

NOT SO GRIM UP NORTH

Investigating the health and wellbeing impacts of museum and gallery activities for people living with dementia, stroke survivors, and mental health service-users

A partnership between



the **Whitworth**



TRAFFORD GENERAL HOSPITAL HAS A LONG ASSOCIATION WORKING WITH THE WHITWORTH AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER, INTRODUCING CREATIVE ART TO A HOSPITAL SETTING, FOR THE WELLBEING OF BOTH PATIENTS AND STAFF ALIKE.



HELEN ROGERS

Head of Nursing, Clinical Due Diligence, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT).

"Being asked to collaborate in the 'Not So Grim up North' research with the team was exciting; knowing that our patients living with dementia, and stroke rehabilitation patients were contributing to novel research, which would benefit not just our own hospital, but be part of creating a new

framework to evaluate the impact of arts on health and wellbeing. The experience of having the artists undertake the activities within the wards had a very beneficial impact upon our staff, as well as the patients involved, and it was a privilege to be involved in this research."



KRISTI PEARSON

**Occupational Therapist
Northumberland, Tyne &
Wear NHS Foundation Trust.**

THE RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM THE NOT SO GRIM UP NORTH PROJECT HAVE SHOWN HOW MUSEUM AND CLINICAL STAFF ARE ABLE TO ENHANCE EACH OTHER'S SERVICES AND HOW USING ARTS AND CULTURAL INITIATIVES HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF PATIENTS.

"Being familiar with Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums' health and wellbeing work which covers dedicated adult engagement programmes, volunteering and children and young people's projects, it is with great pleasure that I have been asked to champion not only what is good at TWAM but great for people of the North East.

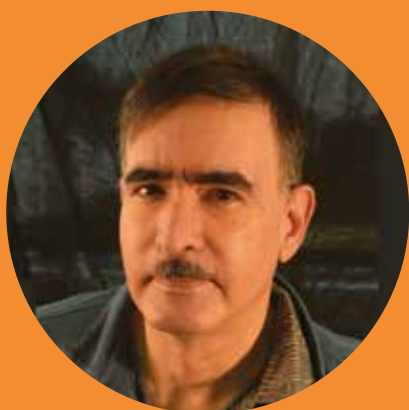
This Arts Council England research grant fund was highly competitive and TWAM, with *Not So Grim Up North* team, were one of eight proposals selected out of over one hundred submissions, which shows the strength of the delivery and quality of the research proposed.

This report clearly highlights the benefits of museum interventions for both patients / people in recovery and for professionals leading on that care delivery. Furthermore as a society I see the clear role that culture can play as part of the solution of ill health and health inequalities in both recovery and preventative models so people can live happier, healthier and longer lives."



SHARON HODGSON MP:

Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Art, Craft & Design in Education.



MARK TILLEY:

A participant from the Momentum Skills – Moving on Together Partnership.

"I have been in contact with Momentum since 2015. My problems include right-sided paralysis, hearing difficulties, aphasia, and damage to my short term memory. I feel drained after spending a few hours in a group. Momentum introduced me to groups of people who have all had experience with acquired brain injuries and helped me to understand my injuries, which is useful. For me this was the next stage in moving on after going through the expert therapies I received with the NHS.

Prior to my stroke in 2014 I really enjoyed going to museums and libraries. When I was offered a chance to be involved with the *Not So Grim Up North* project that would take me back into those environments I found the idea quite irresistible.

The broad outlines of the project included an eye-opening visit behind the scenes at the Discovery Museum, and a conducted tour of the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle upon Tyne. The group who came together to create our own works of art got on very well. I would be glad to meet up with any of them again, perhaps in some future project. By designing our own images of things that are important to us I got to see the skills and interests of our group in action. The volunteers who helped us with keying our art into computers certainly deserve a medal for their patience and skills.

The *Not So Grim Up North* project offered me an excuse to dig deeper into my family history. My paternal grandfather was a water engineer in the Newcastle upon Tyne area before the First World War. My family had visited the Beamish Open Air Museum a few years before I had my stroke, and again in 2016. I was determined to carry on with my grandfather's story regardless of my disability.

I also went back into libraries. At the moment I am writing, fairly slowly, but if necessary I can apply myself for hours every day. By keeping careful notes I am able to keep a rhythm to my writing; in fact I hope to hide the fact that my short term memory is now pretty well a matter of history.

I keep my mind active by picking up new hobbies. In the last year I have taken up a photography group at Momentum. In my own time I have sculpted dinosaurs in Fimo clay and made models of a Roman market. For some reason all the models are to 1/50 scale. For my next writing project I will visit the archives at the Discovery Museum. That is my life, moving on with one or two projects at a time."



— INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW —

Not So Grim Up North (Oct 2015 - Feb 2018) was a research project funded by Arts Council England (ACE) in a collaboration between University College London (UCL) and museum partners: The Whitworth and Manchester Museum, The University of Manchester, and Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM). Other partners included the NHS and third sector organisations in Greater Manchester and Tyne and Wear.

These partners are based in the North of England – which explains the project name. Indeed, it's not grim up north: there is a vibrant arts and cultural scene, and we are interested in how this can contribute to the health and wellbeing of people in these regions.

The aim of the project was to investigate the health and wellbeing impacts of museum and gallery activities for three audience groups: people living with dementia,

stroke survivors, and mental health service-users. The research used a mixed-methods approach that developed fit-for-purpose methodologies for each museum setting to assess health and wellbeing across different contexts.

The study explored participants' own perceptions of their health and wellbeing through qualitative methods, such as interviews and reflective diaries. Quantitative data was collected to measure change in relation to certain clinical outcomes. The aim was to find out whether, and how, museum activities could support wellbeing, recovery and rehabilitation for a range of different groups.

Through working in partnership with the NHS, Adult Social Care services and Third Sector organisations in Greater Manchester and Tyne and Wear, the research was particularly interested in how creative museum-based activities could contribute to positive benefits for these different groups of people.

Wider aims of the project:

- To further the evidence base of the health and wellbeing of the museum sector and communicate back to the health sector.
- To develop a framework for the museum and gallery sector to evaluate these kinds of projects with different health audiences.
- The wider ethos of the project is built on a strong belief that museums and art galleries have a place in supporting health and wellbeing across a range of audiences in the community.

To keep the public informed, there was a blog each month with project updates so those interested could engage, follow the work and see the research findings (link to blog: <https://bit.ly/2KIAi43>)

This report provides a description of the museum activities in each of the sites (Manchester and Tyne and Wear) along with a summary of the research findings.

**Not So Grim Up North
Research Team, 2018**



We see it as our moral responsibility to utilise the collections to support people to enhance their own lives. We can be very creative in the mechanism of how that happens and the form it takes. Ultimately TWAM collections are our unique selling point, to act as a foundation to enable staff at TWAM working with people (community practitioners / professionals and service users / participants) to create environments of creativity, enjoyment and learning that make a positive difference to people's lives and allow them to flourish. It is this ethos and rationale that has very much framed how we work and who we target to work with.

TWAM call the community engagement programmes, programmes rather than projects to show the commitment of the

organisation for long term working in these sectors and to contribute positively to social issue themes. We don't claim to 'cure' people, we don't claim to be experts in community development practice or health promotion. We do however work within a model of practice that views cultural and heritage organisations as having a responsibility to collaborate with experts across multiple sectors to be part of a solution by enhancing community professionals' working practices, so they see museum resources as useful and relevant.

It was with the above in mind that led us to select the three health and wellbeing focused programmes to be involved in the *Not So Grim Up North* research.

The Platinum Programme worked with dementia patients

at Castleside ward – an inpatient Dementia Services Ward at Newcastle General Hospital.

The Wellbeing Programme partnered with Momentum Skills and their Moving on Together Partnership working with people requiring rehabilitative support, from acquired brain injury through stroke, road traffic accident, assault or neurological condition.

The RICH Recovery Programme worked with the Road to Recovery Trust. Although the intended delivery wasn't able to be carried out in time to be included in this research, we were still able to collaborate with the board of trustees on an evaluation method that used the UCL Museum and Wellbeing Measures as inspiration for a recovery community specific evaluation tool.



THE PLATINUM PROGRAMME AND CASTLESIDE INPATIENT DEMENTIA SERVICES WARD AT NEWCASTLE GENERAL HOSPITAL.

TWAM has worked in partnership with Castleside for a number of years delivering outreach museum activities where the museum comes to the patients on the ward. The sessions are co-designed with hospital staff, an activity co-ordinator, challenging behaviour nurse, occupational therapists and museum staff. The sessions are centred on using objects to stimulate conversation, with memories and stories often being shared between patients and medical staff. This sharing is beneficial for both patients and staff.

Patients can show agitated behaviour or be withdrawn and not engaged in life on the ward. Having a new face (museum staff) and a creative, engaging activity can lead to reduced agitation, and a sense of calm which in turn leads to patients eating meals, coming out of their rooms and reduced challenging behaviour. Staff benefits have included, knowing more about the background of their patients through the sharing of stories, and knowing a person rather than a medical condition.

THESE OUTCOMES HAVE ENABLED MEDICAL STAFF TO THINK CREATIVELY ABOUT SOLUTIONS TO CERTAIN BEHAVIOURS BECAUSE THEY HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNDERLYING REASONS.

We were particularly keen for Castleside to be involved in *Not So Grim Up North* as we already had a good working relationship with medical staff and knew that patients were monitored regularly, as in hospital, to be assessed on their mental health issues arising from disorders such as dementia.

After the NHS gave permission to carry out the research on the Castleside ward, we asked family members for their consent for us to record their interactions with the patients. This was important as medical staff explained that some patients had different types of consent they were able to make decisions on under the Mental Health (2007) Act.

The project was carried out in two six-week blocks, with the same museum staff member delivering activities once a week on the ward and the researcher taking an observational role at each session. A themed museum object handling box was used to engage the patients, and themes included Childhood, Home life, Leisure and Hobbies and World War II. Objects including items such as skipping ropes, tic tac toe, tiddly winks, old telephone, cigarette packets, washboard, old soaps, dominoes, football programmes, knitting patterns and wool, old newspapers, evacuees' suitcase, gas mask, identity cards and ration books.

Museum staff would take each object around participants in the room to let them hold, feel and smell the item. The room was quite large and the people were spread out. Most patients either responded to the museum staff member or medical staff, it was observed that there wasn't much group interaction between patients.

As the museum staff ran the sessions they always made observations and filled in a diary at the end of the day, not during the sessions and considered questions such as:

- Did participants interact with and explore the objects?
- Did participants interact with myself/staff or each other?
- Did a participant's mood change throughout the session?

Participants generally interacted with objects and staff, but not necessarily with each other, although a couple of participants remained withdrawn.

The following are some examples of observations noted by museum staff throughout the sessions:

Participant 4 was withdrawn, only interacting with an object and myself briefly – he didn't interact with anyone else during the session.

Participant 5 was in a really good mood, she liked the Donald Duck and Womble toys and gave them a cuddle, she used the skipping ropes and everyone applauded, she played tiddlywinks and also had a little sing and dance. Another week she showed the group how to 'play' the washboard like a musical instrument.

Participant 6 did not interact with the objects or anyone in the room.

PARTICIPANT 3 WAS QUITE AGITATED AT FIRST (SHOUTING), HOWEVER, AS TIME WENT ON HE COMPLETELY ENGAGED, TALKING ABOUT THE OBJECTS AND ASKING ABOUT WHAT WAS HAPPENING NEXT WEEK. HE TOLD ME HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING ME AGAIN. THIS WEEK HE ACTIVELY ENGAGED WITH THE OBJECTS COMMENTING AND SHARING STORIES. HE TALKED ABOUT BEING A CHRONICLE NEWSPAPER SELLER AND HOW THERE USED TO BE CONDUCTORS ON BUSES.

We had planned blocks of six weekly sessions, assuming we would see the same people throughout. However, at most the museum staff member met individual participants around three weeks in a row, and then they were discharged. Some we only met once or twice. It wasn't as straight forward as we had assumed. The museum staff member, who has visited various care homes and day centres with these objects over the years, noted these particular participants were definitely more challenging. The museum staff had learned to get used to confusion, shouting, and sometimes even verbal abuse. Patients could sometimes think you were someone else and museum staff learned sometimes it was okay to go along with it to help patients calm down. On reflection museum staff said they would try and get participants around a table to hopefully generate more interaction in future sessions. This experience gave museum staff greater insight into which objects are particularly good for engaging patients with these conditions and behaviours and which are to be avoided. For example, the soap was great for stimulating memories of certain smells leading to stories about family life, but the newspapers were not as accessible and engaging for the patients.



THE WELLBEING PROGRAMME SELF & RECOVERY PROJECT WITH MOMENTUM SKILLS – MOVING ON TOGETHER PARTNERSHIP.

The Self & Recovery Project engaged members of the Moving on Together Partnership, a charity providing rehabilitative support for people who have an acquired brain injury through stroke, road traffic accident, assault or who have a neurological condition. The group was selected due to our understanding from specialists that people who have experienced stroke can then have health and wellbeing complications leading to depression and associated mental health issues. Stroke has a long-term impact on physical and psychological health and causes disruptions to their quality of life.

Ten people participated on the project as well as their carers, with two participants not completing the project to the end. Contact with the organisation came about via the Stroke Association in the North East, and the Moving on Together Partnership that takes self-referrals, along with the NHS, Headway, Stroke Association and other head injury support services across the North East.

The museum staff member leading the Wellbeing Programme was given access training from the Stroke Association to harness skills and awareness in determining how to approach the project due to lack of previous working experience with this client group.

The sessions were co-designed by museum staff collaborating with Peer Support Advisors, a Clinical Psychologist and a Community Integration Worker. It is important to note here that the project fitted into the agenda of the programme at Moving on Together and was focused on the rehabilitation of the service users (participants), not a heritage led agenda.

During the start-up stage eight participants including two carers engaged in activities over the six sessions facilitated by museum staff. Staff used object handling boxes to discuss themes of human experience and development of civilisations by exploring objects from the Roman handling box, linked to history and developments in the North East. We also used the medicine through time handling box to gauge conversations on well-being and health.

These resources were specifically used to promote conversations and to get to know people in the group, build trust and relationships. We also wanted to gain knowledge of participants' abilities, both physical and psychological, in terms of learning needs to ensure the project was pitched at the right level for the group.

As part of the initial stage of delivery, we co-ordinated a museum store visit, as the museum behind the scenes experience is always popular. We also included an object handling session with shoes from the costume and textile collection which ignited conversations ranging from cultural differences to disability.

We built in a way for participants to feedback on the sessions with staff and participants commenting on what they thought went well and what they would change, that influenced following sessions. Responses included advice on better ways of communicating with the group, using shorter, simpler sentences or phrases when providing information, and an interest in working collectively and embarking on a medium-term project.

Next the museum staff pitched an idea the participants and staff about designing a portrait project inspired by an online exhibition with stroke survivors, and the group chose portraiture.

Portraiture was particularly useful as it has been used as a tool to encourage self-reflection. The group was supported by a photographer as it was seen as an inclusive art form for all participants. A total of nine sessions were held and three additional 'open' sessions were used for one to one time for each participant with the photographer to enable the completion of the final touches on each participant's portrait.

Sessions involved a guided tour and post-tour discussion of the National Portrait Gallery's touring Modern Visionaries at the Laing Art Gallery 2017. This featured a variety of significant self-portraits by 17th-21st century artists including Pablo Picasso, Francis Bacon, L.S. Lowry and Jane and Louise Wilson. The process of facilitated learning through guided tours and museum engagement provided a safe space for members to reflect on their personal experiences and identities, using heritage and photography to inspire creativity, wellbeing and recovery.

The tour was facilitated by Learning Officer Hazel Barron-Cooper who also provided a post-card collage making session.

The portraits in the exhibition were powerful as most of the artists from Picasso to Lowry showed their vulnerabilities and challenges due to their age, gender, and trauma from the experience of war and ill-health. It proved integral for participants and the portraits to include a variety of media, from paintings to video with several themes resonating with participants.

Artists Lindsay Duncanson and Paul A. Knox delivered sessions on portraiture and explored various artists' work so each participant could develop concepts and narratives for their own portrait. A variety of stories and distinct representations developed using self-portraits. Some participants were supported with using PhotoShop and other design-imaging software.



Image reference:
GROW project
volunteer,
Andrew Sawyer
Photography,
courtesy of Jo
Malone London
Limited.

Moving on Together staff supported the project consistently through the process. Participants offered peer-support in an environment that aspired to create dialogue, creativity and relationship-building. The

project and practitioners encouraged the use of participants' personal objects in their portraits. Participants were supported in making decisions and selections to narrow the scope or amount of objects they wanted to use due to time and resource limitations. As well as getting on with creating their portraits they shared stories with one another; their personal objects connected them with each other and their life experiences. Personal object sharing was an activity which was a dominant part of the project. Some portraits were shot 'on location' of the participant's choice, whilst others brought in personal items including archival photos of their family tree to re-design an old album cover of Led Zeppelin's 'Physical Graffiti, 1975. The workshop space at Moving Together Partnership was turned into a photographic studio on occasions.

The final stage of the Self & Recovery project was the showcasing of seven portraits created by the participants in an exhibition at Walkergate Park Hospital. A specialist Stroke Unit and Community Rehabilitation Service is based at the hospital and most of the participants on the project have accessed the service at some point in their recovery journey. The rationale for showcasing the work at this site was to give hope to people who were acutely ill from head injury and accessing services at the hospital and to enhance their recovery journey. The opportunity to have the artworks exhibited at Walkergate Park Hospital was a very important one as it meant the project had gone full circle for participants - the hospital was a place at the start of their recovery post-stroke and then they were revisiting that space in a different way, as people living with stroke.

There were tricky and smooth parts of the project, at times it was challenging and although the group decided to work collectively, upon hindsight, perhaps 50% of the sessions should have been one to one artist support. Each participant brought a uniqueness and subjectivity to their story and their contributions were informed by and navigated their lives pre and post-stroke and of course their aspirations for the future. The way in which their conditions disrupted almost all aspects of their lives and continue to is an integral part of the learning process throughout the life of the project.

There is a complexity in working with the participants on the project as there are multiple barriers to participation. Each participant was affected differently by their condition and experience, understanding this was key, but could only be realised during the course of the project as it progressed, and it was about judging the pace of the project to suit different needs. Patience and persistence offered opportunities to develop trust, support and motivation and consistency for relationship building. It was important that the project was based mainly at the Moving on Together Partnership Centre because it provided the safest space in terms of access to building and amenities, including allocated spaces for parking which meant that each participant attended the project with limited disruptions.

The project has also created further connections with the hospital staff, such as the Occupational Therapist, and the STARR Team Activities Facilitator from the Acute Stroke Unit and Rehabilitative wards. Some of the patients on the wards attended the launch of the exhibition and as a follow up museum staff have been invited to deliver activities on the ward at Walkergate Park Hospital.

PARTICIPANT'S QUOTES:

**IT GAVE ME
SOMETHING NEW
TO FOCUS ON**

"I enjoyed being with the other clients and sharing stories."

**WHEN I HAVE
THINGS TO
GET UP FOR,
IT MAKES MY
DEPRESSION
FEEL BETTER**

"I did things I haven't done before. I never had photographs of me at the bowling alley."

**(I LIKED) BEING
ABLE TO ATTEMPT
NEW THINGS**

"I was able to sort out photos of my family collection and find out about their backgrounds of photos by researching."

WORKER'S QUOTES:

"The project has given beneficiaries the chance to engage and evolve within the activity where they are able to express themselves as individuals and also to develop a common interest to instigate discussion. The behind the scenes visit to the museum and to local art galleries has been invaluable as a point of discussion too, with many beneficiaries stating that if they hadn't attended with the group, they would not have had the confidence to attend alone".

THE WHITWORTH AND MANCHESTER MUSEUM

The Whitworth and Manchester Museum are part of the University of Manchester.

The University of Manchester was the first of the civic universities, furthering the frontiers of knowledge through research and teaching, but also contributing to the well-being of its region and wider society.

As a university, gallery and museum we have three overarching core goals:

- World-class research
- Outstanding learning and student experience
- Social Responsibility

Known as two of the five University cultural assets they both receive core funding from the University and from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), now known as Research England. Together they form part of the Strategic Partnership between Manchester City Council and the University of Manchester. The Manchester Partnership, brings together three organisations – Manchester City Galleries, the Whitworth and Manchester Museum. They receive further funding from Arts Council, England (ACE) and a range of other external funders.

THE WHITWORTH

The Whitworth was founded in 1889 and is a publicly funded gallery and charity with a collection of nearly 60,000 artworks. Hosting events and exhibitions, there is something for everyone at the gallery. Since the £15m refurbishment opened in 2015, the gallery has won awards such as the 'Winner of Visit England's Gold Prize for Large Visitor Attraction of the Year 2016' and 'Winner of the Art Fund's Museum of the Year 2015'.

The Whitworth is an art institute and park made collectively by the activity of its users and all its constituents, and this includes those that work and volunteer there. It is for people of all social classes and cultures to come and rub shoulders together and think the world anew. In working locally, we also connect internationally, with a vision to instil creativity, across borders, into all aspects of society. It is **for the perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester.**

We want **to make art useful** by promoting art as a tool for social change. We should address what is relevant in people's lives, respond to the urgencies of our times and propose solutions to the issues around us.

We will **promote Art and aesthetics for everyone.** It lies at the heart of what makes us human, so our ambition is to transform the way art is seen, not as a luxury but a means to transform and represent what is around us.

The Whitworth is an activist so we will **learn new ways of living** with attitude and a creative spirit.

We are a public space and a resource for all. We are open, and a free space to gather or offer refuge – **a house and garden for the city.**

We are **learning through doing** through exhibitions, public programmes, research and collaborations we nurture the conditions to test out creative solutions with people and for societal benefit.

hello future is the exciting, new £13 million project to transform and develop Manchester Museum, becoming more inclusive, imaginative, caring and relevant to the diverse communities they serve. Manchester Museum will become a source of inspiration for learning and an engine of civic engagement and social action. A commitment to care, not only for collections but people, ideas and relationships drives forward their civic purpose in relation to culture, health and social change.

MANCHESTER MUSEUM

Manchester Museum is home to collections of Archaeology, Anthropology and Natural History and home to up to 4.5 million artefacts. It's the UK's leading and largest University museum. It is a key source of academic teaching and research spanning a 127 year history. It serves as a major visitor attraction with over half a million people of all ages visiting every year to be inspired and learn.

Our **mission** as a university museum, is to use the international collection of human and natural history for enjoyment and inspiration, working with people from all backgrounds to provoke debate and reflection about the past, present and future of the earth and its inhabitants.

Our **vision** is that the museum is ideally placed to encourage people to engage with some of the major issues of our time:

Building understanding between cultures

One of our major challenges is the way in which ignorance and misunderstanding can lead to intolerance and conflict. We will work to increase mutual understanding between cultures today, by placing them in a rounded context, and we will promote understanding of cultures of the past by showing their richness and influence.

Developing a sustainable world

Through the collections of both natural and human-made objects, the Museum can engage people in some of the major issues facing us in terms climate change and habitat loss. It is no longer sufficient for the Museum to show the world as classified and unchanging: - we must show it as dynamic and shaped by past and contemporary forces, many of which are human-made. In doing this, we will position ourselves as one of the leading university museums in the world, known for our innovative and campaigning approach.

The Whitworth and Manchester Museum are part of the Manchester Museums and Galleries Partnership which provides creative arts for health programmes for our local community, hospital patients and staff. The Partnership works with their collections and a wide range of creative practitioners to improve people's wellbeing, the patient environment and creative learning opportunities. We develop our programmes in consultation with community health service providers, hospital staff, GPs and patients to help support improvements to the quality of care delivered by health professionals.

During the course of the research there were three main programme that looked at the wellbeing impacts of taking part and how these projects could develop peer support:

Stroke Rehabilitation & Recovery: 'Art & Culture Club'

This programme took place at Trafford General Stroke Unit over six weeks with a visual artist, musician, museum educators and curators, and included object handling and object stories.

THE INTENTION WAS TO EXPLORE THE THERAPEUTIC ASPECTS OF OBJECT HANDLING AND DISCOVER WHETHER MOOD COULD BE IMPROVED IN A HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT.

The programme also looked at how taking part in arts activities using upper limbs could improve dexterity and supported speech therapy by encouraging conversation and singing through group arts activities.

Living Well with Dementia: 'Wings & Things'

This programme took place at Trafford General on a complex discharge ward and fracture ward working with older patients, including patients with Dementia and was another six week programme with a visual artist attending once a week. Sessions used objects and art materials to explore mood and well-being, and possible decreases in agitation. Part of this programme was looking at the effects of providing calm and creative environments for those living with dementia. This programme built upon learning from our ongoing programme: 'Coffee, Cake and Culture'.

Therapeutic Activity Coordinators continue to develop and deliver these creative sessions. The Cultural First Aid Kits support them in delivering a range of person centred activities.

Mental Health & Wellbeing: 'GROW'

This programme was delivered at the Whitworth and the park. The GROW Programme was facilitated by the Whitworth's Cultural Park Keeper in partnership with horticultural specialists. It was aimed at people who access mental health services and took place over 10 weeks. The group meet weekly in the park and sometimes used gallery spaces with the aim of connecting the indoors with the outdoors and nature.

The GROW programme has been running since spring 2015 and was selected for analysis in more detail and depth as it due its relaxed setting assisting easier accessibility of participants and facilitators.

This programme is continuing and ongoing at the Whitworth today.





THE GROW PROGRAMME AT THE WHITWORTH:

GROW is a partnership programme from the Whitworth that promotes the benefits of engaging in horticultural and sustainable activities to improve individual mental wellbeing, supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Jo Malone London. The programme originally used a promotional video to reach out to people: ([link: https://bit.ly/200kcil](https://bit.ly/200kcil))

The aim of the GROW Programme was to help individuals to acquire new skills, rebuild confidence and provide opportunities to engage socially with others in a safe and culturally inspiring environment. The programme's remit was to engage with groups and their participants in the local community who were experiencing social isolation and dealing with issues around mental health such as anxiety and depression.

When a person placed an enquiry to refer onto the programme, they were asked to complete a programme registration form. Once the form had been received they were contacted within 48 hours and a site visit is arranged. During the site visit there was an informal interview where the support and care needs of the referred individual were assessed and programme goals were set. The registration was then completed and a start date confirmed. Every ten weeks participants were monitored and had an "assessment catch-up" (Personal Development Review) to review their progress and record outcomes.

DURING THIS REVIEW EACH PARTICIPANT COMPLETED THE SHORT WARWICK- EDINBURGH MENTAL WELLBEING SCALE.

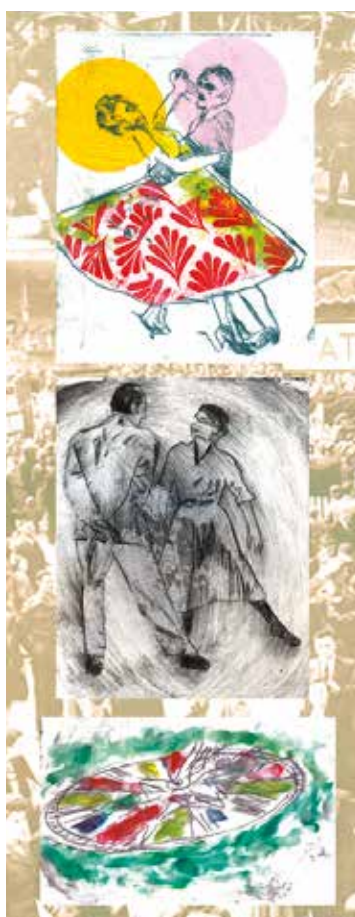
The PDR determined which pathway the participant wished to progress i.e. to further unsupported volunteering, education or employment.

Although not formally accredited, during the course of the programme we used the RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) approach to measure the progress and achievement of learners. Each participant was able to document and review their personal goals as well as celebrate their achievements. An evaluation based on the UCL Museums Wellbeing Measure was completed at the start, during the PDR and at the end of the funded period. This is something which will be taken forward in the future, based on the results of the research.



GROW PARTNERSHIP WITH JO MALONE LONDON

Jo Malone supports people who access mental health services through the cultivation and care of therapeutic gardens. Each garden is a place to recover, grow and reconnect with a community and are peaceful, safe havens for rehabilitation. In Manchester, Jo Malone London has supported the creation of The Art Garden at the Whitworth. The Art Garden is cultivated and cared for through the sale of Jo Malone London Charity Candles. The Art Garden has been created by renowned garden designer, Sarah Price, in partnership with the GROW Programme and Jo Malone London. GROW supports local people who are experiencing social isolation or having difficulties managing their mental health. Working together in the garden allows each individual to learn new horticultural skills as well creating a nurturing sense of community. Sarah's design focused on waves of texture, colour and scent which reveal themselves throughout the seasons. The planting scheme includes some of Jo Malone London's most-loved ingredients from peonies, to bluebells, sage and geranium, to create a richly scented sanctuary. Volunteers from the Jo Malone London team and retail staff from their boutiques right across the UK, also lend a hand. We continue to receive extremely positive feedback from visitors about the Art Garden and have used the space for several activities in partnership with Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and engagement with schools and education.



“

I ENJOY WORKING TOGETHER AS A TEAM. IT HAS BEEN GREAT FUN MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND HAS HELPED ME TO RELAX AND IMPROVE MY CONFIDENCE.

– GROW participant

”

“

THIS PROGRAMME IS SO SPECIAL. THE FIRST TIME I VISITED THE WHITWORTH, I WAS STRUCK BY THE CREATIVE AND WARM, OPEN ATMOSPHERE. THE WHOLE SPACE HAS A DYNAMIC ENERGY; IT REALLY IS A MEETING POINT BENEATH THE TREES; A PLACE TO PAUSE AND LINGER.

– Sarah Price

”

The programme offers visitors a chance to contemplate beauty outside as well as inside the gallery, creating a new space for artwork and offering opportunities for recreation, volunteering and events. Jo Malone London's support enables horticultural therapists to work with participants who are experiencing social isolation and wish to improve their mental wellbeing through participation in the programme. We are proud to have the support from Jo Malone London for at least a further 12 months.

Working within our beautifully designed Art Garden and Whitworth Park, participants have the opportunity to learn a variety of horticultural techniques and engage with our collections. Green spaces offer opportunities for being physically active, learning new skills and connecting with the natural environment, all of which can have positive benefits for wellbeing.

This course consisted of ten two – hour sessions delivered over consecutive weeks, every Tuesday during the growing season (March – November). During the programme, participants develop basic horticultural techniques, growing produce for themselves and discuss green issues, such as encouraging biodiversity within our parks and gardens. In each session there are talks, demonstrations and practical activities. Twenty-six participants completed the initial cohort.

In the summer, tasks included weeding the borders and helping to mow the lawn. During the autumn months they learnt about caring for the lawn and how to apply lawn feed. Participants also helped to cut back the wildflower meadow and plant over a thousand bulbs for the spring. As the garden entered into the winter months and the number of required tasks reduced, participants kept on top of collecting fallen leaves stored in order to make leaf mould for the following years. They learnt about the benefits of the leaf mould, mulching and other soil improvers. In December, they assisted in planting young trees further out into the park and when the weather was particularly bad, activities took place indoors and the group engaged in using herbs to make fragrant

pomanders, bath bags, decorative pots, and food seasonings. The last session of the year saw the group make their own miniature garden in a pot of which they could take home.

Despite the city's economic growth over the past decade, Manchester continues to suffer from significant levels of deprivation. Although major progress has been made in recent years, health outcomes for people living in Manchester still remain among the worst in England, with both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy remaining below the national average. Statistics show that there are 3,981 people in Greater Manchester in contact with mental health services for every 100,000 of the population compared to 2,176 nationally (Greater Manchester Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2016).

There is growing evidence that engaging in horticultural activities and interaction with soil and plants can improve people's physical and mental health and working in gardens can be seen as a form of rehabilitation after long or short-term illnesses.

The aim of this programme was to help individuals to acquire new skills, rebuild their confidence and to provide them with the opportunity to engage with others socially in a safe and inspiring environment. Through engagement in the outdoors, individuals acquired a deeper appreciation of nature, which positively benefited their wellbeing.

Participant outcomes – based on the Five Ways to Wellbeing:

- To gain a new form of self-confidence from learning practical horticultural skills and knowledge. (Keep Learning)
- To have the opportunity to engage with others socially in a safe environment (Connect)
- To develop an awareness of their surroundings, and experience a new sense of wellbeing through engagement with the outdoors (Take Notice)
- To have physical activity and fresh air (Be Active)
- To experience working in a team in order to provide support for each other and to help maintain a public space (Give)

Additional outcomes include:

- **Improved social skills**
 - Demonstrating an increased awareness of other people and acquiring a better ability to work co-operatively. Participants acknowledge that working as a group is a positive experience and allows them to feel accepted and supported.
- **Greater senses of self-confidence**
 - Participants record feeling a sense of achievement when they see something they have planted grow. This results in a greater feeling of self-worth and confidence.
- **Increase in motivation and concentration**
 - Learning new practical skills is an enjoyable experience and develops an enthusiasm to participate in exploratory learning.
- **Physical skills**
 - Participants develop physical stamina and fine motor skills by engaging in horticultural activities and craft making.
- **Knowledge and understanding**
 - Increased knowledge, interest and respect for the participant's natural surroundings and the collections in the park. Horticultural interventions in the community encourage ownership, pride and an improved relationship with the local environment and a better understanding of nature and the environment.

GROW Case Study: Participant A

Participant A made a self-referral onto the programme as he was interested in gardening. He lives in supported housing but has no access to a garden. At the start of the course he was quiet although not withdrawn. Participant A has health issues, which affect his mobility and require him to undertake tasks slowly. Since Participant A joined the programme in August 2017, he has only missed

one session. At first he appeared to lack confidence, asking for reassurance that he was doing each task correctly. As time has gone on, his confidence has definitely grown and he has thoroughly enjoyed getting involved in all of the tasks and has particularly enjoyed the activities where he has been able to create his own container garden to take home, especially as he does not have his own personal outdoor space to grow things. The sessions have helped him to create some structure in his personal life,

giving him a focus to attend weekly sessions at a constructed time, where usually he would have just stayed at home in his flat.

Participant A does not yet feel ready to move onto volunteering unsupported and we would agree that due to his current state of health and mobility issues, it would be best for him to attend the supported sessions and so he is keen to return the programme when we resume the maintenance sessions in Spring 2018.



I HAVE REALLY ENJOYED COMING TO THE SESSIONS HERE AT THE GALLERY, IT REALLY IS A NICE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE ARE SO FRIENDLY. I HAVE A ROUTINE NOW WHERE I COME AND SIT IN THE GARDEN BEFORE THE SESSIONS START AND JUST TAKE IT ALL IN. I'VE LEARNT HOW TO GROW THINGS AND BEING OUTSIDE SEEMS TO MAKE ME FEEL MUCH BETTER.



GROW Outreach and the future

As part of the GROW programme we have also delivered outreach sessions in various communities and for external organisations such as Justlife in Openshaw, Inspire Community Centre in Levenshulme and most recently for the Maggie Centre in Didsbury. These sessions have not only allowed us to increase the reach of our engagement and to work with groups and individuals where transport is a barrier to participation, but it has also created opportunities for GROW participants to share their skills and knowledge, whilst helping others create safe spaces to improve their wellbeing.

The programme was originally aimed at individuals who were experiencing social isolation, vulnerable, living with disabilities or dealing with issues around their mental health, such as stress, anxiety or depression.

During the next funded period we are particularly keen to engage with the following priority groups:

- Ex-service personnel suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Individuals on a break from employment due to stress related issues
- Refugee and Asylum Seeker groups

The devolution of health and social care in Greater Manchester will see the city working towards a 'person and community-centred approach, placing people and communities at the heart of their health and wellbeing'. As Manchester moves towards a model that sees people taking more control over their own health, there is a need for more services and projects like GROW within the voluntary and community sector. The hope for the future is that GROW will become recognised by commissioners and agencies as

a socially prescriptive programme that can be rolled out across several wards within the city.

Going forward, the format and frequency of the sessions has changed. From mid-summer, the GROW programme ceased to run in ten-week cohorts and became a rolling programme, which falls into line with the gardening season from March until November. Participants have expressed that this continuity suits them better but we also recognise that this allows us to reduce referral waiting times and expect to see a significant increase in participant numbers in 2018. We have already identified new agencies to work with in order to recruit new participants.

The change in format will also now see all new GROW participants and additional external volunteers working together more closely to care for the garden and park.



NOT SO GRIM UP NORTH: RESEARCH REPORT

Overview

Not So Grim Up North (Oct15 - Feb18) was a research collaboration between UCL and museum partners: The Whitworth, Manchester Museum, and Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM). Other partners included the NHS and third sector organisations in Greater Manchester and Tyne and Wear.

Generally speaking it can be difficult to measure the impact of cultural and creative activities, particularly in a project such as this which includes different groups of participants, across different sites. In healthcare and medical settings, professionals use randomised control trials which can be problematic to reproduce in an arts or creative setting due to the issue of identifying adequate control groups. Our approach was to develop a range of different methodologies and approaches to understand the impact of museum activities on participants' health and wellbeing. The aim of the project

was to investigate the health and wellbeing impacts of museum and gallery activities for three groups: people living with dementia, stroke survivors and mental health service-users. The research used a mixed-methods approach that developed fit-for-purpose methodologies for each museum setting to assess health and wellbeing across different contexts. This included co-creating a new observational tool (video) with healthcare partners, quantitative measures, and interviews or informal discussions with participants asking them to reflect on their perceptions of the impact of activities.

The study explored participants' own perceptions of their health and wellbeing through qualitative methods, and whether museum-based activities had a measurable and clinical impact on their health and wellbeing. Some participants were also followed up with either three or 6 months later.

Research team members

UCL: Prof. Helen Chatterjee (Principal Investigator); Dr Linda Thomson (Senior Research Associate); Dr Nuala Morse (Research Associate), The Whitworth/Manchester Museum, The University of Manchester: Wendy Gallagher (Arts for Health Partnership Manager), Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM): Zoë Brown (Outreach Officer)

Research approval

The study was approved by the Health Research Authority (IRAS ID 199643) and the study sponsor University College London.

Research funding

ACE Research Grants Programme (Grant number: 29250851).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

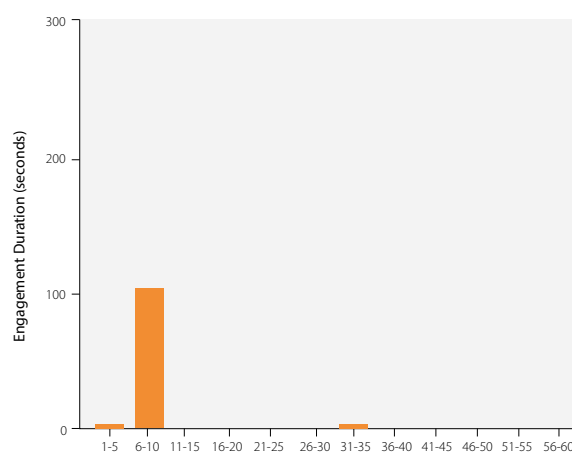
The findings are presented for each of the different health audiences:

Dementia

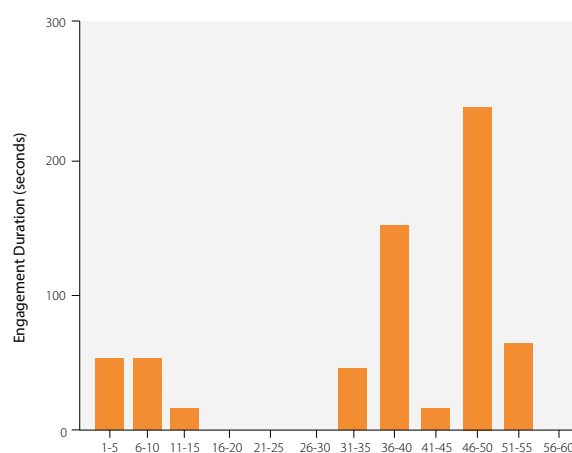
Providing activity-based care is increasingly seen as a central aspect of care for people with cognitive impairments, including dementia. At the study site of Castleside Inpatient Dementia Service, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK activities were delivered by TWAM staff utilising the museum's object handling collection, predominantly social history objects from 1950s-70s.

The study sought to examine the impact of object handling sessions within a dementia-specialist hospital context and assess the effects of engagement for people with moderate-to-severe dementia in relation to mood, social interaction (resident-to-resident and resident-to-care staff) and patient agitation. A new coding protocol 'The Museum Engagement Observation Tool' (Morse & Chatterjee, 2018) was developed to evidence these effects.

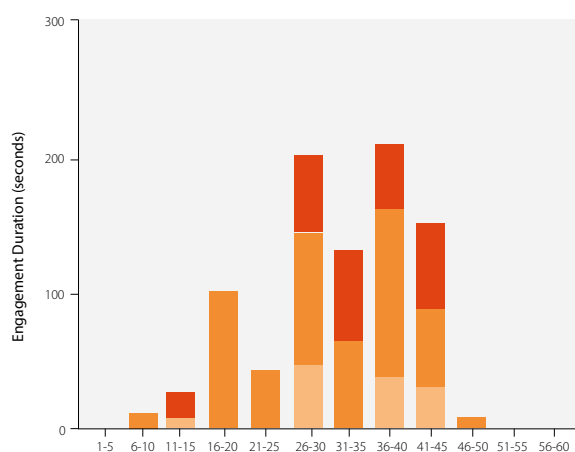
Eleven sessions were video-recorded in the Dementia Unit day room. Continuous observations were taken every minute from seven participants. The study describes the different levels of engagement within a museum object handling session which were associated with positive mood (Figure 1). Figure 1 shows the engagement of one participant across three different sessions (session 3, 4 and 6). We can see progress in terms of the level of engagement with museum objects and the time spent engaging with objects as the weeks progressed. The study also highlights the importance of one-to-one facilitation in these settings in supporting patient engagement. Overall, the study adds support to the value of museum object handling for activity-based dementia care as part of a non-pharmacological intervention.



Session 3 (5 minute intervals)



Session 4 (5 minute intervals)



Session 6 (5 minute intervals)

- Negative engagement with objects
- Responds to prompts only
- Visual engagement with objects
- Explores objects (not engaged in conversation)
- Explores objects and engages in conversation

Mental Health

The Whitworth uses its outdoor spaces for health and wellbeing projects. The research looked at the impact of taking part in a 'green museum' project on participant wellbeing. *Grow: Art, Park & Wellbeing* is a 10-week programme employing therapeutic horticultural- and arts-based activities inspired by nature using The Whitworth's indoor and outdoor spaces.

Sessions were evaluated for 16 participants at the programme start, middle and end. Wellbeing Quantitative measures included the Positive Wellbeing Umbrella from the UCL Museum Measures Toolkit (Thomson & Chatterjee, 2014; 2015) to assess psychological wellbeing, the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEBWMS: Stewart-Brown et al. 2009), and a life satisfaction questionnaire.

Participants, facilitators and researchers kept weekly diaries with guidelines questions to record their experience of the museum activities. Participants and staff were interviewed at programme-end, and a sample of participants were interviewed by telephone at 3- and 6-month follow-ups.

Participants reported that sessions had a positive impact on their self-esteem, confidence, and their sense of subjective wellbeing. This increase in participant confidence over the weeks was also reported by facilitators. The sessions provided a positive distraction away from ruminating thoughts.

“

THE EMOTIONAL SIDE AND THE MENTAL SIDE, UNCONSCIOUSLY IT HAS HELPED. IT HAS HELPED [...] SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS GETTING YOUR HANDS DIRTY, DOING A DRAWING, CREATIVE WRITING: MY MIND WAS SWITCHED ONTO SOMETHING POSITIVE RATHER THAN SOMETHING NASTY NEGATIVE.

– GROW Participant

”

None of the participants in the first group of this project had ever visited the gallery or taken part in any of its programmes. By the end, two of these participants expressed an interest to register to volunteer unsupported as an Art Gardener.

Participants highlighted how sessions enabled them to learn something new and meet new people. In particular, they emphasised the importance of feeling supported in a group setting, and being in a safe space without judgment. An important effect of GROW was to provide participants with a structure and routine, giving them motivation to leave the house. These factors were of key importance for the many socially isolated and long-term unemployed participants.

Effects on motivation levels seemed to have a far-reaching impact as follow-on interviews indicated that several participants made positive personal changes that they attributed to taking part in the programme, such as getting back in touch with friends and family, moving to a different area outside of the city to reconnect with nature, or taking up a volunteer role in the museum. The findings build on a preliminary study that showed that creative museum sessions improved confidence, sociability and well-being in mental health and addiction recovery services users in Tyne & Wear (Morse et al. 2015).



Stroke

The project 'Self and Recovery' was developed in partnership between TWAM and *Momentum Skills – Moving on Together Partnership*, a local third sector organisation providing support to adults with acquired brain injury and stroke survivors. The project ran over a 14-week period, with weekly (sometimes two-weekly) sessions. Participants (n=8 and one carer) attended 13 weekly (occasionally fortnightly) two-hour sessions that alternated between the partner's community centre and the museums. The project aimed to explore sense of identity by using personal objects to tell personal stories of recovery.

The first part of the project explored the museum's handling collections to explore questions such as: why do museums collect objects? What do they collect? What stories do these objects tell? The group also visited the Discovery Museum and the Laing Art Gallery. For the second half of the project, participants used personal objects to tell their stories around recovery working alongside a photographer to develop their own photography portraits. Participants and staff were interviewed at programme-end and sessions were quantitatively evaluated pre- and post-session using the Positive and Negative Wellbeing Umbrellas (Thomson & Chatterjee, 2014; 2015).

Quantitative analysis showed some increase in positive mood and significant decreases in negative mood (although the small numbers mean that these results should be interpreted with caution). Thematic analysis of interviews showed that stroke and brain injury had a specific negative impact on wellbeing that included isolation, loneliness, worry, anger and loss of confidence, linked to wider factors such as a greater dependence on others and lack of mobility.

As described in the wider literature, the experience of stroke can impact on individual's subjective wellbeing, related to the extent to which physical impairments affect social roles or aspects of the self that constitute important components of an individual's identity (Clarke, 2019).

Considering this group may have had very low mood related to these difficulties, it is significant that in our study these negative feelings decreased during the sessions. Group support was highlighted as a key aspect of the programme and as supporting recovery and wellbeing. Museum-based activities therefore play an important role in fostering social connection. Participants spoke of recovering their sense of self and personhood through discovering or re-discovering their creative abilities and interests during the sessions.

Participants also described how the sessions built their confidence from which they drew strength to take on a more proactive and positive outlook, and the energy to 'move forwards' or 'push themselves further'. The study indicates the potential role of creative museum-based activities in supporting stroke survivors and people with acquired brain injury.

Participants described how their mood improved by taking part in sessions. They highlighted their learning experiences that they connected strongly to their enjoyment of the sessions. Overall, the programme supported meaningful participation with cultural and creative activities enhancing self-esteem and positive mood, and adding further support to the role of museum activities in maintaining and enhancing psycho-social wellbeing, in a similar way to the results from the GROW programme.

Stroke Art hospital sessions

As part of the research, object-based handling activities and creative arts activities from the Stroke Art programme delivered by The Whitworth and Manchester Museum, were video-recorded. The next phase of work will focus on exploring the potential of museum-based activities for supporting rehabilitation in hospital settings, in terms of patient wellbeing and physical upper-limb function through analysis of these videos.

Findings from the research and further detail on the methodologies developed will be made available through the UCL Life Learning online course 'Museums as Spaces for Wellbeing':

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lifelearning/courses/museums-wellbeing>



Publications in preparation

Heritage/object-handling for dementia care: Exploring the wellbeing impact of museum-focused activities for hospital patients with dementia.

GROW: assessing the impact of an art gallery-based horticultural and creative arts project on health and wellbeing for mental-health service users.

Self and recovering: The meaning and value of taking part in a museum project for people with acquired brain injury and stroke survivors: Findings from a mixed-methods study.

Findings from the research and further detail on the methodologies developed will be made available through the National Alliance for Culture Health and Wellbeing training MOOC (Massive Open Online Course).



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Awards

**LONG-LISTED
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AWARD 2016.**

S U M M A R Y

The research set out to develop robust and fit-for-purpose methodologies to capture the health and wellbeing benefits of a range of different museum programme. Different approaches were developed in each of the different settings and included mixed-methods to capture both quantitative measure of wellbeing and people's own experiences to gain a more nuanced understanding of this impact. Taken together, they present a framework for museums in health research that can be reproduced and adapted for future research and evaluation.

The research findings demonstrate the benefits of the projects for participants in terms of the psychosocial impact of participating in museum programmes. This adds to the evidence base around the powerful contribution that engaging with museums and collections can make to health and wellbeing, including enjoyment, enabling self-expression, supporting self-esteem and overcoming isolation.

The research also points to new areas that require further investigation, such as the potential of museum object handling sessions in physical rehabilitation in clinical settings; the role of museum objects and activities in stroke recovery; and the integration of museum activities as part of cognitive stimulation therapy for people living with dementia.

The research and the museum practice in both Manchester and the North East demonstrate the significant roles that museums can play across the life-course and providing support for individuals with a range of health conditions or mental health issues. This report shares best practice in terms of developing these programmes from the perspectives of museum professionals. Such programmes and activities require a long-term commitment and a collaborative approach, including the involvement of patients/clients and health professionals in the development and design of programmes.

The current situation in health and social care requires new approaches and museums and art galleries have a potential role to play in the future landscapes of social prescribing and care in the community. Much of this work is developing through museum professionals sharing practice and creating communities of practice, supported by organisations such as the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance. We hope this research report offers both practical directions and inspiration in terms of programmes design and evaluation.



Image reference:
GROW project volunteer,
Andrew Sawyer Photography,
courtesy of Jo Malone
London Limited.



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