Social prescription is a non-medical, holistic approach to care that offers primary care professionals a non-clinical referral option for their clients. The process of social prescribing guides people to identify their social, practical, and emotional needs, and promotes social integration into their communities. The overall goal of social prescribing is to improve personal well-being and quality of life, while limiting the reliance on healthcare services.

Social Prescription and Therapeutic Recreation

Social prescription

Social prescription referrals provide clients with increased social benefits including an increase in communication skills, social relationships, and a reduction in social isolation.

"Social prescribing is a new spin on an old idea—that people are healthier when they are connected with social resources and supports in their communities."

Social

Clients who received a social prescription referral reported physical improvements including increased stamina, strength, and ability to walk and stand for longer periods of time.

Physical

Clients reported having improved confidence, boosted morale, increased self-esteem, and increased emotional well-being when experiencing social prescription activities.

Emotional

Social prescribing has been associated with clients feeling a greater sense of purpose in life and a sense of belonging.

Spiritual

Clients involved in social prescription activities reported having improved memory and concentration.

Cognitive

Benefits of Social Prescription

(Carnes, Sohanpal, Frostick, Hull, Mathur, Netuveli, Tong, Hutt & Bertotti, 2017; Duffin, 2016; Mendes, 2018; While, 2018)
"The role of the navigator is to provide a person with individualized support and help connect them to services in their community."

(Alliance for Healthier Communities, 2018)

A recreation therapist focuses on a person's strengths to provide recreation activities that the person enjoys and can be successful. The ultimate goal is to increase the person's well-being and quality of life.

(Wildman, Moffatt, Steer, Laing, Penn, O'Brien, 2019)

Similarly, the role of the navigator is to connect clients to services they enjoy in the community, to increase their social, practical, and emotional needs, and to increase overall well-being.

(Wildman, Moffatt, Steer, Laing, Penn, O'Brien, 2019)

Therapeutic recreation professionals are the best positioned discipline to be the navigator in the social prescribing process. Including the profession of therapeutic recreation in the social prescribing process provides a person-centered, holistic approach to care with an emphasis on increasing well-being.

(Anderson, Heyne, 2013)