with little or no staff input required. Our activities help alleviate boredom and idleness which are often associated with negative behaviours in prison settings.

Distraction Packs

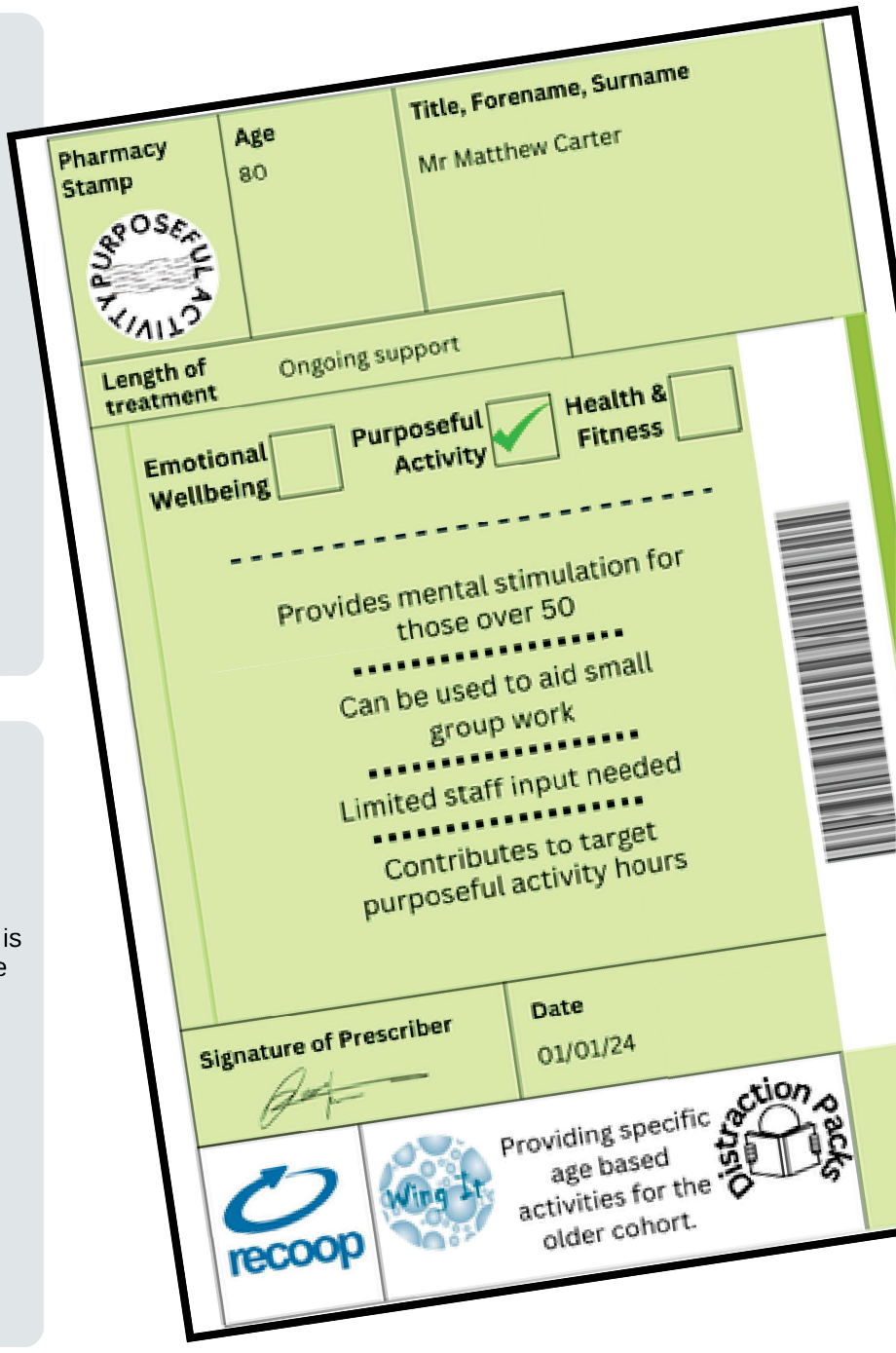
Recoop's 'food for thought' Distraction Packs help those who spend a lot of time in-cell with cognitive functioning and mental stimulation.

> *His Majesty's Inspectors of prison/courts when they saw this provision were very impressed by its content. The distraction pack alleviated boredom and made a positive impact to prisoners.*
> **HMPPS**

Wing It

A 'structured on-wing activity, provides activity that is purposeful, educational and social and can, as the name suggests, be delivered on Wing.

> *'Wing It' will be utilised on its own to support community development and is also great for supporting existing group sessions for ice breakers.*
> **HMP Holme House**



Emotional Wellbeing

Socially prescribed purposeful activity plays a crucial role in rehabilitation and re-integration. Recognising the importance of providing new skills and promoting personal development, Recoop has developed programmes that improve emotional wellbeing and increase social capital.

Mindfulness

Our Mindfulness booklets can help people cope with the stresses of prison life and bring about positive changes.

> *A clear and user-friendly guide which helps provide structure, aims and goals for users.*
> **Mental Health Recovery Worker**

Menopause

Our Menopause Booklet offers facts, information and support to help guide women through their own Menopause, including both group and 1-2-1 work.

> *Helping individuals cope with the impact of menopause in a custodial environment by providing tools, information and support.*



Health & Fitness

Socially prescribing health and fitness activities in prisons can encompass a range of options, including organised sports, gym sessions and wellness programmes. Participants are provided with opportunities to engage in fitness classes and outdoor activities, often bringing a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. Moreover, these initiatives contribute to reducing stress levels and promoting mental wellbeing, thereby aiding in the rehabilitation process.

Healthy Eating & Living Programme (HELP)

Targeting those with a high BMI and based around the balance of nutrition, HELP offers a tailored weight loss programme.

> *Across the group, three participants lost a total of 23lbs or 7.6lbs average.*
> ***Facilitator***
> ***HMP Altcourse***

On Track

A series of virtual step challenges provide an opportunity to improve both physical and mental health.

> *Walking is doing great things for my mental health wellbeing. I'm looking at where I was, where I am and where I'm going.*
> **'On Track' Participant**

