



How creative health reduces demand and admissions

Creative health approaches reduce pressure on health and social care services by preventing the onset of ill health and supporting the management of long-term conditions.

They have a vital role to play in enabling the shift from hospital to community and from sickness to prevention, helping to build a health service that's fit for the future.

Examples of evidence

Studies of creative health approaches show:

- A 40% reduction in GP appointments from patients using a social prescribing service focused on CVD risk and mental health¹
- After a 12-week singing for lung health programme for people with COPD, 45% of participants reported fewer GP visits and 18% reported fewer hospital admissions²
- A 58% reduction in falls by mixing dance with physiotherapy³
- A potential annual saving of £149 million through movement and dance reducing the risk of developing dementia⁴
- A 21% reduction in in-patient admissions, a 20% reduction in A&E visits and a 20% reduction in outpatient appointments in a social prescribing pilot project with mostly older people⁵

Creative health in practice

Gloucestershire ICS has co-produced a range of creative health activities with patients, artists, clinicians and commissioners to address specific needs. There have been positive impacts for both patients and the system.

¹ Polley, M, Seers, H, Toye, O, Henkin, T, Waterson, H, Bertotti, M, Chatterjee, H. (2023) Building the economic case for social prescribing report. National Academy for Social Prescribing. p.47. Available from:

<https://socialprescribingacademy.org.uk/media/wemibqtw/building-the-economic-case-for-social-prescribing-report.pdf>

² Lewis A, Cave P, Hopkinson N. Singing for Lung Health: service evaluation of the British Lung Foundation programme. Perspectives in Public Health. 2018;138(4):215-222. doi:10.1177/1757913918774079

³ Aesop. (2020) Dance to Health. Phase 1 Roll-out 'test and learn' Evaluation Report. p.50. Available from: <https://aesop.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/63/2020/06/AESOP-Dance-to-Health-Phase-1-Overall-evaluation-Report-April-2020-FINAL.pdf>

⁴ Boardman R, Balfour A, Farmer C, Hopkins S, Stamp K. (2023) Social Value of Movement and Dance. Sport + Recreation Alliance. Available from: <https://sramedia.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/f393c7e4-5096-499a-9723-60824b6629ac.pdf>

⁵ Fancourt D, Warran K, Aughterson H. (2020) Evidence Summary for Policy: The role of arts in improving health & wellbeing. UCL. p.27. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evidence-summary-for-policy-the-role-of-arts-in-improving-health-and-wellbeing>



For example, Art Shape, Artspace Cinderford and The Music Works delivered a programme including visual arts, circus skills and music making for children and young people with long term mental health conditions. The programme improved adherence to medication and psychological wellbeing, self-esteem, confidence and social connection. It also led to significant reductions in healthcare utilisation post-intervention.

Mindsong's Singing for Breathing programme has improved life satisfaction and happiness for adult participants. It has also reduced emergency admissions by 100% at 3 months post-intervention and 78% at 6 months. The need for out-of-hours services for this group has been reduced due to people having more confidence to self-manage their conditions.

The creative health offer is targeted at the most deprived communities in Gloucestershire, therefore also helping to address health inequalities.

For the full story of this initiative see **page 96 of the Creative Health Review**

Where next?

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

- Self-Management of Health Conditions

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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