

THE LINK WORKERS GUIDE

This guide for link workers shows how to prescribe music for people living with dementia and link them with the music that they want to experience as part of their journey with dementia.

***music-based activities** describes the wide variety of music on offer including: singing or listening to music in the home, developing a playlist of favourite songs or music, watching musicals, singing in a physical or virtual choir or group, singing and dancing or walking to music, singing along with a musician, and specialist music therapy.

1 The benefits of music for people living with dementia

Music is a universal experience that people living with dementia can enjoy and experience at any time and throughout their journey with dementia. There are many potential physical, psychosocial and social benefits of music-based activities for them. Music is not just a nicety within an individual's personalised care and has a useful role to play in prevention, diagnosis and care.*

2 Include music in the social prescribing conversation – have a musical conversation

In the conversations you have with people about their care, include music. Ask what music is important to them, and how and when they like to experience it. Think holistically with the person about who they are, what matters to them, and the ways in which music might be woven through their life.

Talk about where music might have played an important role in someone's life – sport, faith, work, hobbies, relationships with family and friends. Keep in mind the breadth of music-based activities that could be relevant.

Have more than one conversation, keep a record of preferences, involve carers and family members, and listen out for clues about what does and doesn't work for people.

3 Use our template to support your conversations

Use and adapt our [template](#) to be a regular part of your social prescribing conversations so you can find out what matters most to people when it comes to music.

4 Linking with local opportunities for music-based activities

The Music for Dementia [Musical Map](#) shows locations of different types of music-based activities available across the country.

5 Family and friends supporting the plan

Family and friends can play a key role in supporting the musical elements of a person's care plan (even if they are not living with them). Involve them in the planning and conversations – you'll find they'll want to play a part.

6 Keep the musical conversation going

Things change as people change – keep talking about music with people as their social prescribing journey develops.

Supported by:



This guide has been produced by **Music for Dementia**, a national campaign to make music available for everyone living with dementia, that is led and funded by the Utley Foundation, a family charitable trust. The guide is supported by the National Academy for Social Prescribing, Social Prescribing Champions and the National Association Link Workers.