

Creative Health at a Glance

Core20PLUS5, Major Conditions, & Falls Prevention



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Foreword

This booklet is an 'at a glance' resource, designed to quickly introduce health professionals to how creative and cultural activity can support health priorities. Artistic, heritage and third-sector providers can also use this resource to get a better idea of what health needs can be positively affected by their work.

There is an ever-strengthening evidence-base in the field of Creative Health. The examples selected for this resource were chosen based on succinctness, variety of arts forms, and relevance to key strategies. I encourage you to explore further should you wish to incorporate Creative Health provisions into your health system or service design.

The health conditions spotlighted throughout this booklet appear within the NHS's **Core20PLUS5** strategy and are recognised as the '**Major Conditions**' contributing to ill health in the UK (first identified within the 2023 Major Conditions strategy). These strategies make use of national datasets to identify priority populations and health needs for policy and commissioning. In addition, I have included a section on falls and frailty. This responds to the NHS's requirement to **reduce demand in hospitals**. Due to our aging population, frailty and falls are a leading cause of hospital admissions. Creative Health can help to support all these conditions.

NCCH define Creative Health as creative approaches and activities which have benefits for our health and wellbeing.

For a more detailed definition of Creative Health and an in-depth review of the latest evidence, see the **Creative Health Review** report (2023).

If you would like to share the contents of this booklet in your workplace, each page is available as a print-out fact sheet/ poster. To access these resources, visit the NCCH website.

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Spotlight on: Dementia

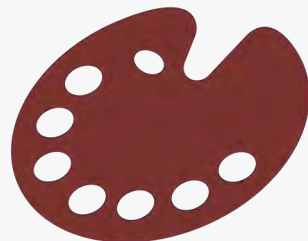
£149 million is saved

annually, thanks to how movement and dance reduce the risk of developing dementia (1).



The **verbal fluency** of dementia patients is improved via music therapy. **Anxiety, depression, and apathy** are also significantly reduced (2).

Investors can expect up to **£6.62 Social Return on Investment** for every £1 invested in visual arts interventions for dementia (3).



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Breast cancer survivors experience improvement in **anxiety, depression, fatigue, and participation in society** thanks to improv theatre/comedy (4).



There are **387 fewer cases** of breast cancer per year thanks to the preventative nature of movement and dance (1).

Music interventions can **reduce anxiety** in cancer patients by an average of 7.73 units on the Spielberger State Anxiety Inventory scale (5).



Spotlight on: **Cancer**



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National Cancer Institute



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Dance therapy **reduces the systolic/diastolic pressure** of people with high blood pressure (6).



Viewing figurative art in a museum setting has been indicated to **decrease systolic blood pressure** (7).

British Heart Foundation encourage blood pressure checks in unconventional spaces, to aid **hypertension case finding** (8). Community/ arts centres are great locations for this.



Spotlight on: Hypertension



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Black women are 5x more likely to die in pregnancy/ childbirth than white women. 39% of these deaths are due to **avoidable heart disease or blood clots** (9). Arts activities and cultural safe spaces can support the **health literacy of disenfranchised groups** (10), which could help them to spot warning signs and access care.



The 'Research Justice framework' aids research with Black pregnant and birthing people, and Black birth-workers, demonstrating best practice in **equitable co-design** (11).

Singing interventions have demonstrated a statistically significant faster improvement in symptoms for mothers suffering with **moderate-severe postnatal depression** (12).



Spotlight on: **Maternity**



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The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommend that arts therapies are considered for everyone who has **psychosis or schizophrenia** (13).



Combining art psychotherapy with pharmacotherapy for **Major Depressive Disorder** is significantly more effective in alleviating symptoms of depression and anxiety, improving interpersonal relationships, and increasing self-esteem (14).

Creative co-production work with people with SMI can significantly increase **uptake of annual health checks** from 10% to 60% (15).



Spotlight on: Severe Mental Illness (SMI) and Mental Ill-Health

Music therapy has been indicated to 'reduce **depression, anxiety, withdrawal** and improve **attention problems** for children who had been exposed to maltreatment and poverty' (16, 17).



'Longitudinal cohort data have shown that cultural engagement is associated with a **reduced risk of developing depression** in adults aged 50+' (16, 18).

Creative and community mental health provisions have been promoted as a great way of **reducing waiting lists** for clinical mental health services (19). This has been achieved via NHS transformation programmes and social prescribing.

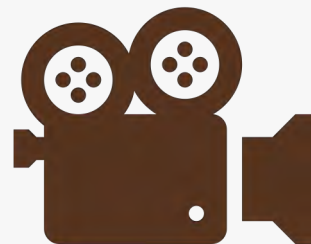




Photo Credit:
Sweet Life

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Spotlight on: Cardiovascular Disease

(inc. Stroke and Diabetes)

Studies note a **40% reduction in GP appointments** from patients using a social prescribing service which focuses on CVD risk and mental health (20).



£157 million is saved annually, thanks to how movement and dance reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes (1). People who dance also have a **46% lower risk of cardiovascular death** (21).

Longitudinal data shows 'those with low social and cultural participation have an increased **risk of coronary heart disease**' (16, 22).



Drama performance and/or singing interventions have been shown to have a positive effect on the **development of new neural pathways** following a stroke (15, 23).

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Singing support for COPD and asthma has led to a **23% decline in A&E** admissions and a **21% decline in GP** appointments, six months after referral (15).



Expressive writing for adults with moderate asthma **improves lung function by 14%**, due to reductions in physiological stress (24).

Music therapy lessens paediatric patients' asthma symptoms, and improves **medication compliance, pulmonary function,** and **quality of life** (25).



Dance-based exercise for COPD improves 'postural **stability and balance** scores, **pulmonary function,** and peripheral **muscle strength**' (26).

Spotlight on: **Chronic Respiratory Disease**
(inc. COPD and Asthma)



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Spotlight on: Musculoskeletal Disorders

Community gardening **modifies risk factors** for musculoskeletal conditions through increases in physical activity, fruit and vegetable intake, and reductions in stress (15, 27, 28).



80% of studies in a review of dance interventions for chronic pain note **reduced chronic secondary musculoskeletal pain** (29).

Music therapy/ music-based interventions for those with fibromyalgia **alleviate pain, relieve depression, improve quality of life** and **self-esteem**, and provide **copng strategies** (30, 31).



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‘Fall-related fractures cost the health and social care system £4.4 billion per year.’
By mixing dance with physiotherapy, **falls are reduced by 58%** (32).



Longitudinal cohort data shows that ‘cultural engagement is associated with a **reduced risk of becoming frail** and a **slower progression of frailty** over time’ (16, 33).

‘Music listening has been associated with a **decreased risk of falls** in older hospital patients’ (16, 34).



Spotlight on: Frailty
and Falls Prevention



Photo Credit:
Shashank Thapa

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