

Reading Well Books on Prescription for dementia: guide for prescribers

About Reading Well Books on Prescription

Reading Well provides accredited and helpful reading to support health and wellbeing. The scheme is endorsed by leading health partners and delivered in public libraries. The scheme will be rolled out in Wales over the next two years with funding from the Welsh Government and in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians Cymru, beginning with Reading Well for dementia in 2018 and followed by Reading Well for mental health in 2019.

The core booklist of 24 titles provides:

- Information and advice about dementia
- Support following diagnosis
- Support and practical advice for carers
- Personal accounts of people with dementia and their relatives and carers
- Suggestions for shared activities.

The titles on the list are detailed in the user leaflets and are also available via our website: reading-well.org.uk/wales

The Books on Prescription model originated in Wales and Reading Well is a development of this original model. The Reading Agency is working with the Welsh Books Council to translate books on the list into Welsh; book collections and supporting materials will be made available from libraries in both English and Welsh.

How does it work?

A health professional or dementia service provider can make a reading recommendation with the user leaflet. Print versions of the user leaflet accompany this guide and are also available from local library services. Digital copies can be downloaded at reading-well.org.uk/wales. People then take their book recommendations to their local library, where the titles can be borrowed for free. If the book is not immediately available, it can be reserved. Free reservations are available in most libraries. Books can also be selected directly from the library without a prescription.

Who can recommend books?

Health and social care professionals who provide dementia care can use the scheme. People can also self-refer, or refer others via the user leaflets. Books can be used before, during or after diagnosis and to support family and carers.

How are the books selected?

The books have all been recommended by health professionals and people who have dementia or are caring for someone with the condition. They have been selected using guidelines and quality standards for dementia care from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. For more information about the book selection protocol, see www.reading-well.org.uk/resources/525

Why are public libraries important to building dementia friendly communities?

Evidence shows that people see their library as a safe, trusted and non-stigmatising place to go for health information. As well as Reading Well Books on Prescription, they offer:

- Information about local dementia services
- Social and recreational activities such as reading groups and self-help groups
- Reminiscence collections

Does it work?

Since its launch in 2013, Reading Well has reached 778,000 people in England and has been endorsed by the public as well as by GPs, mental health professionals and government ministers as a helpful community-based health service.

It has also delivered significant patient benefit. In a recent survey, 96% of those who have borrowed a book from the dementia booklist said it had been helpful. You can read the full evaluation from 2016-2017 here: <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/2480/>

National partnerships

The scheme is supported by Alzheimer's Society, British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies, The British Psychological Society, Carers UK, Dementia UK, Innovations in Dementia, National Association of Primary Care, NHS England (IAPT), Royal College of General Practitioners, Royal College of Nursing, Royal College of Psychiatrists.