

Arts, health and wellbeing: Recent developments in research.

Presentation to Creative Hertfordshire's Art of Wellbeing Conference
Thursday 15th October 2015, Fielder Conference Centre, Hatfield.

Norma Daykin, Professor Emerita Arts in Health, UWE, Bristol; Professor of
Arts as Wellbeing at the University of Winchester.

Overview

- Growing evidence base
- Methodological challenges
- Recent UK initiatives
- Opportunities and challenges

The evidence base

- The Staricoff review (2004)
- Updated in 2011 by Staricoff and Clift
 - Physiological outcomes: effects on blood pressure and heart rate, child development, improved respiratory function.
 - Psychosocial outcomes: reduced anxiety, stress and depression, behaviour and clinical outcomes, reduced need for medication,

The evidence base

- Silver Song Club (2015)
- RCT comparing group singing with usual activities for people aged 60 plus.
 - 258 participants
 - Significant differences effects on mental health related quality of life, anxiety and depression
 - Intervention marginally more cost effective than usual activities

Evidence from dementia research

- Playing a musical instrument as protective against dementia and cognitive impairment (Balbaq et al 2014).
- Engagement in arts and crafts in mid/late life is protective against cognitive impairment (Roberts et al 2015).
- RCT: Benefits of singing and music listening for mood, memory, carer well-being and QOL (Sarkoma et al 2013).

Methodological challenges

- Complex interventions
- Qualitative research
- Voices from the arts
- Research versus evaluation
- Types and levels of evaluation

Recent UK initiatives

- Research
- Developing evaluation
- Policy
- Practice

Research

- AHRC Culture, Health and Well-Being (2011), 3 major research projects:
 - Dr Gillian Windle, Bangor University, (Dementia and visual arts).
 - Professor Paul Crawford, University of Nottingham, (Creative practice, mental health and well-being).
 - Professor Gareth Williams (Cardiff University) (Community arts, health and well-being).

Research

- ACE Research Programme (2015-18)
- Impacts of arts and culture on society, including health and wellbeing.
- Arts led.
- 8 projects awarded £1.4m in 2015-16

Research

- ESRC: Arts, Health and Wellbeing, seminar series over 2013-14
- Network bringing together academics and researchers to support multidisciplinary inquiry into arts, health and wellbeing
- www.artsandhealthresearch.ac.uk

Developing Evaluation

- Creative and Credible Project.
 - One year knowledge exchange project UWE Bristol and Willis Newson, completed August 2015
 - Stakeholder Reference Group.
 - Evaluation tools and resources.
- Website: <http://creativeandcredible.co.uk/>

Policy: APPG

- Launched in January 2014 for peers & MPs to hear and discuss
- Reconvened following General Election
- Hosts events and round table discussions
- Secretariat provided by National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing
- [http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/
APPG](http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/APPG)

Cultural commissioning programme

- Three year Arts Council Funded programme (to June 2016)
- Seeks to help the arts and cultural sector develop skills and capacity
- Enabling commissioners to develop awareness of arts and cultural organisations
- <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/public-services/cultural-commissioning-programme>

What Works for Wellbeing?

- Government sponsored Research Centre
- Funded by ESRC and PHE
- Aims to understand what policy makers can do to increase wellbeing
- Culture and sport one of four three year evidence programmes (2015-18)
- Currently undergoing consensus development to define the scope of the review

Get involved!

- RSPH Special Interest Group for Arts, Health and Wellbeing.
- Culture, Health and Wellbeing International Conference, Bristol UK, June 19th - 21st, 2017.