



Inquiry Meeting 2
31st October 4-6pm
House of Lords Committee Room 1

Chair:

Lord Howarth of Newport
Baroness Andrews
Lord Berkeley
Lord Bichard
Lord Collins of Highbury
Baroness Hollins
Neil Coyle MP
Baroness Masham
Baroness Morris of Yardley
Baroness Neuberger
Lord Ramsbotham
Rt Hon Ed Vaizey MP
Baroness Young of Hornsey

Key Witnesses:

Gilly Angell, Expert Patient
Professor Paul Camic, Canterbury Christ Church University
Nikki Crane, Head of Arts Strategy, Guy's and St Thomas' Charity
Dr Caroline Ellis-Hill, Bournemouth University
Lily Makurah, Deputy National Lead, Mental health and Wellbeing PHE
Eva Okwonga, Peer Support Advisory Board Member for Mind and Music Workshop Leader at Music In Mind
Dr Cliff Richards, Chair of Halton CCG
Suzu Willson, Artistic Director Clod Ensemble

Synopsis of Chapter Six: Working Age Adulthood

This chapter looks at ways in which the arts can positively influence the health and wellbeing of working-age adults. It begins with a consideration of the NHS as the UK's largest employer and the ways in which engagement in the arts – as both participant and spectator – has been found to alleviate work stress. It then moves to consider several examples of the arts finding their way into healthcare environments, from design to decoration.

A portion of this chapter is dedicated to evidence suggesting an association between arts engagement and recovery from illnesses such as cancer and stroke. This gives way to a substantial section exploring the role of the arts in alleviating depression, anxiety and stress. This coincides with increasing recognition within health and social care of the psychosocial causes of illness and a burgeoning movement advocating social prescribing (the take-up of non-medical activities in a given locale). Substantial consideration is given to the arts being offered in community locations, including cultural venues, with Arts and Minds in Cambridgeshire being offered as a case study. Discussion of arts on prescription is accompanied by evidence of reduced demand on mental health services implying a significant social return on investment.

A case study is provided of The Reader, which encourages shared reading of poems, short stories and novels within groups in England and Wales. Attention is then turned to the subjects of two dedicated roundtable discussions hosted as part of the Inquiry – the arts, health and wellbeing in criminal justice settings and the arts in mitigating post-traumatic stress. The first of these sections will benefit from a meeting on 8 November, which is expected to give rise to additional practice examples and recommendations. The second of these sections contains a case study of Combat Stress, the UK's leading veterans' mental health charity, which has offered access to arts therapy since 2001. This chapter concludes with a consideration of the arts in the education of health and social care professionals and of health as a route to professional development for artists.

Questions for discussion:

- Are there any obvious gaps in the content or argument?
- Should there be other practice examples mentioned in the text?
- Are the recommendations adequately supported by the argument in the text?
- Are the recommendations the right ones and to the right people?