

Why use Reading Well Books on Prescription?

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines recommend CBT-based self-help books as a first step in the treatment of a variety of conditions, including depression, anxiety, phobias and some eating disorders.¹

Books on Prescription is an early intervention treatment and part of 'watchful waiting' at step one in the Stepped Care Model for mental health and Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) provision. It can be used as a stand-alone treatment, as complementary to a pharmacological and/or a psychological approach and as a key element in a supported programme.

Books on Prescription increases the range of treatment options available and for many patients may be preferable to medication.

Reading Well Books on Prescription provides:

- A consistent approach delivered through all English public libraries
- Quality-assured resources, including a national, expert-endorsed self-help booklist and user guide
- The signposting of *Reading Well Mood-boosting Books* and social reading activity such as reading groups

Working in partnership

Reading Well Books on Prescription has been developed by The Reading Agency in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians. Health partners supporting the scheme include:

- Department of Health (IAPT)
- Royal College of General Practitioners
- Royal College of Psychiatrists
- Royal College of Nursing
- British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies
- The British Psychological Society
- Mind

Reading Well Books on Prescription is delivered most effectively when supported by local partnerships between library authorities, GPs and other mental health service providers, including psychological well-being practitioners.

Other reading and well-being schemes

Reading Well Mood-boosting Books

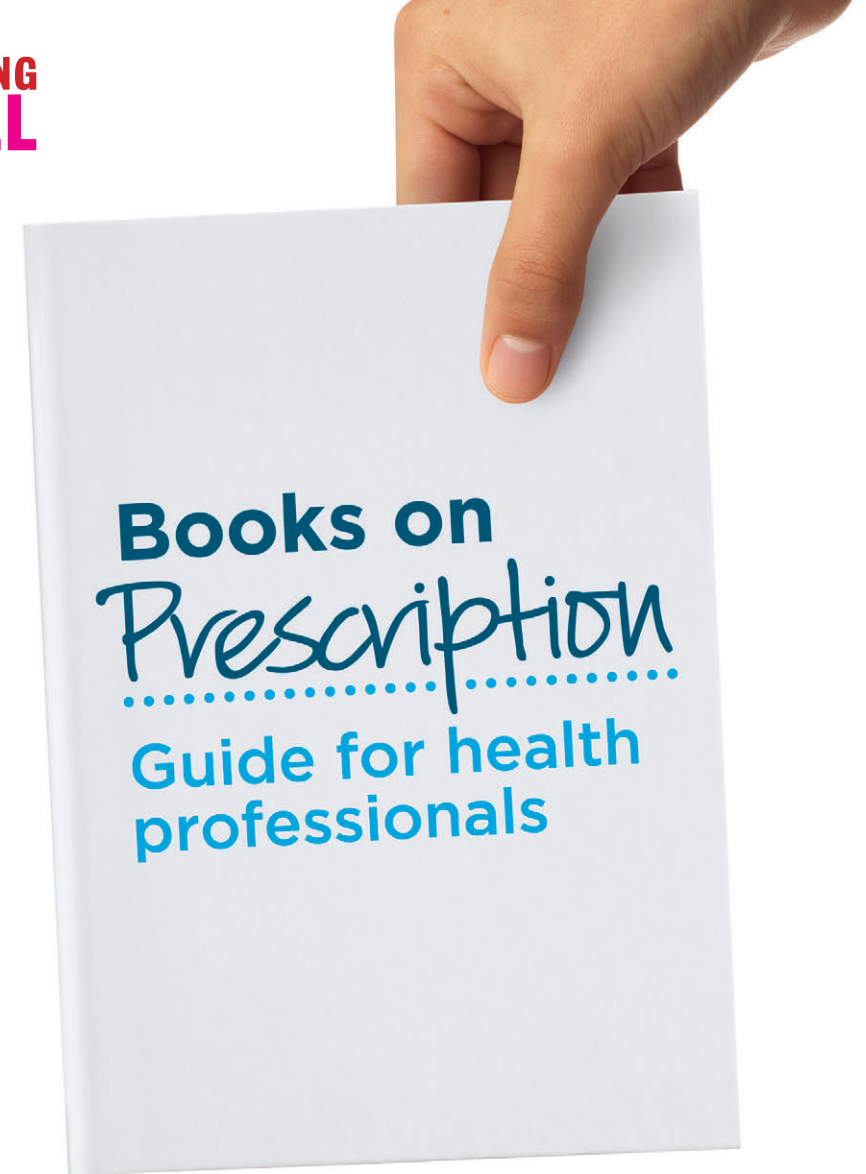
Reading Well Mood-boosting Books, the other strand of the *Reading Well* programme, is signposted in the *Reading Well Books on Prescription* user guide.

Reading Well Mood-boosting Books is a national promotion of uplifting titles, including novels, poetry and non-fiction. The books have been recommended by readers. For more information, visit www.readingagency.org.uk/readingwell

Reading groups in libraries

Reading groups can be a good way of bringing people together, promoting well-being and reducing isolation. For more information, visit www.readinggroups.org

READING
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Evaluation

We would like to contact you in the future regarding evaluation of the scheme. Please register your details by emailing readingwell@readingagency.org.uk

¹NICE guidelines: Depression, CG90 (2012); Anxiety, CG113 (2011); Eating Disorders, CG9 (2004)

readingagency.org.uk/readingwell

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What is Reading Well Books on Prescription?

Reading Well Books on Prescription provides book-based support for adults experiencing a variety of conditions. The core list provides evidence-based self-help in the following areas:

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Binge eating
- Chronic fatigue
- Chronic pain
- Depression
- Health anxiety
- Obsessions and compulsions
- Panic
- Phobias
- Relationship problems
- Self-esteem
- Sleep problems
- Social phobia
- Stress
- Worry

Self-help books work most effectively for conditions which are receptive to book-based cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

GPs and mental health professionals can recommend expert-endorsed self-help books.

People can take recommendations to their local library where the books can be borrowed for free.

A new national scheme for England

Books on Prescription was first developed in Cardiff by Professor Neil Frude, a Clinical Psychologist. There has been a national scheme in Wales since 2005. *Reading Well Books on Prescription*, launched in 2013, is the first national scheme for England.

Who is Reading Well Books on Prescription for?

Reading Well Books on Prescription is aimed at adults experiencing common conditions, including depression and anxiety.

The scheme is primarily suitable for competent adult readers who can read the material and follow the suggested activities.

For people with more severe mental health conditions, referral to local IAPT services or other supported therapeutic interventions will be more appropriate than using self-help materials without guidance.

Some people may use library book collections independently as a first step in seeking help.

The *Reading Well Books on Prescription* user guide includes appropriate referral advice for people not currently receiving support.

Who can recommend books?

GPs may recommend self-help reading to people they might not yet refer to IAPT services or for them to use while waiting for treatment.

Other mental health professionals, such as psychological well-being practitioners, counsellors or therapists, may also recommend books.

How does it work?

Books can be recommended using the form attached to the user guide. This can also be downloaded from www.readingagency.org.uk/readingwell

Individuals then take their book recommendation to the library, where the book can be borrowed for free. If the book is not available, it can be reserved. Free reservations are available in most libraries.

Books can also be borrowed without submitting the form.

The user guide advises that individuals contact their GP or another health professional immediately if the book doesn't seem to be helping. Practitioners are encouraged to reinforce this as part of the consultation process. If well-being deteriorates, a step up to level two of the IAPT Stepped Care Model is recommended.

You can find more information about *Reading Well Books on Prescription* at www.readingagency.org.uk/readingwell

Joining the library

It is easy to join the library. In most libraries the book recommendation form will act as suitable ID if it has been signed by a health professional. Library book loans and borrower details are treated as strictly confidential.

Available resources

As well as the guide for health professionals, resources to support the scheme include a user guide (A5 leaflets) and posters (A4 and A3). These are available from your local library service or you can email readingwell@readingagency.org.uk

