Invitation to Tender: Reading Well Books on Prescription Evaluation (Year Two)

Tenders are invited to undertake evaluation of the second year of The Reading Well Books on Prescription programme.

Introduction

Reading Well Books on Prescription provides book-based support for a variety of health conditions available from English public libraries. Health professionals can refer people to recommended reading from an accredited core book list of between 25–30 titles. The scheme can also be used independently as a first step to understanding and managing symptoms and seeking help. The books are available for everyone to borrow from their local library. The scheme is evidence-based and works within national clinical guidelines.

Launched in 2013 with a list of accredited self-help reading for common mental health conditions, Reading Well Books on Prescription is the first national Books on Prescription scheme for England. In its first year, it has reached an estimated 275,000 people, achieved a 113% increase in library loans of core list titles and been used regularly by around 7,000 health professionals.

Building on this success, a second Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme for dementia list was launched in January 2015. A children and young people’s mental health list will be the third in the series and is planned for a January 2016 launch.

Partners

The scheme is an innovation strand in the Society of Chief Librarians’ Universal Health Offer. It is funded by Arts Council England and delivered by The Reading Agency working in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians, local library services and health partners.

See here for a full list of supporting health partners.

The Reading Agency is a leading independent charity whose pioneering work brings the joy of reading to the widest possible audience across the UK, in partnership with the public library service. The charity’s mission is to create and deliver innovative reading opportunities inspiring more people to read more, encouraging them to share their enjoyment of reading with others and celebrating the difference that reading makes to all our lives. The Reading Agency is funded by Arts Council England.

The Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) is a local government association made up of the chief librarian of each library authority in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. SCL takes a leading role in the
development of public libraries, through sharing best practices, advocating for continuous improvement on behalf of local people, and leading the debate on the future of the public library service.

**Evaluation background**

The first year of Reading Well Books on Prescription was evaluated by The Reading Agency working with partners. The evaluation included:

- User feedback forms distributed across 15 sample library authorities, with pre-paid postage to return responses
- [Case studies](#) (of service users, library best practice and prescriber use)
- Library survey
- Prescriber survey
- Book issues (Public Lending Right and library book issues data)
- Analysis of PR and communications coverage and conference profile

A full copy of the evaluation report is available [here](#). The data collected for the first year evaluation has provided a strong platform on which to build and develop the programme. We would now like to undertake a deeper dive into impact and reach measurement that includes year two of the common mental health conditions scheme and the first six months of the dementia programme.

We would like to repeat the evaluation methodologies that we have used previously, looking at ways to deepen our understanding of the data by including strategies such as key stakeholder interviews and targeted case studies. We are aware that more in-depth service user impact evaluation is required focusing on patient benefit, referral auditing and cost benefit analysis and whilst we would like to explore the possibility of including some of these elements within this study we appreciate that sustained investigation of these areas will require further resource. We are currently fundraising for this work.

**Research specification**

We would like to invite proposals to undertake evaluation of the second year of Reading Well Books on Prescription. This will evaluate 2014/15 activity linked to the common mental health conditions scheme. It will also provide a snapshot evaluation of the first six months of the dementia scheme; launched in January 2015. We would like the evaluation to collect data for the two strands of work, providing an evaluation for the programme as a whole (i.e. including both book lists), as well as for each list and to include comparisons with year one data where appropriate.

The key aims of this evaluation will be to assess:

- User reach and benefit
- Prescriber and health partner benefit
- Library profile and impact for the service /sector
Methodology

The evaluation should include surveys with public users of Reading Well Books on Prescription, libraries that deliver the scheme, prescribers who are using it to recommend books and data from other key partners. We have an established evaluation methodology that we would like the successful agency to review and develop. This consists of:

- Short user survey (hard feedback form distributed by libraries e.g. in books that are borrowed, including pre-paid postage for ease of return)
- Library survey (distributed via email to participating library services)
- Book issues survey (distributed via email to library services)
- Book issues data (provided for a sample of authorities by Public Lending Right)
- Book sales data (provided in partnership with the Publisher’s Association)
- Prescriber survey (distributed by email to prescribers using the scheme by The Reading Agency and library services)

Existing survey tools are available to interested parties on request.

We envisage that data will continue to be collected via email surveys from libraries and prescribers and via hardcopy surveys from users. We would welcome advice on how best to maximise the response rate from these surveys. Existing survey models already exist although may require adaptation. We can also provide the relevant mailing lists used to collect first year data. The Reading Agency will meet the costs of printing and distributing 15,000 hardcopy feedback forms including pre-paid postage. The evaluation proposal will need to include costs for data entry of the user data. User feedback forms include approximately seven questions as well as demographic information relating to age, sex and ethnicity.

The evaluation should also analyse book loans data from libraries and PLR to establish the reach of the programme, along with press and social media coverage to establish awareness and profile of the programme. An existing methodology exists to support this process.

We would also like to add a targeted number of face to face or telephone interviews of key external stakeholders and if possible, service users to deepen our understanding of the quantitative data collected. We would like proposals to include recommendations on the number of interviews it would be possible to include within the evaluation process. Case studies are collected on an on-going basis. We would like proposals to consider the potential for collecting additional case studies as part of the evaluation process.

We are also keen to hear recommendations of other relevant evaluation strategies that it might be appropriate to include within this study.

Outputs:

The following outputs are required:

- Final report of the findings, approximately 30 pages in length (inclusion of supplementary appendices may be necessary and can be discussed as the project progresses).
- A free standing executive summary of up to four pages.
• Presentation of key findings on completion of final report to at least one key stakeholder group in London.

The final report should include:

- Executive summary
- Full analysis of findings
- Conclusions and key recommendations

**Timetable**

March 2015  
Appointment of successful evaluator

April – June 2015  
Data collection period

July 2015  
Analysis of data

August 2015  
Draft report (date to be confirmed)

September 2015  
Final report presented to public library health group

October 10 2015  
Dissemination of key findings by The Reading Agency and Society of Chief Librarians linked to World Mental Health Day

**Tender requirements**

**Staff:** The research team should have a high level of expertise and significant experience in conducting similar pieces of work, with relevant or transferable knowledge about the evaluation of reading for health and well-being programmes. Tenders should describe the skills and experience of each individual (attach brief CV) and their expected contribution.

**Risks:** Tenders should clearly set out the key risk factors for the success of the project and a proposed risk management approach.

**Ethics:** Tenders should address any anticipated ethical issues and problems and how these will be dealt with.

**Data protection and informed consent:** Contractors shall comply with all the provisions and obligations under the Data Protection Act (1998), including the eight data protection principles and all subordinate legislation.

**Costs:** Costs should be itemised under the following headings:

- Salary costs for each project team member to be involved in fulfilling the contract (along with the daily rate and number of days input for each project team member)
- Other administrative costs
- Fieldwork costs
- Travel and subsistence
Overheads (if applicable)

Costs should be inclusive of VAT and state whether VAT is chargeable. Full cost details of any proposed sub contracts and how these will be managed should be included.

The **maximum budget available for this research project is £10,000**. Tenders should set out a payment schedule related to key milestones.

### Shortlisting procedure

Tenders will be evaluated on best value for money. This will be judged on the basis of:

- How well the tender responds to the brief and the robustness and suitability of the proposal
- Relevant skills and experience of the research team, including track record of producing similar work of a high quality and to deadline
- Level of understanding of the research topic
- The adequacy and quality of proposed project management and risk management arrangements
- Plans for an effective dissemination strategy
- Overall costs

Tenders should therefore provide the following details:

- Details of the proposed methodology
- Relevant information about the organisation
- The names and relevant experience, in terms of subject knowledge and skills, of those involved
- Staff time commitment to the project (in days)
- Timetable
- Arrangements for administration and management of the project
- Costs

The timetable for the tendering process is as follows:

- Tenders invited: 11 March 2015
- Submission deadline: 26 March 2015
- Project commissioned: w/c 30 March 2015

**The closing date for receipt of tenders is at 5pm on 26 March.** A full electronic copy of the tender including any annexes and supplementary material in MS Word or PDF format should be emailed to laura.venning@readingagency.org.uk

Responses to the invitation to tender will be shortlisted and the relevant organisations will be notified and invited to interview at the Reading Agency’s offices week commencing 30 March. Work will commence immediately the contract is awarded.

Any enquiries should be directed to debbie.hicks@readingagency.org.uk or laura.venning@readingagency.org.uk