



## MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS 2024

### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR HOSTING MARIE CURIE FELLOWS

#### HOST INSTITUTION

National School of Public Health – Universidade NOVA de Lisboa

#### RESEARCH GROUP AND URL

Health Promotion/CHRC

<https://www.ensp.unl.pt/>

<https://www.chrc.pt/en>

#### SUPERVISOR (NAME AND E-MAIL)

Sónia Dias (sonia.dias@ensp.unl.pt)

#### SHORT CV OF THE SUPERVISOR

Sónia Dias is Dean and Full Professor at the National School of Public Health - NOVA University Lisbon, Portugal. PhD in International Health (2006) and Graduated in Psychology (1998), she is a social scientist and public health specialist whose research focuses on health promotion, disease prevention, socio-behavioral determinants of health, health literacy, with a particular focus in health inequalities and populations experiencing vulnerabilities. She leads and collaborates in several projects aimed at understanding and responding to health needs, as well as on design, implementation and evaluation of health-promoting interventions and policies, through participatory approaches and combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. She is a member of the Executive Board of the Comprehensive Health Research Centre. She teaches doctoral and master courses on Public Health and Health Promotion. She has been very much involved in the Social Prescribing (SP) movement in Portugal from its beginning, as coordinator of the monitoring and evaluation of SP interventions and supporting SP teams in strengthening the process of implementation. Currently, Sónia Dias coordinated the Social Prescribing Portugal Network. She acts as an expert for ECDC, WHO and IOM. She is part of several scientific networks in the Public Health area and is a member of the EUPHA's Steering Committee "Section on Migrant Health". She has published 150+ papers in peer-reviewed journals.

#### 5 SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Dias S, Hoffmeister L, Figueiredo C, Gama A (2024). Social prescribing in The Portuguese context: Challenges and strategies to implement and evaluate a complex intervention. In: Bertotti M (ed.). Social Prescribing Policy, Research and Practice Transforming Systems and Communities for Improved Health and Wellbeing. Cham: Springer International Publishing (pp).
- Hoffmeister LV, Nunes MF, Figueiredo CEM, Coelho A, Oliveira MFF, Massano P, Gama A, Aguiar P, Dias S. Evaluation of the Impact and Implementation of Social Prescribing in Primary Healthcare Units in Lisbon: A Mixed-Methods Study Protocol. Int J Integr Care. 2021;21(2):26. doi: 10.5334/ijic.5592
- Morse DF, Sandhu S, Mulligan K, Tierney S, Polley M, Chiva Giurca B, Slade S, Dias S, et al. (2022). Global developments in social prescribing. BMJ Glob Health. 7(5):e008524.
- **Dias S**, Gama A, Sherriff N, Gios L, Berghe WV, Folch C, Marcus U, Staneková DV, Pawłęga M, Caplinskas S, Naseva E, Klavs I, Velicko I, Mirandola M, Nöstlinger C; Sialon II Network. Process evaluation of a bio-behavioural HIV research combined with prevention among GBMSM in 13 European countries. Glob Public Health. 2022 May;17(5):672-687. doi: 10.1080/17441692.2021.1874469.

## PROJECT TITLE AND SHORT DESCRIPTION

### **Evaluation of implementation process and impacts of Social Prescribing initiatives in Portugal: A multilevel implementation research project**

Addressing the populations ageing and the increased burden of non-communicable diseases, while tackling social determinants of health, have been major challenges for health services worldwide. Social Prescribing (SP) is an innovative approach of integrated care to respond to these challenges. SP is a mechanism by which professionals in clinical and community settings identify a person's non-medical, health-related social needs, and subsequently connect them to non-clinical support and services provided by third-party organizations from the social or voluntary sectors within the community. Overall, growing research on SP has shown positive effects on individuals health (e.g. reduction of isolation, loneliness and anxiety and other mental health problems, adoption of healthier lifestyles, increased empowerment in self-management of health), but also on multisectoral responses (e.g. strengthened integration between the health and social sectors), and sustainability of health systems (e.g. reduction of the overuse of health services, more appropriate use of health and social services). Originally emerged in the primary health care setting in UK, in the last decade there has been a significant increase in SP globally, a movement that has been accompanied by the World Health Organization, and with a variety of initiatives implemented in over 20 countries. In Portugal, the first SP initiative started in 2018 in a primary healthcare centre in Lisbon. Nowadays, several SP initiatives are being implemented in the country, adapted to the specificities of each context in terms of scope, approach, recipients and governance model, with the support of the Social Prescribing Portugal Network, led by the NOVA National School of Public Health. SP has received widespread attention nationally and internationally; however, the evidence base to support SP initiatives is still limited, and gaps remain. The complexity of SP, in that it involves multiple referral routes, partners, pathways and outcomes, poses challenges for its evaluation and research. Development of the evidence base for SP is crucial in informing policy and public health systems to deliver effective interventions that contribute to individual, community and systemic outcomes.

This multilevel implementation research project will involve the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SP pilot interventions targeting diverse populations across different age groups, non-clinical needs and geographic areas in Portugal. This project will embrace collaborative design of SP initiatives to address social needs of identified target populations. It will cover the engagement of multisectoral stakeholders and end-users, and also the support in the implementation of the designed initiatives, along with multilevel and mixed-methods monitoring and evaluation, with a focus on SP implementation processes and impacts. This will result in a set of proof-of-concept case studies with the potential to extend and scale-up SP initiatives at the national/regional level. We are looking for a candidate keen to work in SP and implementation research, with basic knowledge on public health and health promotion. The candidate will have the opportunity to work with an experience research team that integrates several international consortiums of experts in social prescribing and health promotion, assisting in the coordination of the project in close articulation with the project partners. The candidate will work directly with a multi-disciplinary team with experience in evaluation research, implementation research, health promotion, co-creation and participatory approaches. Participation in writing proposals for competitive calls and production of scientific papers and other products is foreseen.

## SCIENTIFIC AREA WHERE THE PROJECT FITS BEST\*

Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC)

**\*Scientific Area where the project fits best** – Please select/indicate the scientific area according to the panel evaluation areas: Chemistry (CHE) • Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC) • Economic Sciences (ECO) • Information Science and Engineering (ENG) • Environment and Geosciences (ENV) • Life Sciences (LIF) • Mathematics (MAT) • Physics (PHY)