

Additional File 2: Descriptive characteristics of studies (n=83) included in the Realist Review

Author	Year	Country	Sub-case	Intervention type	Study method/design	Evaluators	Appraisal
Age Connect Cardiff & the Vale [54]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Volunteer support programme targetting isolation	Uncontrolled before-and-after design and qualitative survey feedback	In-house evaluation	Low
Age Connect Cardiff & the Vale [55]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Volunteer support programme targetting isolation	End of year reporting, monitoring data	In-house evaluation	Low
Age connect Cardiff & the Vale [56]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Volunteer support programme targetting isolation	Uncontrolled before-and-after design and qualitative survey feedback	In-house evaluation	Low
Bangor University [57]	2019	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	The Health Precint, referral via social prescribing	Uncontrolled before-and-after design, interviews with staff	Independent research team	Moderate
Jones, Lynch [58]	2019	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Time Credits, time based community support	Uncontrolled before-and-after design, document analysis of patient notes, interviews, focus groups, reflective diaries	Independent research team	Low
Bertotti, Frostick, Hutt, Sohanpal, Carnes [59]	2018	England	Mixed Methods	Social prescribing with social prescribing coordinators	Realist evaluation including GP surveys, interviews with stakeholders and observations	Independent research team	High
Bickerdike, Booth, Wilson, Farley, Wright [1]	2017	England	Reviews	Social prescribing	Systematic review	Independent research team	Moderate
Bird, Biddle, Powell [60]	2019	England	Mixed Methods	CLICK into activity, community based physical activity	Mixed methods evaluation using RE-AIM framework with uncontrolled before-and-after design questionnaires, interviews and	Independent research team	Moderate

					programme-related documentation.		
Campbell, Winder, Richards, Hobart [61]	2007	England	Quantitative	Welfare advice services	Longitudinal postal survey	No description of research team	High
Carnes, Sohanpal, Frostick, Hull, Mathur, Netuveli, Tong, Hutt, Bertotti [9]	2017	England	Mixed Methods	Social prescribing pilot	Patient surveys with matched control groups, interviews with service users	Independent research team	High
Chatterjee, Camic, Lockyer, Thomson [62]	2018	England	Reviews	Social prescribing (non-clinical community interventions)	Systematic review	Independent research team	Moderate
Cheetham, Van der Graaf, Khazaeli, Gibson, Wiseman, Rushmer [63]	2018	England	Mixed Methods	Integrated wellness service	In-depth semi-structured interviews with service users, focus groups with service-users and non-service users and routine monitoring data	No description of research team	Moderate
Craig, Booth, Hall, Story, Hayward, Goodburn, Zumla [64]	2008	England	Mixed Methods	Tuberculosis link worker	Cohort process evaluation and interviews with service providers	Mixed research team, researchers became stakeholders in project	Low
Crone, Sumner, Baker, Loughren, Hughes, James [65]	2018	England	Quantitative	Arts on Prescription	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	No description of research team	Moderate
Cwm Taf UHB [66]	2015	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing for healthy lifestyles	Literature review, survey, semi-structured interviews	In-house evaluation	Low
Dayson [67]	2017	England	Mixed Methods	Social innovation pilot in the community	Service evaluation with uncontrolled before-and-after design and interviews with patients, carers, commissioners and providers	Independent research team	High

Dayson, Painter, Bennett [68]	2020	England	Qualitative	Holistic social prescribing with link worker	Qualitative case study with three nested case studies; semi-structured interviews with commissioners, providers and patients	No description of research team	Moderate
Elston, Gradinger, Asthana, Lilley-Woolnough, Wroe, Harman, Byng [69]	2019	England	Quantitative	Holistic well-being co-ordinator service	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	Mixed research team	High
Grayer, Cape, Orpwood, Leibowitz, Buszewicz [70]	2008	England	Quantitative	Graduate Primary Care Community Link scheme	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	Independent research team	Low
Grow Well [71]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Therapeutic horticultural support, social prescribing in community gardening	Uncontrolled before-and-after design, feedback, case studies, monitoring data analysis	In-house evaluation	Low
Grow Well [72]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Therapeutic horticultural support, social prescribing in community gardening	Uncontrolled before-and-after design, survey	Independent research team	Moderate
Hanlon, Gray, Chng, Mercer [73]	2019	Scotland	Qualitative	Links Worker Programme, social prescribing to target negative impacts of the social determinants of health	Semi-structured interviews with service users	Independent research team	Moderate
Hassan, Giebel, Khedmati Morasae, Rotheram, Mathieson, Ward, Reynolds, Price, Bristow, Kullu [74]	2020	England	Qualitative	Life Rooms, social prescribing to address the social determinants of mental health	Semi-structured focus groups with service users	Mixed research team including PPI	Moderate
Heijnders, Meijjs [75]	2018	Netherlands	Qualitative	Holistic social prescribing with link worker	Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with service users	Mixed research team	Low

Holding, Thompson, Foster, Haywood [76]	2020	England	Qualitative	Social prescribing targeting loneliness with link workers	Semi-structured interviews with staff and volunteers	Independent research team	Moderate
Husk, Blockley, Lovell, Bethel, Lang, Byng, Garside [77]	2019	England	Reviews	Social prescribing	Realist review	Independent research team	Low
Irvine, Marselle, Melrose, Warber [78]	2020	Scotland	Mixed Methods	Nature-based intervention	Feasibility study, uncontrolled before-and-after design, interviews with service users	Mixed research team	Low
Jarrett, Thornicroft, Forrester, Harty, Senior, King, Huckle, Parrott, Dunn, Shaw [79]	2012	England	Quantitative	Critical Time Intervention to support mentally-ill prisoners post release (social, clinical, housing and welfare services)	Pilot Randomised Controlled Design	Mixed research team	Moderate
Jensen [80]	2019	Denmark	Qualitative	Arts on Prescription	Semi-structured interviews with service users	No description of research team	Low
Jensen, Bonde [81]	2018	Denmark	Reviews	Arts on Prescription	Literature review	Independent research team	Low
Jensen, Torrissen [82]	2019	Denmark	Qualitative	Arts on Prescription	Semi-structured interviews with service users	No description of research team	Low
Kellezi, Wakefield, Stevenson, McNamara, Mair, Bowe, Wilson, Halder [83]	2019	England	Mixed Methods	Social prescribing	Semi structured interviews and longitudinal survey	No description of research team	Moderate
Kilgarriff-Foster, O'Cathain [84]	2015	England	Reviews	Social prescribing	Literature review	Independent research team	Low
Kingstone, Bartlam, Burroghs, Bullock, Lovell, Ray, Bower, Waheed, Gilbody,	2019	England	Qualitative	Tailored social prescribing, behavioural activation	Semi-structured interviews with older people and support workers; interviews or focus groups with GPs	Mixed research team	High

Nicholls, Chew-Graham [85]							
Lloyd-Evans, Frerichs, Stefanidou, Bone, Pinfold, Lewis, Billings, Barber, Chhappia, Chipp, Henderson, Shah, Shorten, Giorgalli, Terhune, Jones, Johnson [28]	2020	England	Mixed Methods	Community Navigator programme	Feasibility randomised controlled trial with semi-structured qualitative interviews with participants, Community Navigators and other stakeholders.	Mixed research team	High
Loftus, McCauley, McCarron [86]	2017	Northern Ireland	Quantitative	Social prescribing pathway	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	Mixed research team	Low
Mantell Gwynedd [87]	2018	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing, Community link service	Monitoring data analysis, interviews with service users	In-house evaluation	High
Maughan, Patel, Parveen, Braithwaite, Cook, Lillywhite, Cooke [88]	2015	England	Quantitative	CONNECT: social prescribing	Observational study	No description of research team	Low
Maund, Irvine, Reeves, Strong, Cromie, Dallimer, Davies [89]	2019	England	Mixed Methods	Wetlands for Wellbeing, Nature-based health intervention	Questionnaires, focus groups and semi-structured interviews for participants and healthcare professionals	No description of research team	Moderate
Mercer, Fitzpatrick, Grant, Chng, McConnachie, Bakshi, James-Rae, O'Donnell, Wyke [27]	2019	Scotland	Quantitative	Primary Care Community Links Practitioner	Quasi-experimental cluster-randomised controlled trial	No description of research team	High
Milestone tweed [90]	2018	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Singing for Lung Health	Uncontrolled before-and-after design, interviews with staff	In-house evaluation	Low

Moffatt, Steer, Lawson, Penn, O'Brien [5]	2017	England	Qualitative	Ways to Wellness, Holistic social prescribing with link worker	Semi-structured interviews with service users	No description of research team	High
Mon Community Link [91]	2020	Wales	Qualitative (grey)	Social prescribing with link worker	Case studies	No description of research team	Low
Natural England [92]	2017	England	Review (grey)	Nature-based interventions	Evidence review	Mixed research team	Moderate
Panagioti, Reeves, Meacock, Parkinson, Lovell, Hann, Howells, Blakemore, Riste, Coventry, Blakeman, Sidaway, Bower [26]	2018	England	Quantitative	Health coaching	Trials within Cohorts design	No description of research team	High
Payne, Walton, Burton [23]	2020	England	Qualitative	Multi-activity social prescribing	Semi-structured interviews with service users	No description of research team	Moderate
Pescheny, Gunn, Randhawa, Pappas [2]	2019	England	Quantitative	Social prescribing with navigators	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	Mixed research team	Moderate
Pescheny, Randhawa, Pappas [93]	2018	England	Qualitative	Social prescribing with link worker	Semi-structured interviews with service users, navigators and GPs	Independent research team	Moderate
Pescheny, Randhawa, Pappas [29]	2020	England	Reviews	Social prescribing	Systematic review	Independent research team	High
Pesut, Duggleby, Warner, Fassbender, Antifeau, Hooper, Greig, Sullivan [94]	2018	Canada	Mixed Methods	N-CARE, nurse navigation in early palliative care	Pilot study using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with service users	Mixed research team, including PPI	Moderate
Poulos, Marwood, Harkin, Opher, Clift, Cole, Rhee,	2018	Australia	Mixed Methods	Arts on Prescription	Program evaluation including uncontrolled before-and-after design,	Mixed research team	High

Beilharz, Poulos [95]					focus groups and interviews		
Prior, Coffey, Robins, Cook [96]	2019	England	Quantitative	Exercise on referral	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	No description of research team	Low
Public Health Wales [97]	2019	Wales	Quantitative (grey)	Social prescribing with link worker	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	Mixed research team	Moderate
Public Health Wales [98]	2018	Wales	Review (grey)	Social prescribing in Wales	Evidence mapping	Mixed research team	Low
Rainbow Centre Penley [99]	2019	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing	Referral numbers and case study	In-house evaluation	Low
Rainbow Centre Penley [100]	2019	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing	Referral numbers and case study	In-house evaluation	Low
Rainbow Centre Penley [101]	2019	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing	Case studies, patient reported outcomes	In-house evaluation	Low
Redmond, Sumner, Crone, Hughes [24]	2019	England	Qualitative	Arts on Prescription	Qualitative survey of service users	Research team, involved with programme development and implementation	Low
Rempel, Wilson, Durrant, Barnett [8]	2017	England	Reviews	Social referral programmes	Systematic review	Independent research team	High
Rhondda GP cluster [102]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Well-being co-ordinator service	Monitoring data analysis, testimonial, survey with service users, practice and providers	In-house evaluation	Moderate
Skivington, Smith, Chng, Mackenzie, Wyke, Mercer [103]	2018	Scotland	Qualitative	Links Worker Programme, social prescribing to target negative impacts of the social determinants of health	Semi-structured interviews with community organisation representatives and Community Links Practitioners [link workers]	No description of research team	Moderate
Smith, Jimoh, Cross, Allan, Corbett, Sadler, Khondoker, Whitty, Valderas, Fox [104]	2019	England	Reviews	Social prescribing for frail older adults	Systematic review	Independent research team	Low

Social prescribing Torfaen [105]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing	Monitoring data analysis, case studies	In-house evaluation	Low
Social prescribing Torfaen [106]	2018	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing	Monitoring data analysis, case studies	In-house evaluation	Low
Social Value Cymru [107]	2019	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social Prescribing via Community Link Officer	Monitoring data analysis	In-house evaluation	Moderate
Stalker, Malloch, Barry, Watson [108]	2008	Scotland	Mixed Methods	Local area coordination for people with learning disabilities	Case studies, postal questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with co-ordinators and managers	Independent research team	Moderate
Stickley, Eades [109]	2013	England	Qualitative	Arts on Prescription	Semi-structured interviews with service users	Independent research team	Moderate
Stickley, Hui [110]	2012	England	Qualitative	Arts on Prescription	Narrative inquiry using in-depth interviews with service users	Mixed research team including PPI	Moderate
Stickley, Hui [111]	2012	England	Qualitative	Arts on Prescription	In-depth semi-structured interviews with referrers	Mixed research team including PPI	Moderate
The Growing Project [112]	2017	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Therapeutic horticultural support, social prescribing in community gardening	Monitoring data analysis, interviews with service users	In-house evaluation	Low
Thomson, Lockyer, Camic, Chatterjee [113]	2018	England	Quantitative	Museum-based social prescription	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	No description of research team	Moderate
Todd, Camic, Lockyer, Thomson, Chatterjee [114]	2017	England	Qualitative	Museum-based social prescription	Semi-structured interviews and weekly diary entries from service users	No description of research team	Moderate
van de Venter, Buller [115]	2014	England	Mixed Methods	Arts on Prescription	Uncontrolled before-and-after design and interviews with service users	No description of research team	High
Vogelpoel, Jarrold [116]	2014	England	Mixed Methods	Arts on Prescription	Uncontrolled before-and-after design, interviews and dynamic	Mixed research team	Moderate

					observation proformas, case studies		
Warm Wales [117]	2019	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Warm Wales, tackling fuel poverty	Case study design	In-house evaluation	Low
We are tempo [118]	2020	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Time Credits, time based community support	Impact evaluation, surveys and journey mapping	In-house evaluation	Moderate
Webb, Thompson, Ruffino, Davies, Watkeys, Hooper, Jones, Walkters, Clayton, Thomas, Morris, Llewellyn, Ward, Wyatt-Williams, McDonnell [119]	2016	Wales	Quantitative	National Exercise on Referral Scheme	Uncontrolled before-and-after design	No description of research team	Low
Wellbeing 4 U [120]	2018	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	Social prescribing, Well-being co-ordinators	Monitoring data analysis, survey, case studies	In-house evaluation	Moderate
Welsh Government [121]	2010	Wales	Mixed Methods (grey)	National Exercise on Referral Scheme	Randomised controlled trial design with nested process and economic evaluation	Independent research team	Moderate
Whitelaw, Thirlwall, Morrison, Osborne, Tattum, Walker [122]	2017	Scotland	Qualitative	Social prescribing in General Practice	Case study design using semi-structured interviews with steering group, wider primary care team and community groups	No description of research team	Moderate
Wildman, Moffatt, Steer, Laing, Penn, O'Brien [21]	2019	England	Qualitative	Ways to Wellness, Holistic social prescribing with link worker	Semi-structured interviews with service users	No description of research team	Moderate
Woodall, Trigwell, Bunyan, Raine, Eaton, Davis, Hancock, Cunningham, Wilkinson [32]	2018	England	Mixed Methods	Social prescribing with well-being co-ordinators	Uncontrolled before-and-after design and interviews with service users	No description of research team	High

Woodhead, Collins, Lomas, Raine [22]	2017	England	Qualitative	Welfare advice services	Realist semi-structured interviews with general practice staff, advice staff and service funders	Independent research team	Low
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