

Global Social Prescribing Alliance Summit 2025

Report

Vision: Thriving communities driving a social revolution in health and wellbeing.

Mission: Advancing social prescribing globally through collaboration, innovation, and advocacy, aligned with UN SDG 3 (Good Health & Wellbeing).

Global Social Prescribing Alliance

WHIS
WORLD HEALTH INNOVATION SUMMIT

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Introduction

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Goals for this year's summit - drive reach and awareness beyond 30 Countries

- 📅 Date: 25 July 2025
- 📍 Location: Online – Global participation from 77 countries
- 👤 Host: Gareth Presch
- 🎙️ Chair: James Sanderson
- 🏛️ Organisations Represented: 276 unique entities
- 🌐 Access & Resources: whis.world/gspa-summit



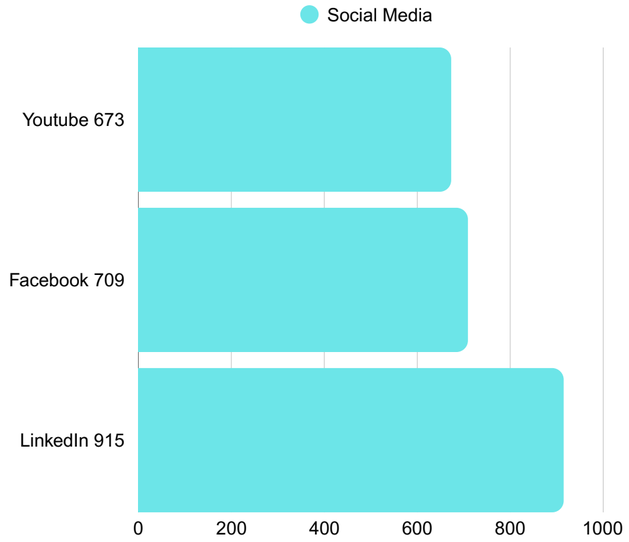
Executive Summary

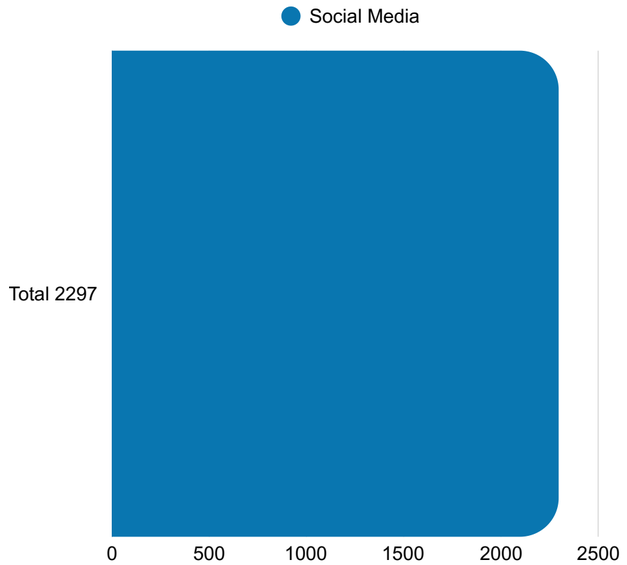
- The 2025 Global Social Prescribing Alliance (GSPA) Summit brought together leaders, clinicians, innovators, researchers, and community advocates from 77 countries to advance social prescribing as a global model for holistic, people-centred care.
- With themes spanning access, networks, technology, clinical integration, and real-world impact, the Summit showcased scalable strategies and policy frameworks that position social prescribing as a vital component of universal health coverage.
- Gareth Presch opened the discussion by reinforcing the central GSPA vision: "Healthcare as a vehicle for living well – not just treating illness." Community, connection, and collaboration were reaffirmed as drivers of systemic transformation.

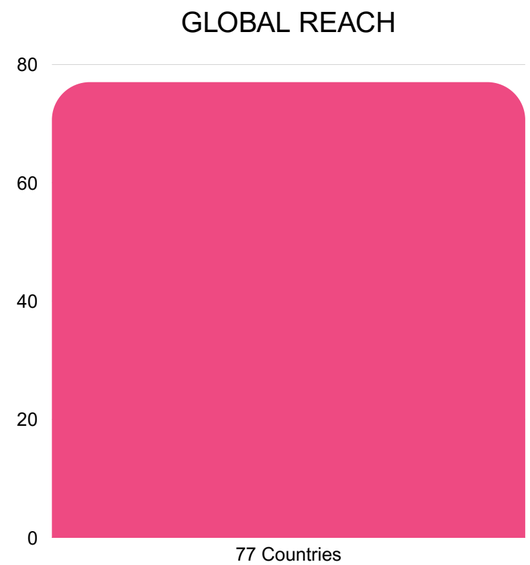
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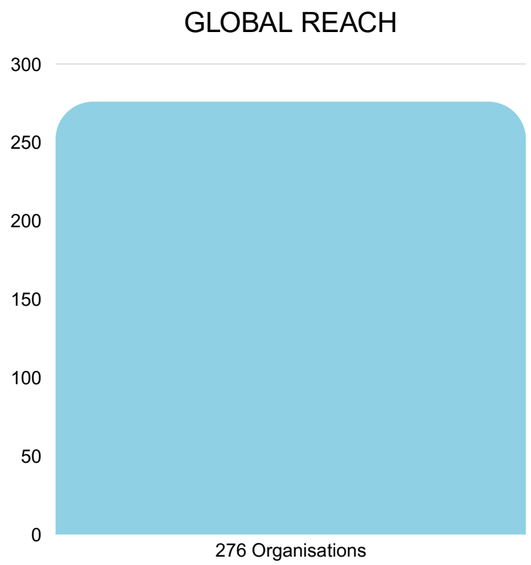
AMPLIFYING OUR IMPACT

🌐 Access & Resources: whis.world/gspa-summit









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GLOBAL SOCIAL PRESCRIBING ALLIANCE SUMMIT 2025

The 2025 Global Social Prescribing Alliance (GSPA) Summit united leaders, clinicians, innovators, researchers, and community advocates from 77 countries to advance social prescribing as a global model for holistic, person-centred care.

Focusing on themes such as access, community networks, technology, clinical integration, and measurable impact, the Summit highlighted scalable strategies and policy frameworks that elevate social prescribing as a key pillar of universal health coverage.





Prof. Dr. Dennis A. Ostwald,
Founder & CEO, WifOR

"Prevention is one of the smartest investments a society can make - both for improving health and for driving economic growth. The evidence shows that prevention strengthens our economies, reduces long-term costs, and improves lives. Health should not be viewed as a cost, but as a foundation for well-being and economic resilience."

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From Vision to Action:

Panel 1: Access & Equity explored ways to co-design solutions with underserved communities, build reliable equity metrics, and dismantle cultural and digital access barriers. Critical recommendations emerged around mandating inclusive data systems and investing in grassroots innovation.

Panel 2: Building Networks focused on cross-sector collaboration—bridging health, education, community sectors to foster scalable, trust-based wellbeing ecosystems.

Panel 3: Real-World Impact demonstrated how data and storytelling enable community successes to drive broader systemic change, encouraging investment in local dashboards and narrative platforms.

Panel 4: Technology's Role tackled ethical design, refuges from AI bias, and the need to co-design tech that is multilingual and inclusion-centric.

Panel 5: Clinical Integration addressed the challenge of embedding social prescribing into clinical pathways, training, reimbursement models, and health-record systems.

A standout moment was the keynote by Prof. Dennis A. Ostwald, focusing on economic opportunities in prevention, making the case for prevention as both a health and fiscal policy priority, with cost-benefit frameworks to follow.





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GOING GLOBAL

Welcome Address & Summit Highlights
Delivered by Gareth Presch, CEO, Global Social Prescribing Alliance

Welcome & Vision

- Warm welcome to participants from all sectors and regions
- Reaffirmed the founding 2020 vision: “Healthcare as a vehicle for living well, — not just treating illness”
- Investment Opportunities - “Health is Wealth
- Emphasis on community, connection, and collaboration

Global Milestones

- Social prescribing launched in Bologna, Italy
- Now active in 30+ countries
- Major partnerships:
  - World Wellness Weekend: Reached 150+ countries
  - G7 -G20 - GCC - EU - ICLEI - CPCF
  - UCLan: Embedding social prescribing in education & research

New Initiatives

- Unlocking Industry Opportunities: Framing wellbeing as economic value
- Training & Development Roadmap for link workers
- Leadership & Wellbeing Retreats launching in Finland
- Global Industry Roundtable: Scheduled for 12 September 2025
- World Health Innovation Day (2 August 2025): Focus on mental health & wellbeing
- GSPA Summit 2026: Announced for 17 July 2026 (Online)







GSPA Chair - James Sanderson meeting Japanese Minister for Loneliness

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Social Prescribing Global Impact Awards Launched

Five award categories:

a. Innovation
b. Community Connector
c. Researcher / Team
d. Student Champion
e. Changemaker

🗓️ Nominations open until 4 December 2025

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Training & Development Roadmap for link workers

The roadmap is based on five key skill categories that underpin effective and ethical practice across all health systems:



Key Skill Categories

✓ Practical Knowledge – Digital skills, documentation, outcome tools
✓ Working with People – Empathy, communication, trauma-informed practice
✓ Cross-Sector Collaboration – System navigation, teamworking, referrals
✓ Health & Wellbeing Support – Holistic care, prevention, health equity
✓ Professional & Personal Wellbeing – Resilience, boundaries, supervision

🌐 A Global Commitment

- Aligned with international best practice
- Rooted in lived experience and local insight
- Flexible across settings, systems, and cultures
- Evolving with global health policy and innovation

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Unlocking Industry Opportunities: Framing wellbeing as economic value

🌟 Opportunities for Industry

🧠 HealthTech & Digital Innovation

- Global digital health market expected to reach $660 billion by 2025 (Statista).
- Huge potential to embed social prescribing in electronic health records, referral systems, and personalized wellbeing platforms.

🧘‍♀️ Lifestyle, Wellness & Sport

- Global wellness economy valued at $5.6 trillion in 2023, forecast to reach $8.5 trillion by 2027 (Global Wellness Institute).
- Social prescribing opens new referral pathways from healthcare to gyms, wellbeing apps, mindfulness, nature therapies, and beyond.

📈 Finance, Insurance & Investment

- Preventable diseases cost the global economy $47 trillion in lost output between 2010 and 2030 (World Economic Forum).
- Align investment portfolios with ESG and SDG goals while supporting scalable, community-based health interventions.

🖼️ Arts, Culture & Nature

- Cultural prescribing programmes have been shown to reduce GP visits by 37% and A&E attendance by 27% (UK NHS studies).
- The global creative economy represents over 3% of global GDP and growing—positioned to become a pillar in preventative health.



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Unlocking Industry Opportunities: Framing wellbeing as economic value

🌟 Opportunities for Industry and Governments

Social prescribing presents a compelling case for value-based investment. As governments and healthcare systems worldwide adopt preventative, holistic models of care, the demand for scalable, community-rooted services is accelerating. For investors and businesses, this means:

- New markets in healthtech, wellness, creative therapies, training, and local infrastructure.
- Tangible returns: For every £1 invested in social prescribing, the NHS sees up to £3.42 in return (UK Department of Health).
- Social Impact: Achieve measurable outcomes aligned with SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), ESG frameworks, and inclusive economic growth.



CEO, Gareth Presch Keynote,
Future of Healthcare - Helsinki
Join the Business Delegation in 2026

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Global Call to Action

Making the Case

- Addressing long-term illness, mental health, loneliness, and climate stress
- UK economic loss: £100B/year due to illness-related unemployment
- ROI: £1 invested → up to £4 return

"Public health doesn't begin in hospitals, it begins in our homes, streets, and communities." — Dr. Sruthi Krishnamurthy

- Call for Social Prescribing Champions across all sectors
- Join online showcases on 19 September & 14 November 2025
- World Wellness Weekend 19-20-21September 2025
- Appeal to investors, DFIs, and governments to fund community-led health innovation
- Special focus on WHIS London in November to mobilise financal capital with community wellbeing



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Opening Remarks – James Sanderson

James Sanderson opened the Summit by emphasizing equity, evidence, and integration. He underscored the opportunity for GSPA and social prescribing's capacity to transform health systems globally.



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Summit Agenda Highlights

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Panel 1: Access & Equity (10:10–11:00 GMT)

Speakers: Andy Cox, Julie Jaye Charles CBE, Maurizio Morini, Manuela Beaty

Key Themes:

- Co-design with underserved communities
- Data gaps and actionable equity metrics
- Cultural and digital access barriers
- Policy levers to drive access

Recommendations:

- Mandate inclusive data practices
- Fund grassroots innovation
- Promote multilingual, culturally competent care

Panel 2: Building Networks (11:15–12:15 GMT)

Speakers: Cristina Vaz de Almeida, Camila Ronderos Bernal, Lee Whitehead, Heidi Albert

Key Themes:

- Cross-sector collaboration (health, education, community)
- Outcome-based funding models
- Building trust through health literacy
- Global adaptability of network models

Recommendations:

- Identify local anchor organisations
- Foster public-private partnerships
- Embed metrics for trust, health literacy, and wellbeing

**Health literacy is the ability and motivation to access, understand, and use health information to make informed decisions, improve self-care, prevent disease, and promote wellbeing.*





Summit Agenda Highlights

Global Social Prescribing Alliance

Panel 3: Real-World Impact (13:30–14:00 GMT)
Speakers: Steven O’Connell, Dr. Paula Carroll
Key Themes:

- Outcomes from community-led models
- Data and narrative as drivers of change

Recommendations:

- Invest in storytelling
- Create community insight dashboards
- Scale grassroots success stories

Panel 4: Technology’s Role (14:10–15:00 GMT)
Speakers: Prof. Reinhard Riedl, Gabriela Cipman, Pascal Lardier, Ben Wilkins, Dr. Sruthi Krishnamurthy
Key Themes:

- Technology as a tool for empathy
- Ethical concerns: AI, privacy, bias
- Smart referral and personalised support
- Preventing digital exclusion

Recommendations:

- Co-design with users
- Establish ethical digital frameworks





Summit Agenda Highlights

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Panel 5: Clinical Integration (15:10–16:10 GMT)
Speakers: Dr. Selvaseelan Selvarajah, Dr. Maheswar Satpathy, Dr. Melissa Sundermann, Sam Pywell, Jill Litt, Patricia Welch Saleeby
Key Themes:

- Overcoming resistance in clinical settings
- Aligning with lifestyle medicine
- Documenting patient transformation

Recommendations:

- Create accredited clinician training
- Integrate into reimbursement structures
- Embed outcomes into EHR systems

Keynote: Prof. Dr. Dennis A. Ostwald (16:30–17:00 GMT)
Theme: Economic Opportunities in Prevention

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Highlights:

- High ROI from prevention strategies
- Prevention as an economic and health policy priority
- Policy Takeaways:
- Develop national cost-benefit frameworks
- Align fiscal policy with health strategy
- Embed equity in economic resilience planning





Quotes & Reflections

Global Social Prescribing Alliance

"I attend loads of online seminars, conferences, webinars etc. and today was genuinely brilliant." ***— Kelly Reynolds***

"Social prescribing is a powerful extension of lifestyle medicine... When we connect people not only to each other, but also to nature, we create the conditions for lasting healing and well-being."
— Dr. Melissa Sundermann, DO, DipABLM, FACLM

"Social prescribing, supported by solutions that are socially organized, bridges the natural assets in our communities and health systems... activating belonging, purpose, and agency."
— Jill S. Litt, PhD, Senior Researcher, ISGlobal (Barcelona)

"Social prescribing not only offers an innovative and more cohesive way to deliver continuous health and social care, it addresses what matters to people: their lived experiences and life priorities." ***— Patricia Welch Saleeby, PhD, MSSA***

"It's crucial we move care from what's the matter with you to what matters to you by making social prescribing an integral part of healthcare delivery... It is the foundation for healthy, connected communities." ***— Dr. Selvaseelan Selvarajah, GP Partner, RCGP/BMA UK Council Member***

"As a patient I have loved this summit and feeling seen as a whole person, not just a problem to be fixed. The whole paradigm was shifted: this social prescribing summit acknowledged and celebrated people and communities' own resources to be & feel well." ***- Roxanne Lavie***



Next Steps

Closing Reflections & Call to Action (17:00–17:15 GMT)
Led by: Gareth Presch, CEO, GSPA, Founder, CEO, WHIS
Key Questions:

- What action can you take today to advance social prescribing?
- How do we maintain momentum beyond the Summit?
- Summit Pledges:
- Promote global access and equity
- Elevate community voice and lived experience
- Build cross-border collaborations to scale success



Next Steps

- 📥 Access full recordings: whis.world/gspa-summit
- 📣 Summary publication to follow on WHIS and GSPA platforms
- ✉️ Circulate a Global Declaration of Intent to health leaders and policymakers
- 🌐 Support national and local implementation of social prescribing pathways
- Prepare for GSPA Summit 2026 - register or for sponsorship/partnership contact gareth@whis.world

Acknowledgements:
Sincere thanks to all speakers, panellists, partners, and contributors. Special appreciation to the community leaders driving social prescribing forward every day.

Contact: info@whis.world
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