The conference themes were wide ranging and included: reducing inequalities; promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention; improving mental health and wellbeing; and creative ageing. We also encouraged abstracts related to specific health conditions; museums and health; training and networks.

The Culture, Health and Wellbeing International Conference 2017 was held in Bristol, UK from June 19th – 21st 2017. It brought together 453 speakers and delegates from 23 countries.

INTRODUCTION

The conference built on the success of the 2013 Culture, Health and Wellbeing International Conference and followed a similar format. A commitment to delivering a second conference in 2017 was included in AHSW's business plan for 2015 – 18 and part of the organisation's commitment to providing collective leadership for the sector as an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. The conference committee was chaired by Professor Richard Parish and met regularly from September 2015 to June 2017 to plan the conference themes, select the abstracts and agree the programme.

As well as the Chair, the committee included other academics: Professor Paul Camic, Professor Norma Daykin and Professor Paul Dieppe, and those with expertise in arts and health practice: Gavin Clayton, Viv Gordon, Victoria Hume, Sue Isherwood, Deborah Munt, and Jane Willis (full list on page 21).

The conference was delivered by Alexandra Coulter, Director of AHSW; Hannah Mumby, AHSW’s Coordinator, and Sarah Holmes, AHSW’s Conference Assistant, with the support of the conference committee, AHSW’s trustees, and 11 volunteers, recruited from AHSW’s membership.

BACKGROUND

The conference themes were wide ranging and included: reducing inequalities; promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention; improving mental health and wellbeing; and creative ageing. We also encouraged abstracts related to specific health conditions; museums and health; training and networks.

The Culture, Health and Wellbeing International Conference 2017 was delivered by Arts & Health South West (AHSW) on behalf of the National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing. Our partners in the conference were the Royal Society for Public Health, Canterbury Christchurch University, the University of Exeter and the University of Winchester. Funding and sponsorship were provided by Arts Council England, the Baring Foundation, the Fine Family Foundation, the University of Exeter, the University of Winchester, and Superact CIC.

“A heartfelt thanks to you and your team for organising such a well structured, jam packed and varied conference programme delivered by a range of high quality speakers and presenters. Heatwave aside, I could not have wished for more.”
The call for abstracts went out to over 2000 people across the world. As well as addressing the conference themes, we invited abstracts that would inform the development or effectiveness of arts and health practice; advance understanding of participants’ experiences of participatory arts for health and wellbeing (including artists’ experiences); advance knowledge and understanding of the role and impact of arts and culture on health and wellbeing; inform the development of health, arts and cultural policy in relation to health and wellbeing; and advance the development of methodologies for arts and health research.

We planned to include a range of abstracts in oral presentations of three or four presenters, practical workshops, performances and films, which would complement the keynotes and meet the themes. 308 abstracts were received from 23 countries, of which 127 were research and 178 were practice. Of these 168 were represented in some way during the conference. This included 3 big debates, 11 workshops, 34 oral sessions, 7 provocations, 10 round tables and 22 poster presentations.

The full programme can be viewed at: www.culturehealthwellbeing.org.uk/PROGRAMME

“A really good conference. If the first one was a four star, this was a five plus. I also learned new things which are already triggering some ideas plus had a lot of fun. Some excellent discussions with so many different people, plus making new connections.”
The first day of the conference focused on public health and prevention, and was chaired by Professor Richard Parish. You can watch the morning keynotes here.

The opening keynote: ‘Arts and Minds: A Creative Alliance’, was by Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England. Public Health England are proving to be great allies to the arts and health movement as we align with the growing emphasis on prevention and community-based, non-clinical support for health and social care.

Duncan Selbie’s keynote was followed by Dr Nayreen Daruwalla, Programme Director for Prevention of Violence against Women and Children at SNEHA in Mumbai, India, whose talk: ‘Art and Health: for the people and by the people’ was about SNEHA’s inspirational work with the arts and, in particular, the Dharavi Biennale. Here is a quirky (un)Empirical Analysis of the Dharavi Biennale. Nayreen was joined by David Osrin, Professor of Global Health at UCL and Welcome Trust Senior Research Fellow in Clinical Science, for a Q&A after her talk.

Mariantonia Oliver, a dance artist from Mallorca, showed us an excerpt from her project working with older women, Las Muchas, and then led a participatory dance workshop and performance created during a residency with the Dorset based group, Grace and Growl.

Remarkably, all of the workshop participants were on the floor with their legs in the air by the end!

The Big Debate on Monday, What’s the Big Picture? included contributions on the arts and global disasters, the arts and health communication during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, British Council programmes in Japan, and community engagement with health research in low and middle income countries.
A lunchtime knitting workshop on College Green was led by Ali Brown of The World's First Knitted Wisdom Dispensing Machine fame. The World's First Knitted Wisdom Dispensing Machine was installed in the foyer of City Hall and dispensed 225 words of wisdom over the three days.

An exhibition of work by people who have been involved in Bristol Arts on Referral programmes was open to delegates throughout the day with a private view in the early evening. On Monday evening, delegates braved the sweltering conditions to attend the drinks reception at the Royal West of England Academy. Our grateful thanks to Alison Bevan, Director of the RWA, and her team, for hosting the event and to our patron, Sibyl Fine King, for speaking about her support for arts and health. The exhibition: Air: Visualising the Invisible in British Art 1768-2017 had wonderful examples of historical and contemporary works related to the theme, from JMW Turner to Mariele Neudecker, including Joseph Wright of Derby's much-loved 'Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump' from the National Gallery. We were privileged to hear a performance of Under the Surface, a choral work from composer Toby Young, commissioned by the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute at the University of Bristol and the Life of Breath project, conducted by musical director Stephen Rice, and performed by soloists from the internationally acclaimed Brabant Ensemble.

“I loved sitting here knitting and chatting under the shade of the tree – thank you”
Poppy Jaman, Chief Executive of the Mental Health First Aid Foundation, chaired the day and placed it fairly and squarely in the context of lived experience of mental health. The first keynote gave us an introduction to the policy landscape with Lord Howarth of Newport speaking about the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing’s two-year inquiry and the forthcoming publication Creative Health. He talked of the crisis of values in the west and how there is an impatient longing for a politics of mutuality, proportion and justice: ‘Arts in health is a movement which will be instrumental in bringing about the birth of the new, of healthcare that goes with the grain of our better nature, of a “healthy and health-creating society.” Good public policy and effective public services in the end must be based on good values. Those values include recognition that a human being is not just a physical specimen, but a creature whose fulfilment depends upon imagination and creativity.’

Fred Foote, doctor, veteran and poet from the USA, performed poetry and spoke about his work with healing veterans through the arts and nature, and about the ambitious Green Road Project at the Walter Reed Military Medical Centre. Dr Iona Heath, former President of the Royal College of General Practitioners, gave a moving presentation on ‘Cultural Literacy and the Care of the Dying’. She talked of how healthcare professionals need skills in five dimensions of literacy: medical, physical, emotional, moral and cultural. The last of these, the most potent resource for making sense of life and death is too often ignored in medical training. You can watch all the morning keynotes here.

On Tuesday, the emphasis was on medical contexts and the relationship between arts and health, medical humanities and arts therapies.

Top image: A delegate talking to Iona Heath after her keynote on ‘Cultural Literacy and the Care of the Dying’. Photo by Clint Randall.

In the breaks, across all three days, delegates could experience Making the Invisible Visible, an interactive sound and visual art installation at City Hall. The installation is the result of an arts and science collaboration with artist Sofie Layton and bio-medical researcher Dr Giovanni Biglini, from the Bristol Heart Institute.

The project was produced by Anna Ledgard and funded by Wellcome. Sofie devised and delivered a series of workshops for young people with congenital heart disease. The resulting installation includes models of hearts using 3D printing technology and a sound installation that engaged the audience in an exploration of the experience of heart transplantation and the complexity of congenital heart disease. Comments included:

“This is wondrous. I was moved to tears.”

A large proportion of conference delegates visited the installation, with 125 completing a survey on artist-mediated illness experiences, which will be published separately.

On Tuesday evening delegates could visit the exhibition Alternative Visions: Undiscovered Art in the South West at the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery. This exhibition of frank, emotive and vibrant work by 20 undiscovered artists from across the region, shows work which communicates personal life experiences including health issues, disabilities, difficult social circumstances and isolation. Alternative Visions is a partnership project with Outside In, Arts & Health South West and Bristol Museums and Archives and is funded by Arts Council England Strategic Touring funds. The exhibition tours to Falmouth Art Gallery, the Wilson, Cheltenham and Poole Museum in 2017-18.

The same evening, in Bristol Museum, there was a performance of Delirium: Time and Violence by Victoria Hume, Composer and Research Assistant, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. Alternatively, delegates were able to attend fast-paced and stimulating 10 minute Provocations at the Watershed, followed by the Bristol Reggae Orchestra conducted by Professor Norma Daykin. That evening the Arts Health ECRN launch drinks was attended by 40 early career researchers. The network lead is Dr Daisy Fancourt and she welcomed everyone to an evening of ice-breaking and interactive activities to enable participants to make suggestions about what they wanted from the network, and how to help it grow and develop.

“The provocations on Tuesday evening were very refreshing and enjoyable. It was great to encourage young people/early career to share their work in a concise way.”

“I wish families who have experienced this and other forms of heart surgery have a chance to connect with this artwork”
Professor Paul Dieppe was Conference Chair for Wednesday. Keynotes in the morning included the wonderful and inspirational Blood Sugars performance from South Africa.

More than 8.3% of the South African population live with diabetes, and this figure continues to grow exponentially. The Blood Sugars team, a partnership between the Health Communication Research Unit and Drama for Life, both at the University of the Witwatersrand, worked with people who live with diabetes and clinicians at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital in Soweto, which is the world’s third largest hospital, using applied drama techniques to develop a play. The Blood Sugars team performed for us and discussed the challenges and successes of this multi-disciplinary project. We are also extremely grateful to the Blood Sugars team for their improvised interventions throughout the conference, including welcoming delegates on the first day with song and dance.

We experienced a very moving interactive session with Neil Valentine Associate Musician, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Julian West Musician and Project Leader, Music for Life, Wigmore Hall in London. The presentation: A Musical Conversation – What Happens When We Make Music? showed us how they engage people in musical dialogue, particularly those with dementia. We felt the power of music to connect us without the need for words. After a range of round table discussions and workshops, we returned to the main hall in the afternoon for a powerful last keynote by the Australian artist, Vic McEwan, Parkinson, Director of Arts for Health at Manchester Metropolitan University. Their extraordinary project: The Longest Heartbeat was heart stopping. Vic worked with a young patient at Alderhey Children’s Hospital in a shared artistic process, which included recording her heartbeat. Vic and Clive journeyed to a remote part of Scotland, the place on earth where sounds last longer than anywhere else, and re-played her heartbeat, recorded it and returned it as an exquisite Memento Mori.

The conference was held in two main venues: City Hall on College Green and the Watershed on the Harbourside. Evening events were held at the Royal West of England Academy and Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

All morning sessions in City Hall were real time captioned to screens in the hall. All morning sessions in City Hall and the Council Chamber were live streamed to the conference website and viewed 350 times before being moved to YouTube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UC3EwepCDB41YF_001B2BPMQ

“I wanted to write and say congrats on the conference! I wasn’t able to attend but having the live streaming was brilliant and what I was able to watch seemed really great and there was clearly very positive feedback from all involved. It is such a great focal point for arts and health.”

Feedback from someone who watched the conference online.

We are extremely grateful to all the speakers and contributors for providing us with such a rich and inspiring programme. Thank you to Professor Richard Parish, Poppy Jaman and Professor Paul Dieppe for being Conference Chairs and to the conference committee and trustees of Arts & Health South West, who skilfully chaired the debates and breakout sessions.

The conference fee and an article on her poster in the special conference edition of Perspectives in Public Health.

Thank you also to our team of 11 host delegates who made everything run so smoothly.

“Thank you so much for having me at your wonderful conference this week! It was a delight to be part of such a warm and stimulating community, and I will be thinking about some of the issues raised in discussion for an awfully long time.”

Conference delegate feedback

“I just wanted to add my congratulations and thanks on one of the best organised and designed conferences I have ever been to. The atmosphere was fantastic and everyone I spoke to was full of praise and enthusiasm for your fantastic work. Many congratulations.”

Conference delegate feedback

Delegates voted for the best poster which was won by Kate Massey-Chase, PhD Student, University of Exeter. The title of her poster was: Scoping mental health transition care.

As her prize, Kate received re-imbursement of her conference fee, as well as £50 for her poster in the special conference edition of Perspectives in Public Health.

Thank you to all of the speakers and contributors for providing us with such a rich and inspiring programme. Thank you to Professor Richard Parish, Poppy Jaman and Professor Paul Dieppe for being Conference Chairs and to the conference committee and trustees of Arts & Health South West, who skilfully chaired the debates and breakout sessions.

Thank you also to our team of 11 host delegates who made everything run so smoothly.

“Thank you so much for having me at your wonderful conference this week! It was a delight to be part of such a warm and stimulating community, and I will be thinking about some of the issues raised in discussion for an awfully long time.”

Conference delegate feedback

“I just wanted to add my congratulations and thanks on one of the best organised and designed conferences I have ever been to. The atmosphere was fantastic and everyone I spoke to was full of praise and enthusiasm for your fantastic work. Many congratulations.”

Conference delegate feedback

Delegates voted for the best poster which was won by Kate Massey-Chase, PhD Student, University of Exeter. The title of her poster was: Scoping mental health transition care.

As her prize, Kate received re-imbursement of her conference fee, as well as £50 for her poster in the special conference edition of Perspectives in Public Health.

“Thank you also to our team of 11 host delegates who made everything run so smoothly.

“Thank you so much for having me at your wonderful conference this week! It was a delight to be part of such a warm and stimulating community, and I will be thinking about some of the issues raised in discussion for an awfully long time.”

Conference delegate feedback

“I just wanted to add my congratulations and thanks on one of the best organised and designed conferences I have ever been to. The atmosphere was fantastic and everyone I spoke to was full of praise and enthusiasm for your fantastic work. Many congratulations.”

Conference delegate feedback

Delegates voted for the best poster which was won by Kate Massey-Chase, PhD Student, University of Exeter. The title of her poster was: Scoping mental health transition care.

As her prize, Kate received re-imbursement of her conference fee, as well as £50 for her poster in the special conference edition of Perspectives in Public Health.

“Thank you also to our team of 11 host delegates who made everything run so smoothly.

“Thank you so much for having me at your wonderful conference this week! It was a delight to be part of such a warm and stimulating community, and I will be thinking about some of the issues raised in discussion for an awfully long time.”
The Special Edition intends to give a flavour of the conference with articles devoted to both research and practice. These include:

- An edited version of Lord Howarth’s speech announcing the publication of the “Creative Health report”
- A piece relating to The Arts Health Early Career Research Network
- A feature on Pallant House Gallery’s Community Programme
- Another feature on how the British Council is promoting arts and health work.
- A practice article on the exciting developments in Social Prescribing
- An article written by Kate Massey-Chase based upon her poster at the conference, for which Kate one first prize.
- Four peer-reviewed articles on: Measuring wellbeing in artists, social prescribing for older adults, participatory theatre and a review of literature about singing with older people.
- Two book reviews on Arts & Health books published in 2017

A big “thank you” to all who submitted to the Special Edition.

If you have any questions about the Special Edition, please email theo.stickley@nottingham.ac.uk

THE SPECIAL EDITION OF PERSPECTIVES IN PUBLIC HEALTH

The Royal Society for Public Health publishes two journals on a regular basis and they offered to devote an entire edition to the contents of the conference. So in January 2018, there will be a Special Edition of Perspectives in Public Health.

The Guest Editor is Dr Theo Stickley from the University of Nottingham. Theo is also a member of the Arts & Health Special Interest Group at the Royal Society for Public Health.

The Special Edition intends to give a flavour of the conference with articles devoted to both research and practice. These include:

- An edited version of Lord Howarth’s speech announcing the publication of the “Creative Health report”
- A piece relating to The Arts Health Early Career Research Network
- A feature on Pallant House Gallery’s Community Programme
- Another feature on how the British Council is promoting arts and health work.
- A practice article on the exciting developments in Social Prescribing
- An article written by Kate Massey-Chase based upon her poster at the conference, for which Kate one first prize.
- Four peer-reviewed articles on: Measuring wellbeing in artists, social prescribing for older adults, participatory theatre and a review of literature about singing with older people.
- Two book reviews on Arts & Health books published in 2017

A big “thank you” to all who submitted to the Special Edition.

If you have any questions about the Special Edition, please email theo.stickley@nottingham.ac.uk

RESEARCH AT THE CONFERENCE

Professor Paul Dieppe and Dr Emmylou Rahtz of the University of Exeter investigated the nature and value of research in arts and health during the conference, by asking delegates two key questions: “How can researchers help arts for health?” and “What should researchers focus on?”

20 postcards were returned with usable data, and many very helpful conversations on the subject were held. It is apparent that there is a huge range of perspectives on research in the community, with a few artists not really understanding the questions. Many people thought that the discipline was trying too hard to fit in with the medical model and its way of evaluating interventions for specific diseases, and advocated more experiential and open approaches. Others pointed out that it is quite obvious that arts are of value to people’s health and wellbeing, that there is no need for any research to prove benefit, but that we do need research to understand more about the nature of those improvements and the mechanisms behind them.

Some felt that enough research has already been done, but said commissioners needed to trust the existing research and arts for health providers needed a simple way of accessing and using the evidence base. Some people emphasised economics, recommending more work on the costs of arts interventions in comparison with other approaches to health care. There were also pleas for better communication about research findings to practitioners. A few respondents advocated more trials and systematic reviews of data, but the majority wanted more qualitative rather than quantitative research.
Delegates came for one, two or three days. There were 16 bursaries for artists funded by the Baring Foundation, the University of Winchester and the North West Arts and Health Network.

Responses to the conference
A short report on the conference was included in Duncan Selbie’s widely circulated message following his keynote on the first day.

A report on the conference is in a blog on the Royal College of Physicians website:
www.rcplondon.ac.uk/news/rcp-represented-culture-health-and-wellbeing-conference

Two blog posts:
www.makeamove.org.uk/wellbeing-conference/
significantseams.org.uk/art-in-health-care/

Twitter Storify:
storify.com/gillianartist/culture-health-and-wellbeing-international-confere

DELEGATES

There were 453 speakers and delegates from the following countries:
Australia; Canada; Denmark; England; Finland; Germany; India; Ireland; Italy; Lithuania; Malaysia; Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Scotland; Singapore; South Africa; Spain; Sweden; Thailand; Uganda; USA; Wales.
There were 57 responses to the online survey from a total of 423 delegates and speakers. This is about half the number of responses we received in 2013. We think this is because we didn’t send the survey out quickly enough after the event. At the next conference, which will be in 2021, we will make the feedback survey available online during the conference and for a period of time afterwards.

Of those who responded to the 2017 survey, 33 attended all three days, 10 attended Monday 19th June, 10 attended Tuesday 20th June and 4 attended Wednesday 21st June.

36 respondents gave a presentation, performed, led a workshop or exhibited a poster at the conference. Of these:
- 9 rated the abstract submission process as Excellent; 22 as Good, 3 as Average; 1 as Acceptable; 1 as Poor.
- 12 rated the information prior to the conference and support during the conference as Excellent; 15 as Good; 5 as Average; and 1 as Acceptable.
- 14 rated the chairing of their session as Excellent; 9 as Good; 1 as Average; 1 as Acceptable; 1 as Poor.
- 7 rated the venue as Excellent; 20 as Good; 3 as Average; 2 as Acceptable; 1 as Poor.

The content of the keynotes across three days was rated as Excellent by 50% to 72% of the delegates. The highest rating was for Lord Howarth’s keynote. One said “this made me feel very excited for the conference and for a period of time afterwards.”

But we also heard that:
- “For the price of the registration, in addition to travel expenses to attend from another country, there was not a great deal of overt value. There were some wonderful speakers and I met some lovely, engaging people, but overall there was a lack of ‘new’ and invigorating or challenging themes presented.”

In terms of conference themes, delegates noted a particular interest in:
- 85% Improving mental health and wellbeing
- 73% Creative ageing
- 54% Models and frameworks for co-production, commissioning, delivery and evaluation
- 48% Promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention
- 46% Designing for wellbeing – services, environments, products
- 46% Developing national and international networks
- 44% Training, education and professional development
- 43% Reducing inequalities
- 38% Museums, heritage and health
- 25% Specific health conditions and care pathways including palliative care

Committee Chair: Professor Richard Parish, Board Member of Public Health England and Emeritus Professor of Public Health at the University of Chester.

Committee Members:
- Professor Paul Camic, Professor of Psychology and Public Health, Canterbury Christ Church University;
- Professor Norma Daykin, Professor of Arts as Wellbeing, University of Winchester;
- Professor Paul Diespe, Emeritus Professor of Health and Wellbeing, University of Exeter;
- Gavin Clayton, Executive Director, Arts and Minds, Cambridge;
- Alexandra Coullier, Director, Arts and Health South West;
- Viv Gordon, Artistic Director, Mean Feet Dance;
- Victoria Hume, Composer and Research Assistant, University of the Witswatersrand, South Africa;
- Sue Isherwood, Chair of Arts & Health South West;
- Deborah Munt, Chair of the National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing;
- Jane Willis, Director of Willis Newson.

Overview Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>£104,978.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delegate Fees</td>
<td>£1,350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>£7,525.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>£46.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Income</td>
<td>£113,657.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>£100.32</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venue hire, catering and equipment</td>
<td>£53,709.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>£12,121.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional staff &amp; freelance</td>
<td>£6,715.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker travel, accommodation &amp; expenses</td>
<td>£15,718.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Refunds, translators etc)</td>
<td>£722.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to core Staff costs</td>
<td>£24,569.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Expenditure</td>
<td>£113,657.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL £113,657.63