

Reading Well delivery model

What is Reading Well?

Reading Well is a national books on prescription scheme that helps people to understand and manage their health and wellbeing using recommended reading. It has been developed by [The Reading Agency](#) in partnership with [Libraries Connected](#) and SCL Cymru and is delivered with public libraries. There are Reading Well schemes for [adults](#), [teens](#), [children](#) and [families](#) mental health and [dementia](#). Since 2013, **over 3.9 million** Reading Well books have been borrowed from libraries. The books are all chosen and recommended by health experts, as well as by people with lived experience of the conditions and topics covered.

Reading Well books can be recommended by professionals and borrowed free of charge from a local library, or users can self-refer and borrow the titles from the open shelves of the library.

Delivery model

Libraries and other organisations wishing to deliver Reading Well must adhere to the following delivery principles:

- To maintain the integrity of the core book list and the support of national health partners, additional self-help titles **cannot** be displayed under Reading Well branding. Local collections/resources can be used to complement the Reading Well scheme, but they must not be added to the national list or displayed as if they are part of the Reading Well collection.
- Reading Well resources including leaflets are copyrighted and cannot be amended, adapted or recreated.
- Signpost people to readingagency.org.uk/reading-well to share their views on the books.
- Staff and volunteers should support people to access the book collections in a non-judgemental and supportive manner.
- Staff or volunteers should have appropriate training and support to manage requests related to health and wellbeing topics, including mental health support.
- If someone requires urgent help for their mental health, follow [NHS England](#) guidelines on accessing support.

Library guidelines

Public libraries running the scheme should also follow the following guidelines:

- Make the books accessible to library users via every library in an authority (on shelves or via reservations).
- Ensure the book collections are available for open access to support clinical referral and unsupported self-help and provide service user anonymity.
- Offer access to eBook and Audiobook versions, where possible.

Community managed libraries, schools and hospitals are encouraged to partner with public library services for advice and support. To find your library authority, visit: readingagency.org.uk/get-reading/find-your-library.

Book selection protocol

The process will include:

- An evidence review relating to the type of conditions/target audience for the list. Where possible, the review will identify alignment between the list and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) clinical guidelines and relevant policies.
- National stakeholder consultation to identify recommended titles and digital resources for consideration.
- Publisher call for submission of newly published titles for consideration.
- Expert consultation to produce a longlist of recommended titles, including information about content and accessibility.
- Co-production group of experts by experience convened to check and challenge book selection process.
- Final revision of the list following verification of publication details and availability, including formats.
- Final consultation and evidence base review of shortlist with key stakeholders.
- Endorsement of list by key partners.

Selection criteria applied

Material will:

- Comply with the evidence-based approach agreed for the list.
- Draw on existing best practice local and national delivery models.
- Have been recommended by health professionals as part of the consultation process as a useful, appropriate, and accessible resource for people managing conditions targeted by the list.
- Have been recommended/endorsed by service users/people who the scheme will target.
- Be reviewed to ensure appropriateness, relevancy, accessibility, and accuracy.
- Be in print and remain so for at least three-years.

- Where possible, be available as eBooks and in other formats (e.g., audiobooks).
- Include health books, personal stories, fiction, and digital resources.

In addition to the selection criteria identified above, the following considerations are applied to the selection of Reading Well lists:

- Material should be relevant to individuals with the targeted experiences/conditions and family/non-professional carers as well as wider social care support networks.
- Material aimed at a professional clinical audience, i.e. clinical textbooks and manuals will not be considered for core lists.
- Booklists should cater for a range of literacy levels and reading abilities.
- Content should reflect an authentic experience of the feeling/experience/condition covered.
- Content should be representative of a wide range of people and experiences.