

Empowering Healing Beyond the Clinic

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Student Perspectives on Social Prescribing: A Cross-Sectional Study Among Undergraduate Health-Science students

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Introduction

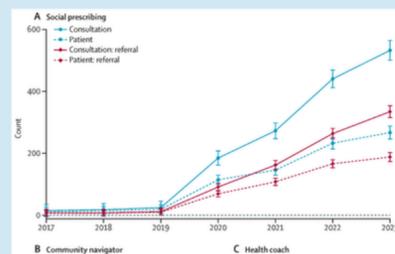
Social prescribing is an emerging, person-centered healthcare model in which individuals are connected to non-medical, community-based services to improve physical, mental, and social well-being. By addressing social determinants of health, it complements conventional clinical care and supports holistic patient management.

Objective

To assess the knowledge, attitudes, and perceived applicability of social prescribing among undergraduate health-science students, and to evaluate predictors of readiness to adopt this approach in future practice.

Reports from England

- A 42.2% reduction in GP appointments among 1,751 patients who accessed social prescribing in Tameside and Glossop.
- A 15.4%–23.6% reduction in A&E attendances among 5,908 patients who accessed social prescribing in Kent.



Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 419 undergraduate students from medical, dental, and allied health professions. A pre-validated 29-item self-administered questionnaire was distributed electronically. Descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and binary logistic regression were used to examine associations between knowledge, attitudes, and readiness to adopt social prescribing.

Concept

”Prescription beyond medicines.” Individuals are connected with activities like

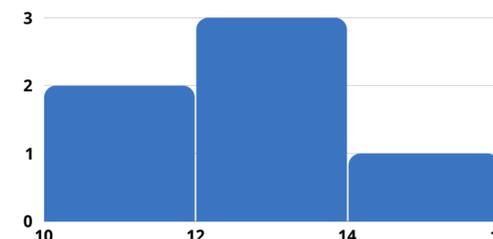
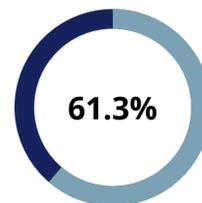
- Exercise groups
 - Art, music or hobby clubs
 - Volunteering opportunities
 - Counselling or support groups
1. Nutrition and lifestyle workshop



Fig: ASHA Foundation work as link workers in spreading health awareness in rural women.

Analysis

Of the 419 participants, 61.3% demonstrated adequate knowledge of social prescribing. Students with prior exposure to community-based health programs were 2.14 times more likely to have good knowledge (OR = 2.14, 95% CI: 1.45–3.15, $p < 0.001$). A favorable attitude was observed in 78.5% of respondents, and those with adequate knowledge had 3.28 times higher odds of positive attitudes (OR = 3.28, 95% CI: 2.21–4.87, $p < 0.001$). Only 39.6% reported confidence in explaining social prescribing to patients; receiving curricular exposure increased confidence (OR = 1.87, 95% CI: 1.21–2.89, $p = 0.004$). Overall readiness to adopt social prescribing in future practice was 68.4%, significantly associated with favorable attitudes (OR = 2.93, 95% CI: 1.98–4.34, $p < 0.001$). Dental students showed higher recognition of its relevance to lifestyle-related conditions compared to other streams ($p = 0.03$)



Conclusion

Undergraduate students exhibited positive attitudes toward social prescribing but limited formal exposure and confidence. Integrating structured social prescribing modules into undergraduate curricula could strengthen future professionals’ capacity to address social determinants and deliver comprehensive, patient-centered care.

