



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP-2017-0168, 6 October 2017

Effect of the arts on health

Westminster Hall, Wednesday 11 October 2017, 4.30pm

A Westminster Hall debate on the Effect of the arts on health is scheduled for Wednesday 11 October 2017 at 4.30pm. The Member leading the debate is Edward Vaizey MP.

In addition to the debate in Westminster Hall, this will be a 'Digital Debate'. Information about this can be found [here](#) on the Parliament website. The Facebook event can be found [here](#).

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Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Media	4
2.1	Press releases	4
2.2	Articles and blogs	5
3.	Parliamentary Questions	6
4.	Organisations and further reading	8

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Introduction

The [All-Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) on Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#) was formed in January 2014 with the aim of improving “awareness of the benefits that the arts can bring to health and wellbeing, and to stimulate progress towards making these benefits a reality all across the country”.¹

In November 2015, the APPG launched an inquiry looking at the existing engagement of the arts in health and social care.² The [report](#) was published in July 2017. This found that the arts can:

- help keep us well, aid our recovery and support longer lives better lived
- help meet major challenges facing health and social care: ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health
- help save money in the health service and social care³

However it said that the UK was “still very far from realising more than a small modicum of the potential contribution of the arts to health and wellbeing.” According to the report, the UK lagged behind Australia, Cuba and the Nordic countries.

The report made ten specific recommendations:

- 1) We recommend that leaders from within the arts, health and social care sectors, together with service users and academics, establish a strategic centre, at national level, to support the advance of good practice, promote collaboration, coordinate and disseminate research and inform policy and delivery. We appeal to philanthropic funders to support this endeavour. We hope that the centre will also have the support of Arts Council England, NHS England and Public Health England as well as the Local Government Association and other representative bodies.
- 2) We recommend that the Secretaries of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Health, Education and Communities and Local Government develop and lead a cross-governmental strategy to support the delivery of health and wellbeing through the arts and culture.
- 3) We recommend that, at board or strategic level, in NHS England, Public Health England and each clinical commissioning group, NHS trust, local authority and health and wellbeing board, an individual is designated to take responsibility for the pursuit of institutional policy for arts, health and wellbeing.
- 4) We recommend that those responsible for NHS New Models of Care and Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships ensure that arts and cultural organisations are involved in the delivery of health and wellbeing at regional and local level.

¹ All Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health and Wellbeing, [Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing](#), July 2017, p4

² All Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health and Wellbeing, [Arts, Health and Wellbeing Inquiry](#), November 2015

³ [Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing](#), p4

- 5) We recommend that Arts Council England supports arts and cultural organisations in making health and wellbeing outcomes integral to their work and identifies health and wellbeing as a priority in its 10-year strategy for 2020–2030.
- 6) We recommend that NHS England and the Social Prescribing Network support clinical commissioning groups, NHS provider trusts and local authorities to incorporate arts on prescription into their commissioning plans and to redesign care pathways where appropriate.
- 7) We recommend that Healthwatch, the Patients Association and other representative organisations, along with arts and cultural providers, work with patients and service users to advocate the health and wellbeing benefits of arts engagement to health and social care professionals and the wider public.
- 8) We recommend that the education of clinicians, public health specialists and other health and care professionals includes accredited modules on the evidence base and practical use of the arts for health and wellbeing outcomes. We also recommend that arts education institutions initiate undergraduate and postgraduate courses and professional development modules dedicated to the contribution of the arts to health and wellbeing.
- 9) We recommend that Research Councils UK and individual research councils consider an interdisciplinary, cross-council research funding initiative in the area of participatory arts, health and wellbeing, and that other research-funding bodies express willingness to contribute resources to advancement of the arts, health and wellbeing evidence base. We recommend that commissioners of large-scale, long-term health surveys include questions about the impacts of arts engagement on health and wellbeing.
- 10) We recommend that the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence regularly examines evidence as to the efficacy of the arts in benefiting health, and, where the evidence justifies it, includes in its guidance the use of the arts in healthcare.⁴

Further material, including a [short version](#) of the July 2017 report, is available [online](#).

The Arts Council England [website](#) contains news, blogs and case studies on the arts and well-being.

⁴ Ibid, p154-6

2. Media

2.1 Press releases

National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing

[Arts Council England announce sector support organisation status for new Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance](#)

Undated (2017)

The National Alliance for Museums, Health and Wellbeing and the National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing are pleased to announce that from April 2018 we will be merging to become a new Sector Support Organisation, the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance (CHWA). Funded by Arts Council England as part of the National Portfolio Fund 2018-2022, the new organisation will be led by Arts & Health South West.

[Arts Council 'health' press releases](#)

Some of the most recent include:

Arts Council

[African contemporary dance increases awareness of addiction](#)

21 July 2017

Arts Council

[Sharing joy with people living with dementia](#)

19 January 2017

Arts Council

[Art brings to life the impact of childhood brain injury](#)

17 January 2017

Independent Age

[Comment on the APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing report on creative health](#)

19 July 2017

Royal Society for Public Health

[RSPH applauds championing of the arts for health and wellbeing in new parliamentary report](#)

19 July 2017

2.2 Articles and blogs

LocalGov.co.uk

[New guide encourages cooperation between arts and health sector](#)

4 October 2017

Evening Standard

[Can graphic design save your life? exhibition review: images and icons that have the power to heal](#)

6 September 2017

Guardian

[Arts can help recovery from illness and keep people well, report says](#)

19 July 2017

Telegraph

[Prescribe poetry to patients to reduce burden on NHS, GPs advised](#)

19 July 2017

Guardian

[Art can be a powerful medicine against dementia](#)

16 July 2017

Guardian

['Creativity improves wellbeing': art transforms mental health ward](#)

15 February 2017

Telegraph

[Admiring great art 'is good for your health', Italian experiment finds](#)

22 April 2016

3. Parliamentary Questions

[Health Services: Arts](#)

Asked by: Chris Ruane

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the use of art-based activities in preventing and curing (a) physical and (b) mental ill health.

Answered by: John Glen | Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

We believe that arts-based activity can have a significant role in improving health and wellbeing of citizens.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has previously commissioned research to develop the evidence base on the social and wellbeing impacts of cultural engagement, including on mental health conditions such as clinical depression. Research commissioned from the London School of Economics published in 2015 showed that people who engaged in the arts as an audience member were 5.4% more likely to report good health than non-participants.

11 September 2017 | Written question | 6839

[School Curriculum: Creative Subjects](#)

Asked by: Baroness Massey of Darwen

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recent findings of the Girls' Day School Trust survey on the impact of creative subjects in the school curriculum on pupils' stress levels.

Answered by: Baroness Evans of Bowes Park | Leader of the House of Lords

The department has seen the preliminary findings of the survey. We believe that every child should experience a high-quality creative education at school. Participation in creative activities helps prepare children for adult life by building confidence, perseverance and the ability to co-operate with others.

HL Deb 14 July 2016 c323

[School Curriculum: Creative Subjects](#)

Asked by: Baroness Massey of Darwen

I thank the Minister for that positive reply. Is she aware of research indicating that creative activities such as art and music benefit well-being, particularly after trauma and stress? Why are creative subjects in schools not therefore given more status, not only for their own sake but to increase pupil knowledge and self-confidence and to decrease stress, as the report suggests?

Answered by: Baroness Evans of Bowes Park | Leader of the House of Lords

I am aware of the research. We certainly believe that every child should experience a high-quality creative education throughout their time at school. That is why we have invested over £460 million in a range of music and arts education programmes designed to improve access for all young people, no matter their background. Of course, schools themselves are leading the way. For instance, Archibald Primary School in Middlesbrough is a local hub for the Royal Shakespeare Company, and this partnership has enabled its children to visit and perform in Stratford.

HL Deb 14 July 2016 c323

[Arts: Mental Health](#)

Asked by: Chi Onwurah

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential of the arts to contribute to mental well-being for people with mental illness; and what programmes his Department has in place to help deliver that contribution.

Answered by: Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Research commissioned by DCMS has found positive associations between participation in arts and health, including mental health. The research can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416279/A_review_of_the_Social_Impacts_of_Culture_and_Sport.pdf

Arts Council England funds a number of organisations on behalf of the Government that support people with mental health issues.

16 March 2016 | Written question | 30741

4. Organisations and further reading

Parliament

[All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#)

APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, [Creative health: the arts for health and wellbeing Inquiry](#)

Links to report, short report, podcasts, videos and policy briefings

APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, [Creative health: the arts for health and wellbeing: Inquiry report](#), July 2017

Government

Public Health England, [Arts for health and wellbeing: an evaluation framework](#), 4 February 2016

Others

- 1 Arts Council, [Wellbeing through arts and culture](#)
- 2 [Arts and Health](#)
An international journal for research, policy and practice
- 3 [Arts and Health South West](#)
- 4 [Culture, Health and Wellbeing international conference and exchange](#)
- 5 [London Arts in Health Forum](#)
- 6 [National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#)
- 7 National Council for Voluntary Organisations and Association of Directors of Public Health, [The art of the possible: a quick guide to commissioning arts and cultural providers for better health and wellbeing](#), August 2017
- 8 Royal Society for Public Health, [Arts, Health and Wellbeing Special Interest Group](#)
- 9 University of Bristol; Elizabeth Blackwell Institute for Health Research, [The arts in healthcare: the human touch?](#)
Describes research at Bristol University supported by the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute

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