



INTEGRATED CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Social care and support



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Introduction to the Guide

This Facilitator Guide is part of the material developed to support training programmes on the WHO Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) approach. This guide serves as a roadmap for trainers and facilitators, helping them navigate through the session on social care and support for older people, while ensuring that key topics are covered and participants are engaged. It includes practical tips, potential challenges, and suggested ways to handle different situations that may arise during the session.

Session structure

This Facilitator Guide is organized around four core facilitation actions that you will use throughout the session. These actions are represented by icons and indicate how you should guide participants through the content.

You will see these actions repeated across all slides and modules, providing a consistent structure for facilitation.



Show: The slides

This indicates the slide you should present from the slide deck. When you see the Show, display the corresponding slide to participants.



Say: What you explain

This provides a suggested narrative outline for you to explain the slide content. The text is intended as guidance rather than a fixed script. You may adapt the wording to suit your facilitation style, experience and the needs of your participants, while keeping the key messages intact.



Ask: Questions to prompt dialogue

This prompts you to ask questions and encourage dialogue with and among participants.

The discussion associated with these questions should generally take 2 to 5 minutes. However, you should use your best judgment to decide how much time to dedicate to such interactions, considering factors such as participant engagement, availability of time, and/or relevance of the topic.



Do: Actions to facilitate learning

This prompts you to conduct an action, such as guiding an activity, managing group interaction or providing instructions to participants.

Keep in mind that this Facilitator Guide is only a roadmap. You are expected to apply your voice and experience to make this tool work for you. As explained, the 'Say' sections are simply indications; you can use them as a script when you feel the need to, but you can and

should adapt them to suit your natural training style. Add your personal touch and personality to every training, while being careful to stick to the session objectives.

A key component of successful face-to-face training is establishing trust and rapport with your learners. Use your good judgement to assess the attitude and cultural sensitivities of the people in your workshop. Adapt your training techniques and approach accordingly.

You are going to be great at conducting this training.

Social care and support



Do:

- *Formal welcome*
- *Introduction of the facilitator*



Show: Slide 1



Say:

Welcome to the module on social care and support.

Understanding the needs of older people with significant losses of capacity is crucial for providing dignified care and support. Social care includes assistance with daily activities, access to community resources, financial security, suitable living arrangements and protection from abuse and harassment.

Let us explore how social care and support can ensure dignity and a meaningful life for those with significant losses of intrinsic capacity.

This session will take about 15 minutes.

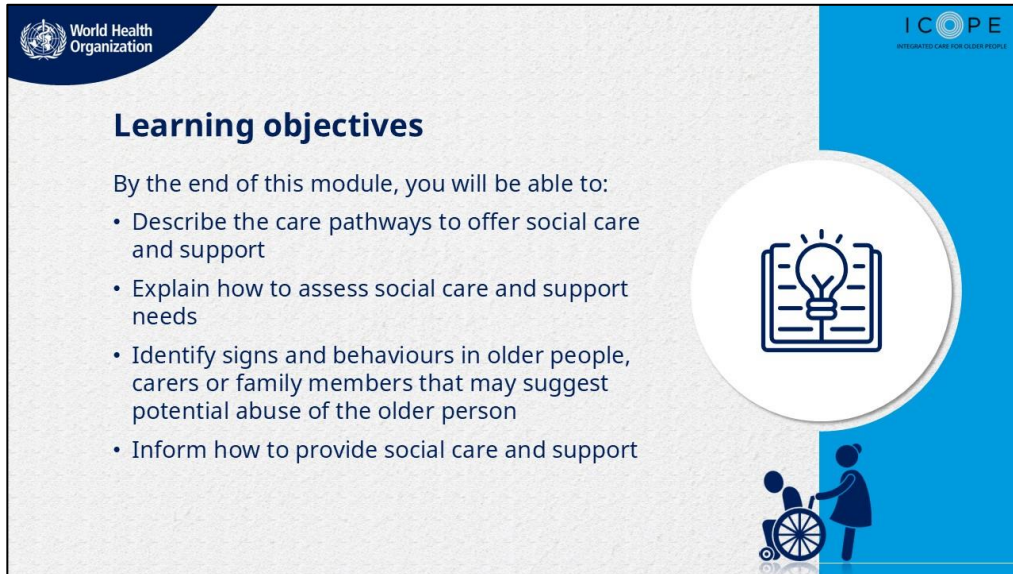
You will find more details on this topic in Chapter 11 of the ICOPE handbook.

Let us get started.

Learning objectives



Show: Slide 2



Learning objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Describe the care pathways to offer social care and support
- Explain how to assess social care and support needs
- Identify signs and behaviours in older people, carers or family members that may suggest potential abuse of the older person
- Inform how to provide social care and support



Say:

Let us take a moment to understand our objectives for this module.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain the care pathways to offer social care and support
- Explain how to assess social care and support needs
- Identify signs and behaviours in older people, carers or family members that may suggest potential abuse of the older person
- Explain how to provide social care and support

Ensuring dignity through social care and support



Ask:

Why is social care essential for maintaining dignity in older people with reduced intrinsic capacity?



Show: Slide 3



World Health Organization

Ensuring dignity through social care and support



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- Older individuals may require social care and support to lead meaningful and dignified lives. This need can arise irrespective of their intrinsic capacity and may change over time.
- People with significant loss of intrinsic capacity often depend on others for care, support and assistance to maintain their dignity.
- Social care and support include help with daily activities, meaningful engagement, reducing isolation, financial stability, stable housing and protection from abuse.
- Identifying these needs may involve consulting a trusted person, especially if cognitive impairment is present.

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Say:

Today, we will explore how social care and support play a crucial role in ensuring dignity for those with significant intrinsic capacity loss.

Imagine needing help with daily tasks, feeling isolated or worrying about financial security. Access to social care can transform these challenges, providing not only practical assistance but also a sense of belonging and security. It involves everything from daily living activities to meaningful community engagement, from safe housing to protection from abuse.

To accurately identify the specific needs of an older person, especially if they have cognitive impairments, it is often helpful to consult with someone who knows them well, such as a family member or carer.

Care pathway to provide social care and support



Show: Slide 4



Say:

Let us navigate the care pathway to identify and address the social care and support needs of older people.

The pathway begins with a series of basic questions designed to uncover major challenges in four key areas:

- Home environment: Is the living space safe, accessible and well-maintained?
- Financial situation: Are there difficulties in affording basic needs such as food, housing or healthcare?
- Social relationships and loneliness: Does the person feel isolated or lack meaningful connections?
- Social engagement: Is the person able to maintain hobbies, interests or participate in community activities?

These are just examples of questions that could be used. Please consider the need of adapting them to your context. Regardless of the result of these questions, always provide health and lifestyle advice, including information on opportunities for social engagement, and re-ask regularly.

A more in-depth assessment is recommended if any potential issues are identified or if there is a decline in intrinsic capacity. This assessment comprises two components:

- Risk of abuse:** Observe behaviours and identify signs that may indicate potential abuse.
- Personal assistance needs:** Assess the need for help with daily activities.

Assess and manage social support needs



Show: Slide 5



Say:

Let us discuss more in detail how to assess the four key areas, and how to explore abuse of older persons. Please remind to always assess and manage social support needs, regardless of a person's intrinsic capacity and functional ability.

Living Conditions: Evaluate the size, access, condition, safety and security of the living environment. Address issues with new security measures, emergency contacts, home adaptations or consider a move to more suitable accommodation.

Finance: Ensure financial security by addressing issues like insufficient funds for basic needs or financial management worries.

Loneliness: Combat social isolation and loneliness through close relationships, social activities and ways to connect with friends and family.

Social engagement and participation: Help older people engage in activities that matter to them. Identify barriers like cost and accessibility, and provide information on local leisure, education and volunteering services.

Abuse of older people: Be vigilant for signs of abuse. For example, check the behaviour of the older person, the behaviour of their caregivers, or signs of physical abuse.

Observational cues for potential abuse



Show: Slide 6




Observational cues for potential abuse

Behaviour of the older person

- Appears to be afraid of a relative or a carer
- Hesitates or shows anxiety when responding to questions in the presence of the carer or relative
- Displays changes in behaviour when the carer or relative is present
- Refers to the carer using terms such as strong-willed, frequently tired, irritable, highly stressed, anxious, or quick-tempered
- Demonstrates exaggerated respect or deference towards the carer



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Say:

Abuse of older persons can take many forms. It can be physical, emotional, sexual, financial or neglect, and it is more common than many realize. Older people with cognitive impairment, poor health, disability, social isolation, or financial difficulties are at higher risk. Staying alert helps us act early.

It is crucial to be aware of signs of possible abuse to ensure the safety and well-being of older people. How could an older person object of abuse appear or behave?

- They may seem afraid of a relative or carer.
- They might not want to answer questions or look anxious at the carer or relative before responding.
- Their behaviour changes when the carer or relative enters or exits the room.
- They refer to the carer using terms like 'strong-willed', 'often tired', 'bad-tempered', 'irritable', 'very anxious', 'highly stressed' or 'loses temper very easily'.
- They show exaggerated respect or deference for the carer.

Recognizing these cues is essential for identifying potential abuse and taking appropriate action to protect the older person.



Show: Slide 7




Observational cues for potential abuse

Behaviour of the carer or relative

- Restricts or hinders communication between staff and the older person
- Frequently interrupts assessments by entering the room
- Insists on answering questions directed to the older person
- Creates barriers to providing home assistance or support
- Expresses dissatisfaction or resentment about caregiving responsibilities
- Attempts to discredit the older person by portraying them as "confused" or unreliable without justification
- Exhibits hostility, impatience or signs of fatigue during interactions



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Say:

Sometimes the behaviours of carers or relatives may also help identify possible abuse of older people. Being aware of these signs can help us protect the older person. For example:

- They hinder communication between staff and the older person, often preventing private conversations.
- They interrupt the assessment frequently, for instance by repeatedly entering the room.
- They insist on answering questions that are directed at the older person.
- They create obstacles to providing home assistance to the older person.
- They express dissatisfaction about caregiving responsibilities.
- They attempt to portray the older person as 'crazy' or unreliable without any valid reason.
- They exhibit hostility, fatigue or impatience during the interview.

These behaviours can be red flags for potential abuse. Recognizing them is crucial for ensuring the older person's safety and well-being.



Show: Slide 8




Observational cues for potential abuse

Neglect and physical abuse

- Malnutrition, dehydration, pressure sores
- Poor body and oral hygiene
- Dirty, severely worn clothing
- Delay between the onset of illness and seeking medical attention
- Injuries
- Bruising that has the shape of fingers, indicating rough handling
- Improper use of medications, whether underuse or overuse



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Say:

Also, neglecting the older people and physical abuse can be detected by recognizing observational cues, a critical aspect in safeguarding the well-being of older people. For example:

- Look for signs of malnutrition and dehydration, including weight loss or dry mouth.
- Check for pressure sores, especially in people with limited mobility.
- Observe poor body or oral hygiene and dirty or severely worn clothing.
- Be alert to delays in seeking medical care after the onset of illness.
- Look out for cuts, burns, bruises and scratches on the older person's body.
- Be wary of injuries that do not match the explanations provided.
- Take note of injuries that are unlikely to have occurred accidentally.
- Check for injuries and wounds in concealed places.
- Pay attention to bruising that resembles finger marks from rough handling, often seen on upper arms.
- Examine injuries in protected areas, such as underarms.
- Be concerned about untreated or multiple injuries at different stages of healing.
- Watch for signs of medication underuse or overuse.

Recommended actions in cases of suspected abuse



Show: Slide 9




Recommended actions in cases of suspected abuse

If you suspect abuse:

- Refer the case for further assessment through social services
- Ensure close monitoring (e.g., visits by a community health or social worker; encourage attendance at health facilities or support services)
- Consider referral to psychosocial services, such as counselling
- If there is an immediate threat to life or physical safety, involve law enforcement and arrange temporary shelter where possible



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Say:

Let us talk about what to do when you suspect abuse of an older person.

If you suspect abuse:

- Refer the case for further assessment. Contact social services using observed signs (e.g., unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, concerning interactions with carers). Social service professionals can conduct a more detailed evaluation and identify the appropriate response.
- Offer close monitoring. This may include arranging regular visits by community health workers or social workers and encouraging the older person to attend health facilities or other support services.
- Consider referral to psychosocial services. Counselling and emotional support can help older people cope with the stress, fear or trauma associated with abuse. Make referrals when these services are available and acceptable.
- If there is any immediate threat to life or physical safety, act urgently. Contact law enforcement or adult protection services and arrange temporary shelter if possible.

The priority is always the immediate safety of the older person.

Assessment of social care needs



Show: Slide 10





Assessment of social care needs



A person's care and assistance needs depend on strategies to compensate for loss of intrinsic capacity, while respecting their preferences, choices and goals.

An in-depth assessment should evaluate the ability to perform basic and instrumental activities of daily living (i.e., ADLs, IADLs), such as:

- Transferring
- Personal hygiene
- Meal preparation and feeding
- Medication management
- Using a telephone and managing transportation



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Say:

This slide explains that the need for personal care and assistance arises when a person's intrinsic capacity declines. The goal of the assessment is to identify how best to compensate for these losses to maintain or improve functional ability and quality of life.

The assessment should focus on the person's ability to perform both:

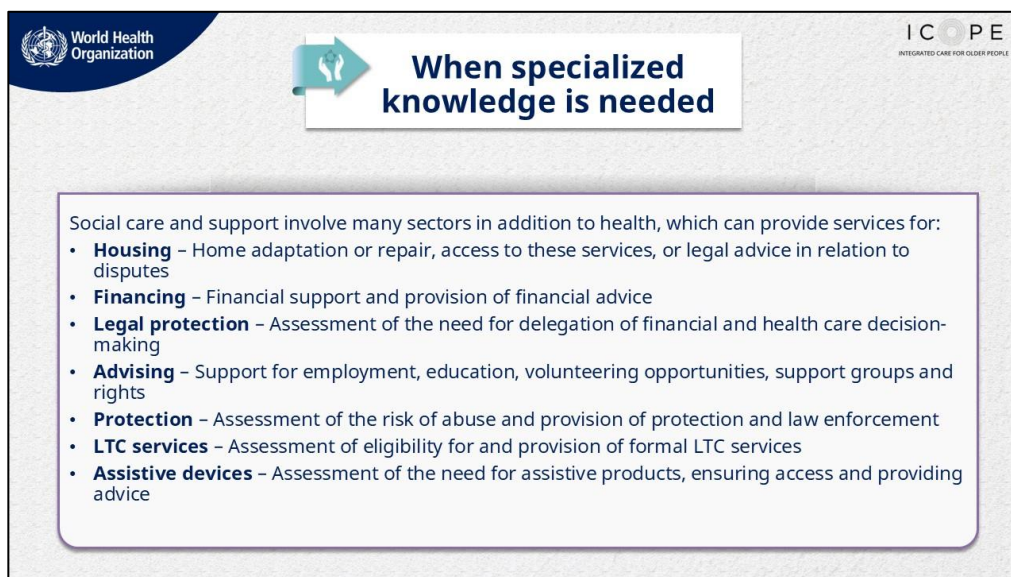
- Basic Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) such as:
 - Transferring (e.g., moving from bed to chair)
 - Personal hygiene (e.g., bathing, grooming)
 - Feeding and meal preparation
- Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) such as:
 - Using medication correctly and consistently
 - Managing transportation and using a telephone

ADLs and IADLs are essential for independent living and social participation. Identifying limitations in ADLs and IADLs allows care providers to tailor interventions—whether through assistive devices, carer support or environmental modifications.

When specialized knowledge is needed



Show: Slide 11



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When specialized knowledge is needed

Social care and support involve many sectors in addition to health, which can provide services for:

- **Housing** – Home adaptation or repair, access to these services, or legal advice in relation to disputes
- **Financing** – Financial support and provision of financial advice
- **Legal protection** – Assessment of the need for delegation of financial and health care decision-making
- **Advising** – Support for employment, education, volunteering opportunities, support groups and rights
- **Protection** – Assessment of the risk of abuse and provision of protection and law enforcement
- **LTC services** – Assessment of eligibility for and provision of formal LTC services
- **Assistive devices** – Assessment of the need for assistive products, ensuring access and providing advice



Say:

Here are some examples of the areas of special expertise involved in older people's social care:

- **Housing:** Individuals may need support with home adaptations or repairs, or legal advice related to housing disputes. These services help ensure a safe and accessible living environment.
- **Financing:** Financial insecurity can severely impact well-being. Specialized support may include financial aid, budgeting assistance or access to benefits and entitlements.
- **Legal protection:** In cases where individuals can no longer make decisions independently, there may be a need for legal assessment and delegation of decision-making authority (e.g., through power of attorney or guardianship).
- **Advising:** Support may also be needed to help individuals re-engage with employment, education, or volunteering, or to connect them with support groups and advocacy services that uphold their rights and dignity.
- **Protection:** When there is a risk of abuse or neglect, it is critical to involve professionals who can assess the situation and coordinate protective services and law enforcement if necessary.
- **Long-term care services:** Some individuals may require formal long-term care, such as home-based services or residential care. This involves eligibility assessments and coordination with long-term care providers.

- **Assistive devices:** Specialized assessment may be needed to determine assistive products (e.g., mobility aids, communication tools), ensure access and provide training or advice.

Knowing which health and care workers to involve ensures that older people receive comprehensive and appropriate care tailored to their needs.

Manage social support needs



Show: Slide 12




Manage social support needs

- Home environment**
 - Consider simple home adaptations
 - Consider alternative accommodation options
 - Refer to social welfare, community housing programmes or support networks
- Financial situations**
 - Refer to social services for access to pensions, grants and allowances
 - Suggest professional financial advice
 - Provide guidance on delegating financial decisions, ensuring protection against abuse
- Social isolation and loneliness**
 - Support in managing difficult personal relationships
 - Share local opportunities for social activities, volunteering, employment or education
 - Help with using digital tools to stay connected with family and friends
- Social engagement and participation**
 - Identify interests and share local opportunities for leisure, learning, volunteering and work
 - Recommend services that support participation (e.g., transport, discounted activities)
 - Encourage social connections with community or spiritual groups



Say:

Let us look at four areas to strengthen social support for older people: their home environment, financial security, loneliness and social participation.

Home environment: Suggest simple safety adaptations like better lighting or handrails. If needed, explore more suitable housing and connect the older person to social welfare or housing programmes for repairs and upkeep.

Financial security: Help check eligibility for pensions or allowances. Recommend professional financial advice when needed, and guide safe delegation of financial decision-making, especially if cognitive impairment is present.

Social isolation and loneliness: Share local social activities, volunteering, or learning opportunities that can rebuild social connections. Offer guidance on using digital tools to stay connected and support managing personal relationships.

Social engagement and participation: Discuss interests and preferences that make engagement meaningful. Provide information on leisure services, clubs, education, volunteering and services that ease participation (e.g., transport subsidies).

Manage social care needs



Show: Slide 13



Manage social care needs

Helping older people stay safe, mobile and well-supported at home

- Adapt the home environment to enhance mobility and reduce fall risk.
- Recommend appropriate assistive products (e.g., shower chairs, dressing aids, modified cutlery, plates, cups, pill organizers) and provide guidance on access and maintenance.
- Evaluate the need for rehabilitation services and facilitate access where available.
- Assess support from spouse, family, or other carers, and identify the needs of the carer.
- Review requirements for assistance from care workers.
- Connect individuals to locally available services such as home-based care, day-care programs, or residential LTC facilities, ensuring options are culturally acceptable.



Say:

Let us look now at how to support daily activities while helping older people stay as independent as possible.

Modify the home environment: Simple changes, like grab bars, good lighting or safer flooring, can improve mobility and prevent falls.

Use assistive products: Introduce practical aids such as shower chairs, dressing tools, modified utensils and pill organizers. Explain how to access and maintain them.

Assess rehabilitation needs: Rehabilitation can improve mobility and reduce reliance on carers. Link the older person to services where available.

Assess family and carer support: Check how much support is provided and what the carer may need. Encourage carers to help the older person do what they can for themselves.

Review care worker needs: Decide if additional care workers are required to support daily activities and reduce strain on families.

Connect to local services: Link the older person and their carers to home-based care, day care or long-term care facilities that are available and culturally appropriate.

Summary



Show: Slide 14




Summary



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- Health workers and community stakeholders should identify the needs for social support of older people.
- Collaboration across sectors like social services, long-term care, and legal services is essential.
- Personal assistance to accomplish tasks of daily living may be necessary for older people with a significant loss of intrinsic capacity.
- Primary care workers and community stakeholders must observe and address signs of abuse and neglect.
- Community stakeholders play a key role in providing social care and organizing home-based care and activities.



Do:

Go through the slides and recap the points discussed during the session.



Say:

To summarize this session, we have highlighted the importance of identifying the social support needs of older people as a core part of integrated, person-centred care.

Health workers and community stakeholders play a critical role in recognizing these needs and responding appropriately. We have seen that collaboration across sectors, such as social services, long-term care, and legal services, is essential to ensure older people receive comprehensive and coordinated support.

For those with a significant loss of intrinsic capacity, personal assistance with activities of daily living may be necessary to maintain dignity and quality of life.

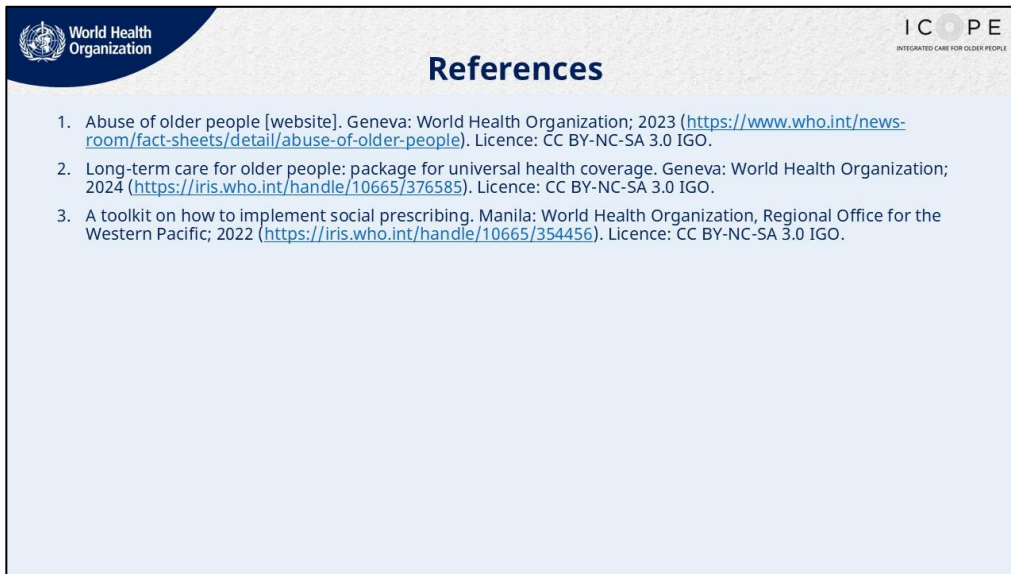
We have also emphasized the responsibility of primary care workers and community stakeholders to observe, prevent, and address signs of abuse and neglect.

Finally, community stakeholders are key partners in providing social care, organizing home-based care, and facilitating meaningful activities that support the well-being of older people.

References



Show: Slide 15



The thumbnail shows a presentation slide titled "References". It features the World Health Organization logo on the top left and the ICOPE logo on the top right. The slide contains three numbered references:

1. Abuse of older people [website]. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2023 (<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abuse-of-older-people>). Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
2. Long-term care for older people: package for universal health coverage. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2024 (<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/376585>). Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
3. A toolkit on how to implement social prescribing. Manila: World Health Organization, Regional Office for the Western Pacific; 2022 (<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/354456>). Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.



Say:

Here are some useful links and citations for your reference. Thank you for your time and participation.