

READING WELL

Reading Well Books on Prescription: FAQs for health libraries

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1. What is Reading Well Books on Prescription?

Reading Well Books on Prescription provides accredited reading to help people manage their health and wellbeing, available from English public libraries. It is delivered by The Reading Agency in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians with funding from Arts Council England and Wellcome. The scheme is [endorsed by leading health partners](#).

Reading Well Books on Prescription for common mental health conditions was launched in June 2013 as the first national scheme for England. A second scheme for people with dementia and their carers was launched in January 2015, followed by Reading Well for young people in 2016 and Reading Well for long term conditions in 2017. A new adult mental health scheme will replace the 2013 booklist in June 2018.

Health professionals can refer people to a recommended list of accredited titles to help with specific conditions and people can also use the scheme independently as a first step to understanding and managing symptoms and seeking help. The programme complements existing local health services and is a simple way of delivering prevention and early intervention care.

The programme is available in 98% of public library authorities and is part of the Society of Chief Librarians' Universal Health Offer. Reading Well Books on Prescription also signposts people to other wellbeing services in libraries, including social and recreational activity such as reading groups and community volunteering.

2. What do the Reading Well Books on Prescription schemes cover?

- [Reading Well Books on Prescription for dementia](#)
- [Reading Well for young people](#)
- [Reading Well for long term conditions](#)

A new Reading Well for mental health booklist will launch in June 2018.



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Reading Well for mental health

The new Reading Well for mental health booklist will launch in June 2018. The booklist of 37 titles provides adults living with mental health needs with advice, information and support including self-help, psycho-education and memoir. The list covers general wellbeing, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), mindfulness, common feelings and experiences including bereavement and low self-esteem, and common conditions including anxiety, depression and postnatal depression. The list also includes personal stories from people who are living with or caring for someone with mental health needs.

Reading Well for dementia

In January 2015, we launched Reading Well Books on Prescription for dementia, which provides help and support for people with dementia, carers of people with dementia and anyone who would like to find out more about the condition or is worried about symptoms.

Reading Well for young people

Reading Well for young people provides recommended reading to young people to help them understand and manage their mental health and wellbeing. The scheme provides young people aged 13 to 18 with advice, information and support on a range of mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, and difficult experiences like bullying and exam stress.

Reading Well for long term conditions

Reading Well for long term conditions provides a booklist of 29 titles providing people living with long term conditions and their carers with expert endorsed health information and self-management support. The book list covers general information on living well with a long term condition, titles on specific conditions (Diabetes, Arthritis, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Asthma, Heart disease, Angina, Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Stroke), symptom-based titles (mental health related to living with a long term condition, sleeping difficulties, fatigue and pain management) and titles for family and carers.

3. Can health libraries run Reading Well Books on Prescription?

Health libraries are encouraged to stock Reading Well titles and deliver the scheme to allow the health professionals using their library to be aware of the scheme and its benefits, recommend the titles to their patients, and to read or find out more about the titles that they might recommend to their patients in the future.

Health libraries are eligible to run Reading Well as long as they meet the following guidelines:

- Stock the full collection of Reading Well titles on a list in sufficient quantities to ensure adequate provision for the target audience
- Registering with Reading Agency as running the scheme by emailing readingwell@readingagency.org.uk

- Partner with appropriate health professionals who are able to recommend titles and support people in understanding and managing their conditions.
- Purchase appropriate quantities of the Reading Well user leaflet to ensure people are fully informed about the scheme and where to go for further support. The leaflet and other print resources can be ordered from The Reading Agency [shop](#)
- Signpost users and health professionals to local library services, especially the services which support health and wellbeing
- Providing loan data for the titles on the list as part of the annual Reading Well evaluation

4. How do I work with my local public library?

Health libraries are encouraged to get in touch with their local library authority to work together to promote and deliver Reading Well. Contact your local library authority to explore ways they can work together to deliver the scheme (to obtain correct contact details please email readingwell@readingagency.org.uk).

5. How can I support the health professionals I work with to deliver the Reading Well schemes?

Provide the user leaflets containing the booklist to your colleagues so they can signpost people to supportive titles. Health professionals can refer people to the books in the Reading Well collection using the recommended reading form in the user leaflet as part of a supported treatment programme. There is also a bank of resources for health professionals on the [Reading Well website](#). These resources are free to download and include digital versions of the user leaflets, FAQs for health professionals, and information on titles on the lists.

An information booklet for health professionals, written by the National Association for Primary Care in association with The Reading Agency, is also available to explain the benefits of Reading Well.

- ‘Reading Well Books on Prescription: *How bibliotherapy can help your patients and save your practice time and money*’ is available to download [here](#).

6. How can I be updated with news about the scheme?

Please email readingwell@readingagency.org.uk to sign up for our new mailing list for HEE libraries. This newsletter will contain updates and free downloadable resources to support delivery of Reading Well. You can also visit The Reading Well website: www.reading-well.org.uk.