

# Arts and Creativity in Promoting Health & Wellbeing



Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Cardiff & Vale Health Charity recognises the benefits of the arts in Health and Wellbeing, and its positive therapeutic impact on individuals. A commitment to creativity reflects our increasing belief that art, speaking in its own aesthetic language, aids the healing process. **We aim to:**

- Use the arts to soften and humanise the hospital and clinical environment;
- Create and commission contemplative artworks to enhance psychological wellbeing;
  - Use visual art as an aid to way finding within the hospital;
- Build links and relationships with the local community to engender an increase in trust, affection and ownership of the hospital;
  - Install art that creates a dialogue between the observer and architecture;
- Work with artists to stimulate, engage, distract, inspire and reassure patients, staff and visitors on their journey through the hospital;
- Use art therapeutically so that users of the hospital are able to express their concerns and communicate with a wider audience;
- Commission artists to reflect and/or to advocate on behalf of patients.

## Long Term



The environments in which we live and work have a profound influence on our physical and psychological wellbeing. Research has repeatedly confirmed that a supportive and welcoming environment can have positive effects both on those who visit hospitals, whether as patients or carers and those who work in them (Ulrich 2001). But hospital environments are not always designed with these principles in mind, we plan in the long term to address this further in capital builds, refurbishments and through the arts strategy.

## Prevention



Through the different phases of the art strategy programme and utilising more evidence based outcomes, we envisage a direct economic impact on service costs. These can include: reduced falls; reduced length of stay; reduced incidents of challenging behaviour among service users; increased carer involvement; improvements in staff retention and recruitment; sickness and absence; increased productivity and reduced waste by using spaces more effectively; improved opportunity to continue activities of daily living; increasing the chance of patients returning home following an acute episode of care; and closer links being formed with local communities.

## Integration



The Arts in Health and Wellbeing movement in Cardiff and Vale UHB dove tails with 'Arts in Health and Wellbeing: An Action Plan for Wales' (Arts Council of Wales/ WAG 2009). This strategic document is a dual sign up by both Ministers of 'Health and Social Care' and 'Heritage and Culture'. It endorses the benefits that engagement in the arts can bring positive outcomes to the treatment, care, and cultural heritage of our regions. It is an Action Plan which, combined with a second publication, 'The Art of Good Health' (2010), is intended to increase understanding of the role of the arts in health and wellbeing, and support the development of arts and health initiatives through information and guidance.

## Collaboration



Major new art in health and wellbeing projects are developing within the Health Board, alongside this we will expand the scope of the exhibitions shown in the gallery. To achieve this, we have invited a number of organisations, companies and charities to partner with us to support the gallery as a venue for future creative events. Also, we invited expressions of interest and proposals to exhibit either existing collections of multi-discipline artworks, or to sponsor new commissions and projects which might focus on elements of health and wellbeing across our demographic- for example, the wellbeing of future generations, promoting wellness in older age or a focus on cultural, social and heritage themes.

## Involvement



Our arts projects have been designed, planned and produced with involvement from patients, visitors, carers, staff and numerous artists and organisations. We are committed to an inclusive, 'open to all' ethos. Involvement of our hospital community together with opportunities for those working in the creative arts has generated interest within the hospital and beyond.

**We welcome feedback and suggestions and would encourage more patients, staff and visitors to be involved in creative projects.**

**Please contact us to discuss future collaborations and projects:**

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HEARTH GALLERY

**paintings** in hospitals

