



Creative health and public health

Creative health approaches are proven to have a positive impact on civic participation, social cohesion, diversity and inclusion, and public health and wellbeing.

Creative health therefore has an important role to play in building stronger, more resilient communities that are less reliant on public services in the long term.

Examples of evidence

Studies of creative health approaches in public health show:

- Weekly dance sessions for primary-age children in underserved areas contributed to improved children's behaviour in the home, increased social networks for families, and enabled families to better meet children's emotional needs¹
- Creative projects that improve a community's sense of agency and control have been shown to improve community wellbeing²
- Place-based creative events and interventions have been shown to add social value through a range of wellbeing measures and offer the potential to reduce health inequalities through the development of social capital and a sense of community³
- Engagement with culture and heritage leads to general health benefits worth £992 per adult per year⁴

Creative health in practice

East Sussex Public Health considers arts and creativity as a key component of its prevention approach, improving quality of life and reducing the gap in healthy life expectancy for its population .

It has three key strategic priorities:

1. Creative Health and the Individual (micro) – Utilising creative health approaches to improve people's health and wellbeing.

¹ National Centre for Creative Health. South Tees Art Initiative (STAR) - Cross-sectoral approaches to tackling inequalities. Available at: <https://ncch.org.uk/case-studies/south-tees-art-initiative-star>

² New Local (2023) Rapid review of community agency and control, as final outcomes, or enablers of place-based interventions to improve community wellbeing. Available from: <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Rapid-Review-Community-Agency-and-Control.pdf>

³ Ganga, R., Davies, L. and Wilson, K. (2022) Arts & Well-being - A review of the social value of place-based arts interventions. Liverpool John Moores University. Available at: <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Arts-Wellbeing.-A-review-of-the-social-value-of-place-based-arts-interventions-updated-30.01.2023.pdf>

⁴ Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (2024) Culture and heritage capital: monetising the impact of culture and heritage on health and wellbeing: A report prepared for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/678e2ecf432c55fe2988f615/rpt_-_Frontier_Health_and_Wellbeing_Final_Report_09_12_24_accessible_final.pdf



2. Creative Health and Community (meso) – In collaboration with partners in the culture, arts, heritage, health, and social care systems, to build and support creative health across East Sussex localities and communities.
3. Creative Health, Systems, Networks and Partnerships (macro) – Work with the ICS and wider cross sector partners to embed and champion creative health across a wide range of service offers and settings, backed up with robust approaches to research and evaluation.

A Creative Health Delivery Action Plan is being developed. This sets out a range of key actions and activities that establish, embed and support a sustainable and impactful creative health programme that links into key statutory and voluntary and community systems, partnerships, networks and frameworks.

For more information, see [East Sussex Creative Health Position Paper](#)

Where next?

Practical strategies for introducing creative health approaches in public health: *More information coming soon!*

The NCCH has worked in partnership with NHS England to develop a **Creative Health Toolkit**, which includes examples of how creative health can support public health with:

- [Wider Determinants of Health](#)
- [Across the Life Course](#)

The National Centre for Creative Health

NCCH supports health and care sector professionals in organisations and systems to achieve the benefits of creative health approaches for patients and service users.

We publish a monthly newsletter especially created for professionals working across health and care. Please do [subscribe here](#) and/or share with colleagues working across Primary Care, Provider Trusts, ICBs, Public Health, Social Care and across the NHS, so they can access the latest news for creative health!

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