

# Tony Doherty

- Regional Coordinator of the Healthy Living Centre Alliance
- Co-chair of the Community Development Innovation and Implementation Board(IIB)
  - Co-chair of Social Prescribing Network Ireland



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# What Social Prescribing Is:

Social prescribing is a way to link medical care to (typically) non-clinical, locally delivered support services. It enables medical professionals to refer their patients to a range of activities and services, recognising a social model of health in which wellbeing is determined by a variety of factors. It empowers patients and communities, supports greater independence, reduces reliance on primary healthcare, and ultimately delivers better outcomes for people and society.



## What Social Prescribing is not:

- Solely reliant on the patient to act
- Sign-posting
- Leaflet-dropping
- Expensive
- Free of charge
- To be taken lightly
- A transient fad

# SPRING Social Model of Health – Process of Soft Handover





1. Community-led and community-based model established in 2015 through Derry/Strabane Integrated Care Partnership
2. 2018 Regional expansion of model to each Health Trust area and in 10 Scottish locations supported by National Lottery Community Fund
3. Rural Enhancement funded by DAERA – Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
4. Only regional model in the north of Ireland
5. Several stand-alone models in Belfast, Antrim and Armagh

# Current Framework



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1. Social Prescribing Network Ireland
2. UK Social Prescribing Network
3. ICP Directorate-led SP Working Group
  - Project Echo – bespoke online training for social prescribers
4. Consideration by Transformation Implementation Group
5. Joint ownership and leadership required for success

# Challenges – a land of opportunity?



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- Capacity to deliver and sustain – money following the patient
- Multi-disciplinary Teams in Primary Care – now catching up with community sector through co-production
- Clinical Care Gateway (primary care referrals) doesn't currently allow external bodies
- Absence of political governance – civil servants in charge
- Other public sector opportunities i.e. DfC – housing, arts, museums

<https://vimeo.com/312481534?ref=tw-share>

[tony@hlcalliance.org](mailto:tony@hlcalliance.org)

@tonydutchdoc

07921810642



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