

# Toolkit for Creative Health Champions

## Introduction

This toolkit is to support your role as a champion for the arts and culture in relation to health and wellbeing within the NHS, social care or local government.

It is being developed by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health & Wellbeing, the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance, the National Performance Advisory Group for Arts, Design & Heritage in Hospitals, the Local Government Association and NHS Providers.

## The Role of Creative Health Champions

We want to inspire and support Creative Health Champions in clinical commissioning groups, NHS trusts and local authorities to develop policies and strategies for partnership working across arts, culture, health and wellbeing to help deliver improved health and wellbeing for their communities. We will connect you with each other and provide tools to support you.

## explore | connect | advocate | develop

### 1. Explore

To investigate what is already happening in your area.

### 2. Connect

To make connections with local organisations and individuals who can support this work, including Creative Health Champions in other organisations local to you.

### 3. Advocate

To use opportunities to advocate for the role of the arts and culture in relation to health and wellbeing, both within your organisation and your local community.

### 4. Develop

To develop policies for your own organisation that focus on the arts and culture in relation to health and wellbeing, or to write the arts and culture into existing policies.

**If you are not signed up to be a Creative Health Champion or you would like any further information please contact:** Alex Coulter, Secretary to the APPG, on [appgahw@gmail.com](mailto:appgahw@gmail.com)



## Background

In 2017 the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health & Wellbeing (hereafter APPG) published *Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing*. The report presents the findings of two years of research, evidence-gathering and discussions with patients, service-users, health and social care professionals, artists and arts administrators, academics, people in local government, ministers, other policy-makers and parliamentarians from both Houses of Parliament.

*Creative Health* concludes with a series of ten recommendations. This toolkit relates to Recommendation 3:

**We recommend that, at board or strategic level, in NHS England, Public Health England and each clinical commissioning group, NHS trust, local authority and health and wellbeing board, an individual is designated to take responsibility for the pursuit of institutional policy for arts, health and wellbeing.**

In 2018, the Chief Executives of all Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities and NHS trust received a letter from the APPG and a copy of the *Creative Health* report, encouraging them to identify a champion at board level. The first group of Creative Health Champions came together in the House of Lords in February 2019 ([minuted here](#)). A further meeting between the APPG, the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance (CHWA), the National Performance Advisory Group for Arts, Design & Heritage in Hospitals, the Local Government Association (LGA) and NHS Providers led to the development of this toolkit. We have consulted with the Champions on this toolkit and welcome further comments as the group grows.

## Case studies

The case studies and infographic in this toolkit give you an indication of the range and scope of work you might consider and advocate for. The key messages of the *Creative Health* report are:

- The arts can help keep us well, aid our recovery and support longer lives better lived.
- The arts can help meet major challenges facing health and social care: ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health.
- The art can help save money in the health service and social care.

## Clinical Commissioning Groups

**Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group** instigated a social prescribing and cultural commissioning programme in early 2017 with a dedicated team of staff. Social prescribing, including arts on prescription, is recognised as key to enabling delivery within the Gloucestershire Integrated Care System. In the context of increasing life expectancy and patient demand for both GP consultations and A&E services, alongside growing levels of social isolation and anti-depressant medication, the county has looked at how best to connect people to non-medical community activities. For example, 50% of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) patients do not attend pulmonary rehab because it is exercise based. They looked at whether some of these people would benefit from a 12 week Singing on Prescription

‘Breathe In Sing Out’ choir instead, so they worked with local charity Mindsong to deliver this. In their 2014-15 social prescribing pilot they saw a statistically significant increase in reported mental wellbeing scores, a 23% decline in A&E admissions and a 21% decline in GP appointments in the six months after referral compared with the six months before. Independent evaluation suggested an estimated return on investment of £1.69 (health £0.43; social £1.26).

## Integrated Care Systems

### West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership (ICS)

*“The therapeutic value of art is an asset we must use. A partnership between arts organisations and health organisations has the power to improve access to the arts and to health services for people neglected by both. Through our Creative Minds programme in Yorkshire, I also know these partnerships can both save lives and make lives”.* Rob Webster, Chief Executive South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust; Lead for West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership (ICS). Quoted in the *Creative Health* report. In Calderdale, the partnership between Calderdale Council, South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership, Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group, Creative Minds, and other creative organisations has led to ***Living a larger life: Using creative activities to help people live well in Calderdale***. The vision is to make Calderdale a leader in using arts and culture to support people’s health and wellbeing, whilst tackling health inequalities. The mission is to enable people to engage in creative approaches so that they can live well in their community and achieve their potential. This will form part of the five year plan for Calderdale and inform the planning for the wider West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership (ICS). Matt Walsh, Chief Executive of Calderdale CCG, writes in the introduction: *“The relationship between arts and health is understood in our experience of the world, and for those of us who have spent years of our lives working with people in difficulty with their health and wellbeing, it has always been clear that whilst medicine and related disciplines can help to solve many problems, the fundamental issues which confront us at a human level are to do with our relationship with ourselves, with those close to us and with the community of which we wish to be a part....Art can help us to tell new stories which will take us to new places, and art can help us to tell the old stories in a way that connect at a deeper level.*

Please see this [briefing for ICS planning](#) for further information.

## Local Authorities

Norfolk County Council libraries are involved in a number of initiatives to support health and wellbeing. The Reading Well scheme is well-established across the county and means libraries are stocked with books which GPs and health professionals can prescribe for people to borrow, or individuals can easily find books which will help them manage health conditions. There are a selection of books available on topics including mental health, long-term conditions, dementia and young people. In 2017/18, over 63,000 health books were borrowed from the counties libraries. As well as this, Norfolk libraries work with public health to run sessions giving people advice on healthy living and support to quit smoking, and provide services such as baby weighing, blood pressure checks and HIV testing in the libraries. Find out more: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries-local-history-and-archives/libraries/library-services/health-and-wellbeing>. If you’d like any more information, Jan from Norfolk libraries will be able to help: [janet.holden@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:janet.holden@norfolk.gov.uk).

## NHS Trusts

Air Arts is the arts charity for the University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust promoting health and wellbeing through the arts and arts participation. Air Arts is funded through charitable donations and Trusts and Foundations. Established in 2007, Air Arts is a wide ranging and ambitious arts in health programme, designed in partnership with staff and patients. The programme aims to create a calm, welcoming environment, distract from illness, improve wellbeing, aid recovery and enhance the hospital experience for 10,000 staff and 2 million patients and visitors every year. A wide variety of art and cultural experiences are on offer, both receptive and participative, including; visual art, dance, drama, photography, poetry, storytelling, crafts and music throughout the corridors, waiting areas and wards. The Air Arts team work closely with staff and patients to ensure the programme is embedded into ward routines to support holistic healthcare. As well as group sessions, the artists work one to one with patients to provide personalised creative activities. The programme improves the hospital experience for patient and staff alike, reduces anxiety and provides a welcome distraction. Patients report increased levels of wellbeing and staff report an improved working environment.

*“It’s clear that at Derby Hospitals art and culture has become integral to the way staff care for patients and their relatives, often making terrible situations more bearable. Hearing how patients have benefited from and enjoyed their experiences of the Air Arts programme affirms for me the need to invest in art and culture for the benefit of our health and our wellbeing.”* Sir Peter Bazalgette, former Chairman, Arts Council England

Of the 226 NHS Trust in England, more than 80 have arts programmes. There is an NHS National Performance Advisory Group (NPAG) on [Arts, Heritage and Design in Hospitals](#).

**For information on arts, culture, creativity, health and wellbeing activity in your area please contact: [info@culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk](mailto:info@culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk)**

## Resources

The following will provide you with more detailed information to support your role:

- [The Creative Health Report](#)
- [Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance](#) – including [Social Prescribing page](#)
- [All Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health & Wellbeing](#)
- [Social Prescribing Network](#)
- <https://nhsproviders.org/>
- [Local Government Association social prescribing guide](#) and [LGA/All Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health & Wellbeing briefing for local authorities](#)

### Arts in Health and Care Environments

This includes hospitals, GP surgeries, hospices and care homes.



A mental health recovery centre co-designed by service users in Wales is estimated to save the NHS

**£300k**

per year.

Visual and performing arts in healthcare environments help to reduce sickness, anxiety and stress.



The heart rate of new-born babies is calmed by the playing of lullabies. The use of live music in neonatal intensive care leads to considerably reduced hospital stays.

### Participatory Arts Programmes

This refers to individual and group arts activities intended to improve and maintain health and wellbeing in health and social care settings and community locations.

After engaging with the arts

**79%** of people in deprived communities in London ate more healthily

**77%** engaged in more physical activity

**82%** enjoyed greater wellbeing.

£1 spent on early care and education has been calculated to save up to £13 in future costs. Participatory arts activities with children improve their cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development and enhance school readiness.



### Arts Therapies

This refers to drama, music and visual arts activities offered to individuals, usually in clinical settings, by any of 3,600 practitioners accredited by the Health and Care Professions Council.



Music therapy reduces agitation and need for medication in

**67%**

of people with dementia.



Arts therapies help people to recover from brain injury and diminish the physical and emotional suffering of cancer patients and the side effects of their treatment.



Arts therapies have been found to alleviate anxiety, depression and stress while increasing resilience and wellbeing.

### Arts on Prescription

Part of social prescribing, this involves people experiencing psychological or physical distress being referred (or referring themselves) to engage with the arts in the community (including galleries, museums and libraries).

An arts-on-prescription project has shown a 37% drop in GP consultation rates and a 27% reduction in hospital admissions. This represents a saving of

**£216**

per patient.



A social return on investment of between £4 and £11 has been calculated for every £1 invested in arts on prescription.

Over the past two centuries, life expectancy has increased by two years every decade, meaning that half of people being born in the West can expect to reach 100. Arts participation is a vital part of healthy ageing.



Participatory arts activities help to alleviate anxiety, depression and stress both within and outside of work.



### Medical Training and Medical Humanities

This refers to inclusion of the arts in the formation and professional development of health and social care professionals.

Within the NHS, some 10 million working days are lost to sick leave every year, costing

**£2.4bn**

Arts engagement helps health and care staff to improve their own health and wellbeing and that of their patients.



### Everyday Creativity

This might be dancing, painting, pottery, sculpture, music, or film-making, singing or handicrafts.

There are more than **49,000** amateur arts groups in England

involving **9.4 million** people

that is **17%** of the population.



### Attendance at Cultural Venues and Events

This refers to attendance at concert halls, galleries, heritage sites, libraries, museums and theatres.



Attendance tends to be determined by educational level, prosperity and ethnicity.



Cultural engagement reduces work-related stress and leads to longer, happier lives.

Of **2,500**

museums and galleries in the UK, some

**600**

have programmes targeting health and wellbeing.



### The Built and Natural Environments

Poor-quality built environments have a damaging effect upon health and wellbeing.

**85%** of people in England agree that the quality of the built environment influences the way they feel.

Every £1 spent on maintaining parks has been seen to generate

**£34**

in community benefits.



Infographic from the *Creative Health* report