

Introducing the First Statewide Social Prescribing Solution in the United States

Art Pharmacy announces Massachusetts launch of innovative healthcare program in partnership with Mass Cultural Council

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, healthcare services business [Art Pharmacy](#) and [Mass Cultural Council](#)



proudly announce the launch of the nation's first statewide arts prescription solution, also known as arts-based social prescribing. Art Pharmacy's services enable healthcare providers and other care team members to prescribe arts and culture participation to individuals with a range of health concerns.

“

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*Massachusetts Governor
Maura Healey*

Further, Art Pharmacy is thrilled to share that [Mass General Brigham](#) has joined this venture and shares Art Pharmacy's and Mass Cultural Council's vision of bringing this healthcare solution to the Commonwealth.

Social prescribing is the practice of referring patients to community-based resources – like arts and culture engagements – to effectively promote whole person health. Arts-based social prescribing is an effective way to support patients with mental health needs, reduce social isolation and loneliness, and promote adherence to co-

morbid treatment plans.

Art Pharmacy's solution uniquely combines decades of research in the field of arts and health with the well-developed care model of social prescribing to address some of the nation's most challenging health problems.

“We are excited to use this novel social prescribing model in a pilot program as an additional tool in addressing blood pressure control,” said Anne Klibanski, MD, President and CEO, Mass General Brigham. “We will focus this care at the primary care sites where patients are at most risk, given

the long-standing disparities in blood pressure control for underserved communities. This initiative will work in parallel with our clinical equity efforts and our commitment to a personalized, quality experience for every patient at Mass General Brigham.”

Art has long been recognized for its impact on physical and mental health. With the launch of Art Pharmacy’s program in Massachusetts today, the arts become a recognized healthcare solution.



While social prescribing is an established practice in other parts of the world, to date it has not been widely adopted in the United States. Mass Cultural Council, the Commonwealth’s state arts agency, laid the foundation for this announcement in 2020 with the launch of its CultureRx Initiative, which first introduced the practice of arts prescription in Massachusetts.

After a three-year pilot which resulted in successful and positive reviews from health providers, cultural organizations, and patients, Mass Cultural Council began work to identify a partner to sustainably scale an arts-based social prescribing ecosystem to serve patients statewide. To implement this solution, the Agency sought a partner that would build a network of arts and culture organizations, recruit additional institutional stakeholders, and build sustainable relationships with health systems and health plans. That search led to Georgia-based Art Pharmacy.

“Mass Cultural Council believes this initiative will increase access to arts participation, help drive down healthcare costs, and support vulnerable communities in the Commonwealth,” said Michael J. Bobbitt, Executive Director, Mass Cultural Council. “With today’s launch, Massachusetts boldly steps up as a national leader in the practice of arts prescription. We know this work to be effective preventive medicine and are thrilled it will also create a new revenue stream for cultural organizations who – for the first time - will be compensated specifically for the health benefits they provide. This is an innovative way to advance the creative and cultural sector in Massachusetts and leverage the benefits of arts participation for the greater good. Thank you to the more than 300 cultural organizations who have signed on with Art Pharmacy to join us in this work, and we look forward to welcoming more healthcare partners to this movement as well.”

“We know that the arts have healing powers – both for physical and mental health. Massachusetts is proud to yet again be pioneering a transformative medical innovation with the nation's first statewide arts prescription solution,” Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey said. “We congratulate the Mass Cultural Council for this incredible achievement and thank Mass

General Brigham and Art Pharmacy for their partnership."

"In the face of the dual mental health and loneliness crises, arts-based social prescribing, like what Art Pharmacy offers, provides an accessible, effective, and enjoyable intervention for people in the Commonwealth," Art Pharmacy CEO Chris Appleton said. "We are excited to bring this innovation to Massachusetts and look forward to further developing the ecosystem to provide even more access."

This announcement marks the beginning of a new type of prescription in Massachusetts. Art Pharmacy is actively engaging with additional local and regional stakeholders, including health systems and health plans, to further grow access to arts-based social prescribing.

To learn more about Art Pharmacy, visit www.artpharmacy.co. To learn more about Mass Cultural Council, visit www.MassCulturalCouncil.org.

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About Art Pharmacy:

Art Pharmacy is a healthcare services business that works with healthcare partners (insurance plans, health systems), universities, and non-profit organizations to develop arts-based social prescribing ecosystems and implement arts-based social prescribing initiatives. Art Pharmacy's smart-matching technology considers clinical needs, patient preferences, and decades of research to match each patient with appropriate arts and culture engagements. Art Pharmacy offers a closed-loop referral system, care plan integration, and outcomes monitoring. To learn more about Art Pharmacy, visit www.artpharmacy.co.

About Mass Cultural Council:

Mass Cultural Council, an independent state arts agency, is charged with bolstering the Commonwealth's creative and cultural sector. The Agency's efforts advance economic vitality, support transformational change, and celebrate, preserve, and inspire creativity across all Massachusetts communities. To learn more about how we harness the power of culture in Massachusetts, visit www.MassCulturalCouncil.org.

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