



New social prescribing resources launched to harness the health benefits of singing and playing with others

Making Music, the UK's membership organisation for leisure-time music, and Singing for Health Network are delighted to announce the launch of free downloadable guides on social prescribing for music groups and social prescribers (also known as 'link workers').

Created in consultation with Music for Good, National Academy for Social Prescribing, Natural Voice Network, Sing for Pleasure, Sound Sense and Making Music, Singing for Health Network originally launched two free guides last year designed to support successful social prescribing referrals – one aimed at choirs and one at link workers.

Now Making Music has adapted these resources for both vocal and instrumental leisure-time music groups, and they are available for free to [download on the Making Music website](#).

Part of the NHS Personalised Care programme, social prescribing is a way for GPs and local agencies to refer people to a link worker, who takes a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing. They then connect people to community groups and statutory services for practical and emotional support.

There is a growing evidence base that highlights the health benefits of singing or playing music in a group. These activities can be particularly effective for improving mental health and wellbeing, as well as combatting loneliness and isolation. Singing in particular can support lung health and be used to help the management of symptoms for conditions such as dementia and Parkinson's.

In addition to general information on social prescribing, the new guides help groups and link workers to understand each other better and interact more effectively. For example, the guide for music groups includes suggestions on how to brief a link worker about a music group, and the guide for link workers explains more about the huge diversity of music groups, and how to find singing or instrumental groups across the UK. Alongside the free resources, Making Music member groups can also access additional, editable templates and assessment tools.

On Friday 20 May, 10am to 11:30am, Making Music will be hosting a free online event on social prescribing with representatives from both sides of the scheme, featuring Social Prescriber Sue Moorchild and Singing for Health Network Manager Baz Chapman. Anyone can attend but spaces are limited, so [book ahead on the Making Music website](#).

Barbara Eifler, Making Music Chief Executive, said:

“Music groups are all about serving their communities and many have been wondering how they can offer the benefit of their activity to people being referred for social prescribing. We hope these resources will make it easier for groups to welcome patients and for link workers to understand the social and well-being aspects of music groups.”

Baz Chapman, Singing for Health Network Manager, said:

“We are delighted to have collaborated with Making Music to extend these resources to instrumental groups as well as choirs. There are many successful social prescribing schemes to music groups already in place across the UK, but there’s huge potential for more, and we want to support greater connection between music groups and Social Prescribers through these resources.”

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Making Music, 8 Holyrood Street, London SE1 2EL
020 7939 6030

info@makingmusic.org.uk

www.makingmusic.org.uk

Twitter: [@MakingMusic_UK](https://twitter.com/MakingMusic_UK)

Instagram: [@makingmusicuk](https://www.instagram.com/makingmusicuk)

Facebook: [facebook.com/makingmusicuk](https://www.facebook.com/makingmusicuk)

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Making Music

Making Music has championed leisure-time music groups since 1935 across the UK with practical services, artistic development opportunities and by providing a collective voice for its members. We represent over 3,800 groups made up of around 220,000 musicians of all types, genres and abilities. We help them run their groups so they can get on with making music!

www.makingmusic.org.uk | info@makingmusic.org.uk

Singing for Health Network

The Singing for Health Network was launched in February 2021, the brainchild of singing and health practitioner and researcher Emily Foulkes. It aims to bridge research and practice across the singing and health sectors, and support the growth of the Singing for Health Movement. Members of the network can access a library of online resources, including summaries of relevant research and articles from expert singing practitioners.

Alongside its online resources, the Network runs an ongoing series of popular webinars focussing on key topics such as Singing and Dementia and Singing for Mental Health and Wellbeing. It also supports the connection between researchers, singing practitioners and health professionals, signposting to relevant opportunity.

www.singingforhealthnetwork.co.uk | singingforhealthnetwork@gmail.com

Social Prescribing

Part of the NHS Personalised Care programme, Social Prescribing is a way for GPs and local agencies to refer people to a 'Link Worker'. Link Workers give people time, focusing on 'what matters to me' and taking a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing. They connect people to community groups and statutory services for practical and emotional support. Social Prescribing works for a wide range of people, including those:

- with one or more long-term conditions
- who need support with their mental health
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing

The types of community groups that Link Workers might prescribe to depend on the area, but could include creative activities such as art, dance and singing, and physical activities such as walking, football, gardening and fishing. Social prescriptions might also be to services such as debt counselling, housing and other practical support agencies.

www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing

Other resource partners and associates

[Music for Good](#)

[National Academy for Social Prescribing](#)

[Natural Voice Network](#)

[Sing for Pleasure](#)

[Sound Sense](#)

[Singing Network UK](#)