

Prevention as an Investable Asset Class

Building Health, Wealth, and Sustainable Systems



Advancing Access, Quality, and Innovation in Global Health

Foreword

By Gareth Presch, CEO, Founder WHIS; CEO, Global Social Prescribing Alliance (GSPA)

Over the past decade, healthcare has reached a pivotal moment. Rising costs, aging populations, and chronic disease burdens challenge even the most advanced systems. Yet, amid these pressures, one opportunity has emerged with transformative potential: prevention as an investable asset class.

The Global Social Prescribing Alliance (GSPA) exemplifies this vision. Launched in 2021 by the UK Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, GSPA now spans over 30 countries, connecting health systems, communities, and investors globally. Powered by the World Health Innovation Summit (WHIS), GSPA demonstrates how innovation, data, and global collaboration can generate measurable social and financial returns.

With ISO standards we now have a framework for measuring and reporting prevention outcomes. These standards unlock the ability to treat preventive health interventions as investable, scalable, and globally comparable assets. This paper explores how social prescribing and preventive health infrastructure are no longer abstract goals they are tangible, evidence-backed opportunities for investment, transformation, and improved wellbeing worldwide.

Executive Summary

Healthcare is at a crossroads. Traditional reactive models are unsustainable, while preventive approaches offer both social and economic returns. Social prescribing connecting patients to community-based resources for mental, physical, and social wellbeing—illustrates the potential:

- Over 1 million people accessed social prescribing in the UK in 2023, resulting in 28% reductions in anxiety and depression scores and 30% fewer emergency care visits.
- Economic modeling shows that £1 invested yields £2.50 in healthcare savings over three years.

The Global Social Prescribing Alliance (GSPA), with members across 40+ countries, provides the infrastructure, governance, and global advocacy to scale these interventions. Launched in 2021 by the UK Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and powered by WHIS, GSPA sets a global standard for evidence-based, measurable, and investable prevention.

The forthcoming ISO standards will further enable prevention to be treated as an investable asset class by providing:

1. Standardized Implementation Guidelines – Ensuring programs are replicable and scalable.
2. Reporting & Metrics Frameworks – Allowing investors and health systems to quantify outcomes.

With ISO standards, validated social prescribing outcomes, and emerging financial instruments such as social bonds and outcome-based contracts, preventive health interventions are poised to deliver triple-bottom-line returns: social, health, and financial. GSPA, supported by WHIS, demonstrates how preventive health can be innovative, measurable, and globally scalable, transforming healthcare from reactive cost management to proactive investment in wellbeing.

The Fiscal Imperative: Ill Health as an Economic Liability

The investment case for prevention is no longer theoretical — it is being driven by economic necessity.

In the United Kingdom alone:

- 2.8 million people are out of the workforce due to long-term sickness, creating an “economic inactivity crisis.”
- The crisis costs an estimated £212 billion annually in lost output, welfare, and NHS burdens — nearly 7% of GDP.
- Since 2019, an additional 800,000 people have left the workforce due to ill health.
- Employers absorb £85 billion per year in sickness-related productivity losses.

Ill health is therefore a structural drag on national prosperity and workforce participation, reframing prevention as a fiscal and economic stabilisation strategy.

Global Opportunity

While the UK demonstrates the fiscal stakes, the global landscape amplifies the urgency:

- 4 billion people worldwide lack access to basic healthcare (WHO).
- 300 million new jobs could be created in the care sector over the next decade (ILO).

This dual dynamic unmet health need alongside workforce expansion potential represents one of the largest inclusive growth opportunities of the 21st century. Investment in prevention and community health infrastructure can:

- Expand workforce participation.
- Reduce acute care costs.
- Generate employment across clinical and community settings.
- Strengthen social and economic resilience.

Prevention as an Asset Class

Prevention is no longer a “soft policy goal” — it is an economic and investable proposition. Evidence from social prescribing shows:

- Improved population wellbeing.
- Reduced healthcare utilization.
- Clear cost-avoidance and productivity gains.

With ISO standard metrics, prevention interventions including social prescribing can be packaged as financially credible, scalable, and transparent investments.

Investment vehicles include:

- Prevention impact funds.
- Social prescribing bonds.
- Outcomes-based finance contracts.
- Blended public-private health infrastructure vehicles.

These structures allow investors to generate financial returns alongside measurable social impact.

Global Social Prescribing Alliance (GSPA): Infrastructure and Leadership

GSPA connects over 40 countries to validate and scale social prescribing interventions. Key achievements:

- Launched in 2021 by the UK Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.
- Developed the Global Social Prescribing Playbook for national adoption.
- Creates a global standard of evidence, data, and outcomes reporting, ensuring prevention programs are measurable and investable.

GSPA demonstrates that prevention can be systematically scaled, delivering both social value and measurable fiscal impact.



World Health Service (WHS): The Capital and Delivery Vehicle

World Health Service (WHS), the not-for-profit arm of WHIS, is the blended capital vehicle that operationalizes prevention at scale.

WHS enables:

- Investment in prevention and social prescribing.
- Scaling of proven WHIS programmes (WHISKids, WHIS@Work, WHISSeniors).
- Place-based health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Blended public-private-philanthropic co-investment.

Through fiscal sponsorship and donor-advised fund structures, WHS ensures accountability, impact measurement, and long-term value creation, providing investors and partners a credible vehicle to deploy capital in prevention.

Advisory Pathways for HNWIs, Banks, and Institutional Investors

HNWIs, banks, family offices, and institutional investors can access strategic advisory to deploy capital into prevention markets:

1. Asset Identification — Evidence-backed social prescribing, workforce wellbeing, healthy ageing, and climate-linked prevention programmes.
2. Blended Capital Structuring — Philanthropic, government, and private investment vehicles.
3. Standards & Impact Measurement — ISO aligned outcomes tracking.
4. Place-Based Strategies - Municipal and city-level prevention portfolios targeting measurable social and economic outcomes.

This approach allows investors to generate strong, risk-adjusted returns while addressing health inequalities and social challenges.



WHIS Cities: Engines of Prevention and Venture Creation

WHIS Cities are the place-based execution engines where prevention is operationalized and scaled.

They function as innovation ecosystems, mobilising:

- Local governments and health systems.
- Investors and banks.
- Community organisations.
- Academic and private sector innovators.

WHIS Cities generate new ventures in:

- Digital social prescribing platforms.
- Community health workforce enterprises.
- Healthy ageing technologies.
- Green health infrastructure.

They create measurable health impact, economic value, and regional innovation, aligning prevention interventions with real-world investment outcomes.

Integration Across the Prevention Architecture

The ecosystem is fully aligned:

- ISO – Standards for outcomes and reporting.
- GSPA – Global network and validation.
- WHIS – Innovation platform and convenor.
- WHS – Capital deployment vehicle.
- WHIS Cities – Place-based execution and venture creation.

Together, they demonstrate that prevention is investable, scalable, and globally deployable, generating measurable social, health, and financial returns.



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Conclusion & Call to Action

Prevention is no longer just good policy it is a multi-sector, investable infrastructure opportunity.

Investors, governments, and philanthropists can now participate in:

- Reducing long-term healthcare expenditure.
- Reactivating workforces.
- Generating sustainable economic and social impact.
- Advancing health equity, climate resilience, and wellbeing at scale.

With the GSPA's global adoption, WHS as a capital vehicle, and WHIS Cities as delivery engines signal that prevention is ready for investment as a structured asset class.

Join us in building the future of healthcare where health creates wealth, and wealth creates healthier societies.



Partnerships & Ecosystem

Building strong collaborations with key stakeholders to enhance healthcare quality, research, and innovation.

Collaborative Network

Government & Regulators:

Ministry of Health programs,
public health initiatives

Research & Clinical Partners

Clinical trials, new
treatment development

Academic Partners:

Joint research, student
training programs

Investors & Innovation

Funding for digital health
platforms and pilot projects

Strategic Impact

Collaboration strengthened service quality, expanded research capabilities, and improved organizational resilience, enabling us to deliver better patient outcomes and support long-term healthcare innovation.

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