

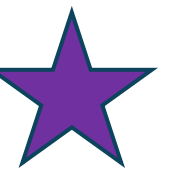
BEYOND MEDICATION: HOW SOCIAL PRESCRIBING AND LIFESTYLE MEDICINE IMPROVE PATIENT OUTCOMES

Presented by Dr. Nivedita Patel

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Ontario 

Agenda



- 1. Social and Lifestyle Factors Affecting Health**
- 2. Social Prescribing – What and Why?**
- 3. Local Initiatives**
- 4. Future Considerations**

Social Determinants of Health

Social and economic factors influencing health, shaped by living and working conditions.



<https://www.livewellpei.ca/about/health-promotion/social-determinants-of-health>

Lifestyle Factors Impacting Health Outcomes

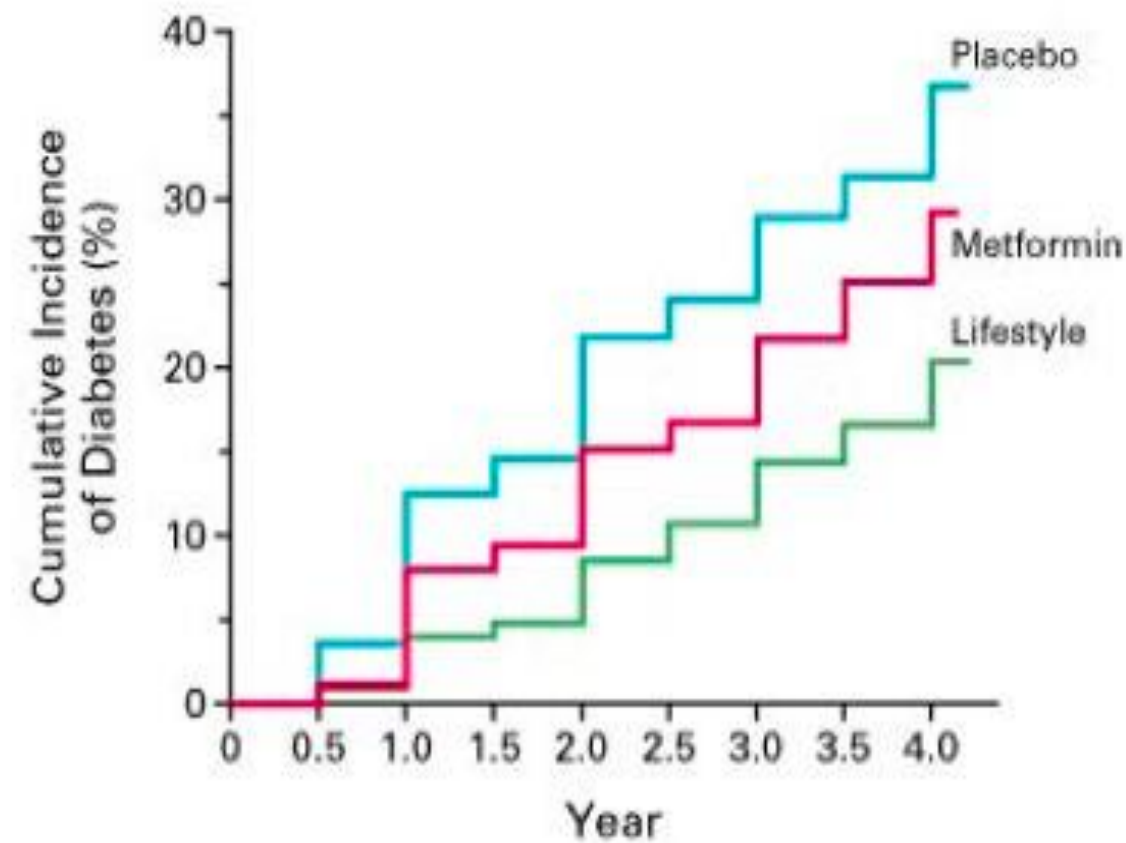


Lifestyle Medicine:

Medical specialty that uses therapeutic lifestyle interventions as a primary modality to treat chronic conditions including, but not limited to, cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.



Lifestyle medicine certified clinicians are trained to apply evidence-based, whole-person, prescriptive lifestyle change to prevent, treat and even reverse such conditions.

Lifestyle Change Has the Power to Prevent, Treat and Reverse Disease



Diabetes Prevention Program Research Group 346 (6): 393, Figure 2, February 7, 2002, NEJM

Reversal of Coronary Disease Achieved with Plant-Based Diet

1996	1999
	

Coronary angiograms of the distal left anterior descending artery before (left bracket) and after (right bracket) 32 months of a plant-based diet without cholesterol-lowering medication, showing profound improvement. Used with permission from Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr. (Source: *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease* by Dr. Esselstyn.)

Chronic Disease Burden in Canada

Chronic Disease Prevalence (2021)

45.1% of Canadians have at least one major chronic disease
Common conditions: **Overweight (35.5%), Obesity (29.2%), Arthritis (19.5%), HTN (17.7%)**
Heart disease & obesity rates rising

Impact of Age & Gender

Increase with age, **especially 65+**
Higher rates in women

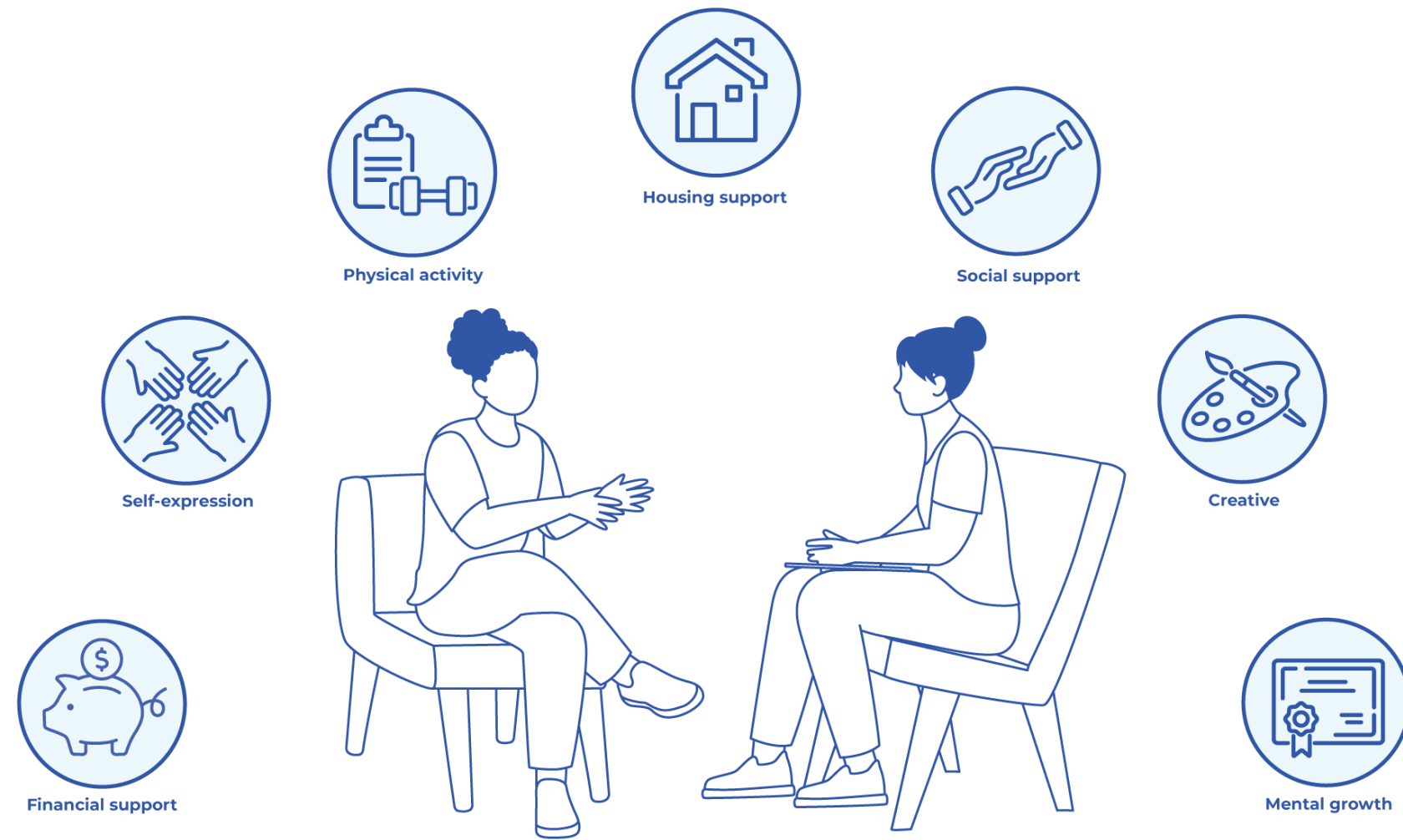
Socioeconomic & Racial Disparities

Lower income = higher chronic disease & multimorbidity
South Asians: Overweight rate **44.2%** vs **31.9%** (non-racialized)

Mental Health

Anxiety: 10.4% | **Mood disorders:** 9.6% (age 12+)
Higher in **females, First Nations, Métis,** and **lower income**

Social Prescribing



<https://tools.cep.health/tool/social-prescribing/#initiate-social-prescribing>

Social Prescribing is a holistic, patient-centered approach to health and well-being that allows healthcare professionals to connect individuals to non-clinical supports and community-based resources.

- Addresses **root causes**: isolation, sedentary lifestyle, low income, food insecurity, mental health, etc.
- Bridges **clinical care** and **community resources**
- Most helpful for those facing **social/systemic barriers** to health

Why Social Prescribing Matters

Global Findings (Systematic Review of 7 Studies)

- 48% of participants reported more frequent physical activity.
- 20% reported improvements in their health status.
- 23% reported improvements in their health confidence.

Patient Experience and Health Equity

- Calgary, AB: The Way In Network Findings:
 - 76% felt less lonely and isolated.
 - 83% felt program helped them access needed community services.
 - 76% reported improved communication with their medical team.

Social Prescribing and Older Adults

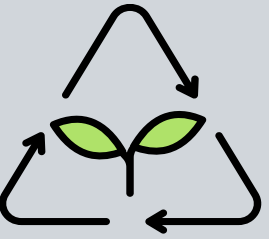
- 245,400 fewer hospital days annually due to fall prevention.
- 47% lower risk of dementia
- 16,900 fewer cases of coronary heart disease, 7,600 fewer cases of dementia in the next 10 years and 6500 fewer cases of stroke over a lifetime

Reducing Costs and Improving System Efficiency

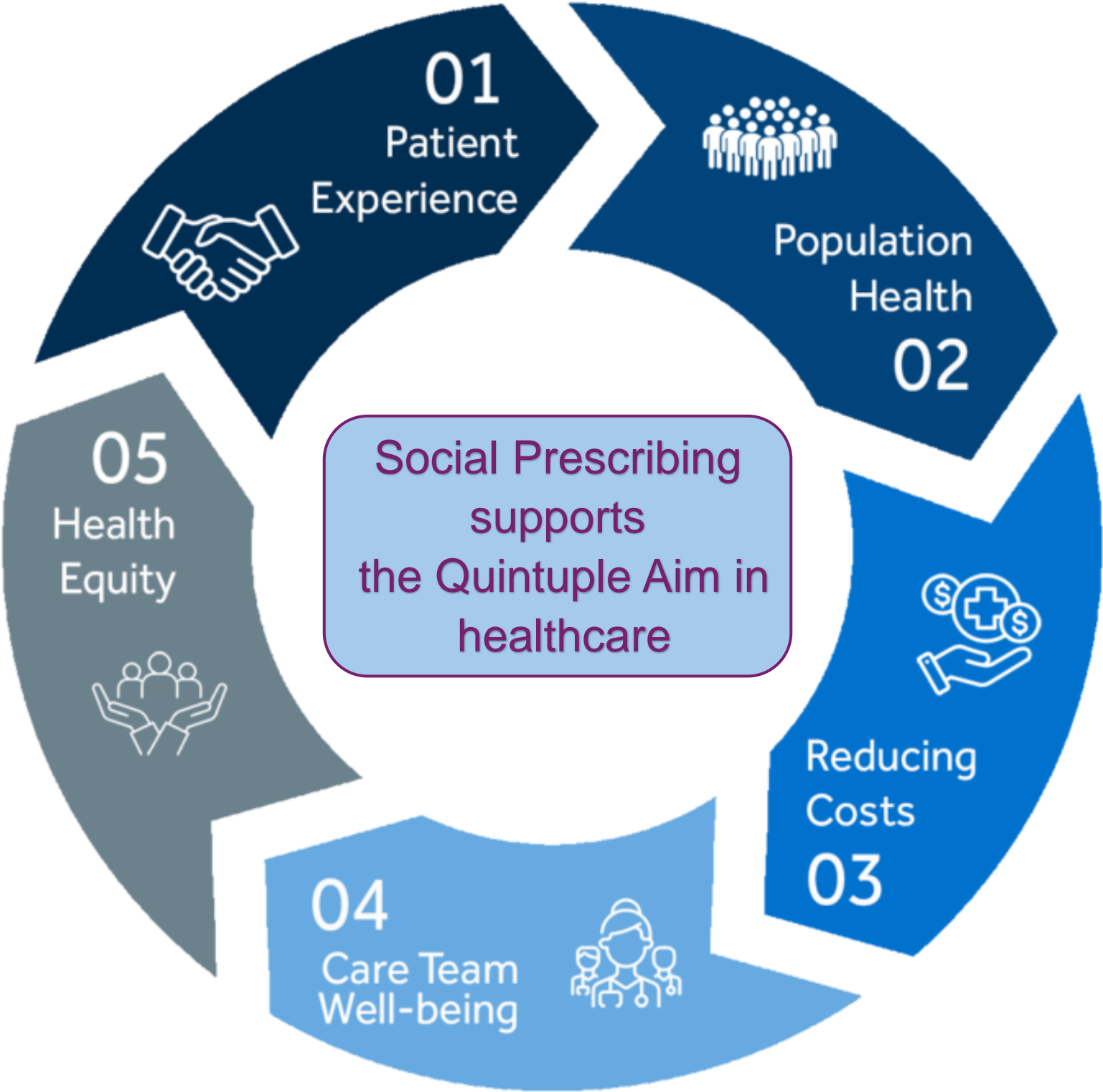
- Impact at Involve Kent CHC (UK):
 - 5% reduction in unplanned inpatient stays
 - 26% reduction in ER visits for older adults.
- KPMG Analysis:
 - **\$4.43** return for every dollar invested
 - \$268M in healthcare savings annually from fall prevention in older adults.

Environmental Sustainability

- **Lowers Healthcare resource demands**
- **Reduced Healthcare related emissions (4.6% global GHG emissions are healthcare related)**
- **Complements clinical care**
- **Nature prescribing promotes pro-environmental behavior**



The Quintuple Aim



<https://www.chesshealthsolutions.com/2023/08/01/the-quintuple-aim-what-is-it-and-why-does-it-matter/>

Local Initiatives



SMALL STEPS
FOR **BIG CHANGES**



PaRx and Conservation Halton Partnership



Walk with a Doc – Oakville chapter



Small Steps Big Changes



PaRx – Canada’s Nature Prescription Program

What is PaRx?

- Canada’s first national nature prescription program
- Encourages prescribing time in nature to support health and well-being
- Offers personalized prescriptions and Parks Canada access benefits

Why Prescribe Time in Nature?

- Helps reduce stress, anxiety, and depression
- Supports cardiovascular and immune health
- Boosts overall well-being

Recommended Dosage

- Minimum 2 hours/week in nature for measurable benefits

PaRx in Action: Recent Partnership and Referral Process

Local Partnership in Halton Region:

- PaRx, Conservation Halton, CCHOHT, and Halton Healthcare collaboration
→ Patients issued nature Rx get 10 free visits to Conservation Halton Parks

How Providers Can Refer Patients:

- Register on www.parkprescriptions.ca by clicking on 'Register as Prescriber' icon on top right corner to get provider code
- Give physical prescription with specific time in nature recommendation
- Patients go to Conservation Halton website (<https://www.conservationhalton.ca/park-fees-membership-rates/>)
- Scroll down to PaRx and Click on PaRx Request Form
- Fill the form
- Receive 10 visit coupon by email



Walk With a Doc – Oakville Chapter

Walk with a Doc (WWAD)?

- Non-profit initiative founded in 2005 by Dr. David Sabgir, cardiologist
- Free walk events including brief health discussion led by physician followed by community walk
- Open to all ages and abilities.

Oakville Chapter Overview:

- Launched with CCHOHT and Halton Healthcare
- Aims to promote connection, health and well-being to reduce the burden of chronic disease
- Monthly walks on Saturdays, starting at 271 Kerr Street, Oakville

How to Refer Patients:

1. Explain benefits of these fun, free, inclusive events
2. Refer patients to Walk with a Doc Oakville webpage:

<https://walkwithadoc.org/join-a-walk/locations/oakville-ontario/>

walk WITH a DOC MORE THAN "JUST A WALK"
4 Life-Changing Components of Walk with a Doc

1 Physical Activity
Walking is one of the most important things we can do for our health. It's good for the heart, brain, bones, lungs, muscles, and even helps prevent many chronic diseases.

2 Health Education
Our docs will give you tips on maintaining a **healthy lifestyle** and you can also ask them health-related questions while you walk.

3 Social Connection
Research suggests that **connectedness** with others can improve your quality of life, boost your mood, and decrease your risk of depression.

4 Time in Nature
Spending time **outdoors** can be very beneficial for both your physical and mental health.

www.walkwithadoc.org

Small Steps for Big Changes – YMCA Oakville



Free Evidence-based Counseling Program

- Sustainable diet and exercise changes to lower T2DM risk
- Focused on prediabetic individuals

Features

- 6 coaching sessions over 4 weeks
- 1-month free gym membership
- Check-ins at 12- and 24-months

Impact

- 85% of 400 patients enrolled no longer have prediabetes; none progressed to T2DM
- Sustained increased physical activity and healthier eating
- Improved fitness, reduced BP, weight, and waist circumference

How to Refer

- Eligibility: A1C 5.7-6.4% or ADA risk score ≥ 5 , medically safe to exercise.
- Provide patient with program details:

<https://ymcaofoakville.org/programs/health-management/>

Next Steps and Future Considerations



Build directory of local social prescribing options for providers and patients



Expand partnerships with community organizations and services



Strengthen mechanism for patient feedback, needs assessments and program evaluations



Ongoing dissemination of key information to reach more providers and patients



Lifestyle Medicine webinar/in-person series

Key Takeaways

- Social Determinants of Health and Lifestyle Factors play a key role in health and wellbeing
- Lifestyle medicine emphasizes the importance of lifestyle changes in preventing, treating and managing chronic diseases
- Social prescribing is an effective means to address social and lifestyle factors to bridge the gap between clinical care and community support leading to enhanced health outcomes
- Local initiatives like PaRx, Small Steps for Big Changes and Walk with a Doc are showing a tangible impact on individual and community health.

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Thank you!

Beyond Medication: How Social
Prescribing and Lifestyle Medicine
Improve Patient Outcomes

