



New National Centre aims to make creativity integral to health and social care systems

A new national centre for creativity and wellbeing launches on Tuesday 9 March. The [National Centre for Creative Health](#) aims to make creativity integral to health and social care systems.

At the online launch of the Centre, Chair of Trustees, [Lord Howarth of Newport](#), and guest speaker, **Lord Victor Adebowale**, Chair of the NHS Confederation, will reflect on how the arts, culture and creativity can support people and organisations in the context of the pandemic and increasing health inequalities.

Lord Howarth of Newport said:

“This is an exciting and very important moment. It’s an opportunity to make a difference. We know from thousands of studies that creativity is vital for everyone’s wellbeing. The new Centre will advance research, inform policy and promote good practice and collaboration in order to foster the conditions for creative health to be integral to health and social care systems.

“The creative health movement believes that active engagement with the arts and culture – whether through our own creative practice or through our enjoyment of the creative practice of others – is beneficial for the wellbeing and health of *all* of us. Health inequalities are a key priority for the Centre; lack of access to cultural and creative opportunities too often mirrors other inequalities. The Covid-19 pandemic has reinforced and increased inequalities and made this work all the more urgent.”

The Centre has been formed in response to the [Creative Health](#) report, the result of a two-year inquiry led by the [All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#).

Evidence from research shows that engagement with the arts and culture is beneficial for health and wellbeing. The [Creative Health](#) report brings together over a thousand published studies outlining the role of arts and creativity in supporting health across the life course.



Other speakers at the launch:

- **Rachel Clarke**, Palliative care doctor and author of [*Breathtaking: Inside the NHS in a Time of Pandemic*](#), will talk about the experience of healthcare staff during the pandemic and a growing concern for their health and mental wellbeing. In the coming months and years, enabling health and social care staff to engage in creative health programmes will support their own wellbeing as well as that of their patients.
- **Lucinda Jarrett**, Director of [*Rosetta Life*](#) and participant, **Pauline Boye**, will talk about the Opera *I Look For the Think* made in lockdown.
- **Christopher Bailey**, Arts and Health Lead at the World Health Organisation, will speak about the wider global context for arts and creativity in the time of the pandemic.
- **Dr Jane Povey**, Clinical Lead for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Sustainability and Transformation Partnership will reflect on how creative approaches to health and wellbeing can become integral to health and care provision.

In partnership with NHS England, the National Centre for Creative Health will work with [*Integrated Care Systems*](#) to spread learning and embed creative health approaches through a programme of [*Hubs*](#).

Dr Jane Povey, Clinical Lead for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP), said:

“I am thrilled to be celebrating the launch of our National Centre for Creative Health. This is extremely timely since we will be able to work with Integrated Care Systems as they emerge across the country. This will ensure creative approaches to health and wellbeing become integral to health and care provision. In Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, we are looking forward to playing a part in enabling this, to benefit our community and share the approaches we evolve with other Integrated Care Systems.”

During the pandemic, a remarkable transformation of creative health practice has enabled people who are vulnerable and isolated to continue to engage and be supported. **Pauline Boye**, a former nurse and a [*Stroke 'Ambassador'*](#) will talk about her experience of taking part in the Opera *I Look For the Think* made in lockdown with the Garsington Opera Adult Community Company. Stroke Odysseys is one of three interventions in the major King's Health Partners' [*SHAPER*](#) programme.



Pauline Boye said:

"It was very touching, the songs about how we leave hospital and start a new life – I loved singing those parts. It was very moving. I look forward to joining each session, I like the exercise and I wish we could do it every day because it makes me feel happy, my mood, each time we perform I feel a bit more confident, a little goes a long way"

A panel at the launch will include

- **Nikki Crane**, [SHAPER](#) Programme Manager
- **James Sanderson**, Director of Personalised Care, NHS England and NHS Improvement
- **Rob Webster**, Chief Executive of South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Lead Chief Executive West Yorkshire and Harrogate Integrated Care System

Rob Webster said:

"In West Yorkshire and Harrogate, we are delighted to be one of the four Integrated Care Systems working with the National Centre for Creative Health on this programme. We know that creativity is part of the lifeblood of our communities, is a major contributor to our economies and helps to define the places we live. Creative health has been a priority for us for the last five years. There is also an impressive evidence base on the relationship between creativity and health. During the pandemic this has become very clear, with creativity playing a role in supporting people's mental and physical wellbeing, especially those who are shielding or isolated."

The Centre will play a pivotal role in enabling creative health approaches to become integral to health and social care and wider systems in the UK. The Centre's priorities are: health inequalities; advancing good practice and research; informing policy; and promoting collaboration.

The [National Centre for Creative Health](#) will be launched at 2pm on Tuesday 9 March at an online event.

Ends

For further information

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Notes for editors

To receive an invitation to the online launch event, please email: info@ncch.org.uk, including your name and publication/media outlet.

The public link to join the launch: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/launch-of-the-national-centre-for-creative-health-tickets-141143601311>

The [Creative Health](#) report is the result of a two-year inquiry led by the [All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#). It brings together over a thousand published studies outlining the role of arts and creativity in supporting health across the life course.

The World Health Organisation scoping review: [What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing?](#) synthesizes the global evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being, with a specific focus on the WHO European Region. Results from over 3000 studies identified a major role for the arts in the prevention of ill health, promotion of health, and management and treatment of illness across the lifespan.

[Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review](#) investigates how the pandemic has affected health inequalities in England.

The increasing gap in inequalities was evidenced in [Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On](#), published in February 2020.

The Centre is working with [Integrated Care Systems](#) to explore models for integrating creative health at a systems level through a programme of 'Hubs' in Gloucestershire, West Yorkshire and Harrogate, Suffolk and North East Essex, and Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.