



MEDIA STATEMENT

3 March 2023

Using creativity to reduce addictions

The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) welcomes the decision from NHS England working in partnership with integrated care systems (ICS) to develop [a new framework for local health and care providers](#) that embraces creative health approaches as part of a holistic treatment plan.

The Rt Hon Lord Howarth of Newport CBE, Chair of the NCCH and Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (APPG AHW), said:

“We are delighted to see creativity being embraced in healthcare. Current research suggests that using creative, non-medical approaches to healthcare challenges, as in the case of inappropriate prescribing of high-strength painkillers and other addiction-causing medicines, like opioids and benzodiazepines, can have significant benefits for individuals, the NHS and society.

“Creative health has an important part to play in supporting personalised care. Practitioners have been applying this approach for years past and there is an increasing evidence base showing measurable and cost-effective benefits from such creative interventions, as part of a holistic and preventative approach.

“Creative activities, such as music, art, gardening and singing, support the management of emotions, reduce stress, improve confidence and self-esteem and contribute to the prevention and management of depression and anxiety.



Arts, Health and Wellbeing



“The current NCCH Creative Health Review shows growing evidence of the positive impact that creativity can have on individual’s physical and mental health and wellbeing. The funding supporting the roll out of this new framework is testament to the merits of this approach and recognises creativity as an integral part of a person’s treatment plan.”

- End -

Note to Editors:

Creative health involves creative approaches and activities that prevent ill-health and promote health and wellbeing. It aids the management of long-term conditions, treatments, and recovery across the life course. It can help strengthen social cohesion and reduce health inequalities. Activities can include visual and performing arts, crafts, film, literature, cooking and creative activities in nature, such as gardening.

The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) aims to advance good practice and research, inform policy and promote collaboration, helping to foster the conditions for creative health to be integral to health and social care and wider systems. It was set up in response to Recommendation 1 in the APPG AHW report: [Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing](#) and became a registered charity in 2020.

More information is available on the National Centre for Creative Health at <https://ncch.org.uk> @TheNCCH

About the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (APPG AHW)

The APPG AHW was formed in 2014 and is a cross party group of parliamentarians with a shared interest in the field of arts, health and wellbeing. The aim of the APPG AHW is to raise awareness of the benefits that the arts can bring to health and wellbeing and to stimulate progress towards making these benefits a reality across the country. The APPG AHW led a two-year inquiry 2015-17, which resulted in a report, [Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing](#).

The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) has data processing responsibility for the APPG AHW. The [Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance](#) hosts information about the APPG AHW [here](#).



Arts, Health and Wellbeing



The NCCH together with the APPG AHW launched a creative health review in autumn 2022 to gather evidence of the benefits of creative health in relation to major current challenges and show examples of where this is already working in practice.

The NCCH is supported by a **panel of commissioners** with a wide breadth of expertise to help translate evidence for creative health into recommendations for policymakers, to encourage and inform the development of a cross-governmental creative health strategy. The panel includes:

- **Tracy Brabin**, Mayor of West Yorkshire, former Shadow Minister for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Shadow Minister for Cultural Industries.
- **Madeleine Bunting**, Author of *Labours of Love: The Crisis of Care* and former associate editor at Guardian
- **Tracey Crouch CBE MP**, Co-Chair of the APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, former Minister State for Sport, Tourism and Heritage and Minister for Loneliness.
- **Dame Caroline Dinenage DBE MP**, former Minister in Department of Health and Social Care and Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.
- **Professor Baroness Ilora Finlay, Baroness Finlay of Llandaff**, Professor of Palliative Medicine and Crossbench Peer
- **Monty Don OBE**, leading garden writer and broadcaster.
- **Dr Darren Henley CBE**, CEO, Arts Council England
- **The Rt Hon. Lord Howarth of Newport CBE**, Chair of NCCH and Co-Chair of APPG AHW, former Schools Minister and Minister for Higher Education and Science; Employment, Equal Opportunities and Disabled People.
- **Professor Sir Michael Marmot**, Professor of Epidemiology at University College London and author of *The Health Gap*.
- **Professor Martin Marshall CBE**, Chair of the Nuffield Trust and GP in Newham, East London
- **The Rt Hon. Baroness Estelle Morris of Yardley**, former Minister for Education and Labour Peer
- **James Sanderson**, Director of Community Health and Personalised Care, Community and Personalised Care Directorate at NHS England, previously CEO of The National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP)
- **Rob Webster CBE**, CEO NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- **Alice Wiseman**, Director of Public Health, Gateshead
- **Baroness Lola Young of Hornsey OBE**, Crossbench Peer and currently Chair of the LGA Commission on Culture, former professor of Cultural Studies and Head of Culture at the Greater London Authority.

For media enquiries, please contact Edna Petzen epetzen@lyndenconsulting.com
mobile 07391 158596