

# SOCIAL PRESCRIBING: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HEALTH

## Social Prescribing Outcomes<sup>1</sup>



\*Three months post social prescription.  
\*\*Nine months post social prescription.

In Canada, nearly 100% of seniors aged 65 and older plan on supporting themselves to live safely and independently in their own home for as long as possible.<sup>2</sup> For those who lack natural supports like family relationships, community-based programs help complement their medical care. This allows older adults to experience greater independence and helps reduce the length and frequency of hospital stays.

**Over 80% of a person's health depends on social determinants of health like adequate food, housing, income and relationships with others.<sup>3</sup>**

Social prescribing bridges the gap between medical and social care services. When older adults present with non-medical symptoms like loneliness, healthcare professionals can refer them to community-based programs to enhance their quality of life.

1. Alliance for Healthier Communities. *Rx: Community - Social Prescribing in Ontario, Final Report* (March 2020). [https://cdn.ymaws.com/aohc.site-ym.com/resource/group/e0802d2e-298a-4d86-8af5-21156f9c057f/rxcommunity\\_final\\_report\\_mar.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/aohc.site-ym.com/resource/group/e0802d2e-298a-4d86-8af5-21156f9c057f/rxcommunity_final_report_mar.pdf)
2. *National Institute of Ageing (NIA)/TELUS Health Survey* (2020)
3. Hood CM, Gennuso KP, Swain GR, et al. *County health rankings: relationships between determinant factors and health outcomes*. *Am J Prev Med* 2016;50:129-35.doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2015.08.024

## START SOCIAL PRESCRIBING TODAY!

The **Seniors Community Services Partnership** is a social prescribing program that links the healthcare system to senior-serving organizations in Lethbridge. This reduces the demand on healthcare professionals and better equips them to support older patients (55+). Through the program, doctors, nurse practitioners and other regulated health professionals alike, can promote healthy aging and resilience in their communities.

Here's how to get started:

### STEP 1 Make an Assessment

After your medical examination, determine whether your patient has a non-medical need that is affecting their health and well-being.

### STEP 2 Write a Social Prescription

Complete the **Seniors Community Services Partnership Referral Form**

### STEP 3 Submit a Referral Form

Submit your completed referral form to [intake@lethseniors.com](mailto:intake@lethseniors.com) or by fax to **(403) 320-2762** (Attention: Social Prescribing). Please ensure patient consent before making a submission.





## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once you submit your referral form, a Link Worker\* or Seniors Systems Navigator partners with your patient to develop key goals and access community-based resources. They can also attend appointments, make exercise group referrals or help your patient to complete a benefits application form. As the healthcare provider, you will receive updates about your patient's progress.

*\* A Link Worker is a non-clinical professional employed by a community-based, senior-serving organization. This individual builds relationships with older adults under their care and monitors their progress.*

**The healthcare sector in Canada is facing a human resources crisis.** HCPs lack the time and resources needed to provide holistic care to patients. Through social prescribing, patients can seek non-medical supports through their community. This preventative approach to care improves short and long-term health, which reduces reliance on costly emergency and primary care resources.



**Healthy Aging Alberta** is a rich network of community-based, senior-serving organizations and allies across our province united by a shared vision: to make Alberta one of the best places in the world to grow older.

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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