Unfolding Arts in Health

Belfast Trust Arts in Health Strategy 2013 - 2015

THE ARTS IS AT THE HEART OF OUR STRATEGY...
Foreword

We are delighted to introduce Unfolding Arts in Health, our strategy for promoting better health and wellbeing through access to the arts, for all who come into contact with Belfast Trust. There is growing evidence that shows the benefits of the arts in health and social care, improving the overall quality and experience of care for users and carers and improving outcomes. This is why, despite continuing economic and financial pressures on our services, embedding the arts in health and social care is more important than ever and why the publication of this strategy is so timely.

There is an impressive history of the use of the arts within the health and social care system in Northern Ireland and within the organisations that made up the Belfast Trust, both performance and environmental arts, much of it championed by enthusiastic and committed staff. It is now time to ensure that we provide support for all our staff who wish to use the arts within the health and social care environment for the benefit of service users, carers, visitors, local communities and the staff themselves, so that we can all reap the benefits. For the Belfast Trust, the expertise and involvement of Arts Care NI, who have for many years provided vital support for the arts in health and social care, has been invaluable, and the partnership between our organisations for the development of this strategy has been mutually beneficial. We would also like to recognize the contribution of the Artists-in-Residence, who have played a crucial role throughout the process. We look forward to working closely with them as we implement this strategy.

We are also grateful to the Public Health Agency for their support in launching this strategy and to the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Arts Care NI for their ongoing support for this work. We also wish to recognize the joint commitment of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Arts Care NI to deliver this strategy and to work together to ensure that it is implemented effectively.

Why the Arts in Healthcare?

It is increasingly recognized that the Arts have a vital role to play within healthcare and contribute to enhancing the overall quality and experience of healthcare services (US Society for the Arts in Healthcare 2009). The arts have been used in a wide range of health and social care settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, day care centres, hospices and within community services. A variety of arts activities have been integrated into many programmes of care to assist with the challenges presented by conditions such as mental illness, chronic disease, dementia, brain injury, physical disability and learning disability, with the aim of improving health outcomes and quality of life. There is now an emerging body of evidence on the benefits of arts in health, including economic benefits resulting from shorter hospital stays, less medication, fewer complications, staff retention, less stress-related illness and better quality of care.

The arts have contributed to enhancing the health and wellbeing of service users, staff and visitors within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and other Trust areas since 1989 through the successful delivery of innovative arts projects and programmes. The positive impact and benefits derived from the engagement of the arts with healthcare has transformed clinical environments throughout the Trust area and enabled people to transform their lives.

The Arts in Health Strategy is intended to increase understanding of the role of the arts within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Services and to strategically support further development of arts in health initiatives within a local and wider international context.
There is a growing body of local and international evidence which demonstrates the positive impact and the effectiveness of the arts in healthcare (Staricoff 2006). Reported benefits of the arts and creativity in healthcare include:

- Enhancement of health and social care environments to make clinical spaces less intimidating for service users and the general public and to assist in signposting and finding one’s way through facilities
- Increased opportunity for healthcare staff and service users to learn creative skills which improve the quality of healthcare experience and develop professional practice
- Reduced stress behaviours in babies and young children in hospital
- Assistance with symptoms and pain of treatment in children with cancer
- Improvement in depression and fatigue levels in service users on chemotherapy
- Enhanced satisfaction and improved levels of social interaction and psychomotor functioning in adults with neurological disorders including Parkinson’s disease and enduring traumatic brain injury
- Life-long learning opportunities through creative training, education and skill-building
- Enhanced relationships between health professionals and service users
- Improved levels of motivation and morale in staff and service users
- Increased social interaction particularly within Older People’s Services
- Enhanced overall mental, physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of service users and staff
- Increased self confidence and self esteem
- Access to creatively enhanced external healthcare spaces and gardens reduces anxiety, length of hospital stay and increases service user and family satisfaction with overall quality of care.

Evidence: What are the Benefits of the Arts in Healthcare?
Creating an Arts-based Arts in Health Strategy for Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

The strategy was developed through an arts-based experiential model of strategic visioning, analysis and project development developed by Dr Jenny Elliott as part of her doctoral research (Elliott 2008, 2012). The process engaged with the personal and collective creativity of healthcare staff, service users and the public. The creative process was central to strategy development at all stages.

The Strategy Development Framework: Four Processes

1. A Strategy Steering Group to guide the development of the strategy (see appendix 1)
2. Two arts-based exploratory workshops for Belfast Trust Staff, artists and partners
3. Arts-based workshops for service user groups and questionnaires for general public feedback
4. Analysis of arts-based data and questionnaires and development of strategy framework

The two arts-based workshops were held in February and June 2012 using the personal and collective creativity of workshop participants to explore what should be included in an arts health strategy for the Belfast Trust. The Arts Care Artists-in-Residence facilitated the workshops which included healthcare staff and representatives of partner organisations, engaging in reflective movement, silk painting, music, cartoon documentation, painting, printing and collage.

Initial ideas recorded from the first workshop were used to engage with a range of user groups such as people with learning disabilities, mental illness, physical disabilities and community groups. In addition, visitors to our hospitals were asked their views on the impact of the arts which they observed in the hospital environment. This was used to further develop the themes for exploration and agreement at the second arts-based workshop with healthcare staff and arts partners.

Final analysis and refinement of all the creative data were fed back to the steering group and formed this first ever Belfast Trust Arts in Health Strategy. The uniqueness of this strategy is that the process, visioning and content have been developed from participant creativity which has included contributions from the Chief Executive, Chairperson and members of Trust Board, healthcare staff, service users, artists, partners and visitors.
Definition of ‘Arts and Health’: What does it mean?

Belfast Trust in developing the arts strategy defines “Arts in Health” as arts-based activities that aim to improve individual and community wellbeing, enhance the healthcare environment and contribute to the quality of healthcare delivery across all services and facilities.

Some of the art forms that have been facilitated are:

• Music
• Visual
• Dance
• Drama
• Photography/Film-making
• Clowing
How are the Arts delivered?

Arts and Environment Project, The Royal Hospitals
The Arts and Environment Project was established in 1989 and has developed into an active and vibrant art project with the aim of improving the quality of the physical healthcare environment and enriching the experience of hospital users, through the arts. This is achieved through the purchase and commissioning of artworks, workshops for patients and staff, and collaborative projects with external organisations. The project is managed by an Arts Co-ordinator and supported by an advisory committee with wide-ranging interests.

Arts Care
Arts Care was established in 1991 by the Department of Health and Social Services, to make all forms of art accessible to service users and staff in health and social care throughout Northern Ireland. In partnership with Belfast Trust, Arts Care engages a team of Artists-in-Residence, Clown Doctors and project artists across the Trust area. All of these artists facilitate and co-ordinate participatory workshops, performances and site-specific commissions across all service areas. Five local committees manage the Arts Care Programmes within Belfast Trust, working closely with Arts Care NI. The committees comprise members of clinical, managerial, administrative and estate services as well as service user and local arts officer representation.

Art and Music Therapy
The arts psychotherapies are well established in a variety of healthcare, community and special educational settings in the UK and are fully recognised treatment approaches at governmental level. Art and Music Therapists deliver a clinical model of arts participation across different services in the Belfast Trust based on established professional training and principles of practice.

In Music Psychotherapy, musical engagement is the main means of working through a therapeutic process centred on the patient-therapist relationship. Music Psychotherapists are trained to monitor and understand the psychotherapeutic process, to understand both psychological and musical processes in-depth and to work in a wide variety of clinical and community settings.

Integrated Art Projects in new buildings
The Integrated Arts in the Environment Projects involve specifically commissioned artworks as an integral part of new buildings. These projects are managed by independently appointed arts co-ordinators in partnership with new-build architects and steering groups. Service user and staff engagement is encouraged in the development and creation of the site-specific artworks.
Services and Programmes

Arts programmes and projects are delivered across the following services and facilities:

- Acute and Chronic Mental Health
- Cancer
- Children and Young People’s
- Learning and Physical Disability
- Neuro-rehabilitation
- Older People’s
- Acute and Chronic Healthcare
- Staff
- Estates

Belfast Trust also supports various interactive arts in health education programmes and creative placements for students in partnership with Arts Care, University of Ulster and Queen’s University, Belfast. In addition, a number of significant local research projects undertaken within the Belfast Trust area demonstrate the benefits of the arts in health (See appendix 2 for examples).
The Strategic Framework for Arts and Health in the Belfast Trust

The Vision
Better health and wellbeing through access to the arts for all who come into contact with Belfast Trust

Strategic aims
• To raise awareness of the role that the arts can play in prevention, healing, health and wellbeing
• To integrate the arts into mainstream health and social care
• To make greater use of the arts to promote health and wellbeing and engage with communities

Strategic objectives
1. To provide arts for all within health and social care settings
   This means environmental and participatory arts are accessible for all service users, their carers, visitors and staff, when they come into health and social care settings.

   1.1 We will identify dedicated funding for Arts in Health – even small amounts of funding can go a long way and result in a significant return on investment. Sourcing of funding for more substantial commissioned work or designated space will also be necessary.
   1.2 We will ensure relevant expertise is available in the form of artists, art therapists and Arts Care to deliver the highest standard of art engagement.
   1.3 We will provide adequate space for the arts to facilitate arts activities close to where people are (wards, clinics, foyers, health and wellbeing centres and residential facilities) as well as designated studio spaces where artists and arts therapists can provide enhanced arts activities.
   1.4 We will supply art materials for the artists to facilitate high quality arts activities.
   1.5 We will provide encouragement from senior managers to all levels of staff to support them in making this happen with arts being seen as legitimate activity that enhances health and wellbeing and is aligned to corporate strategy.
   1.6 We will enable time for arts to be an integral part of daily activities and available out of hours for service users and staff to participate in the arts. Even brief participation in arts activities can produce beneficial impact.
   1.7 We will recognise the value of environmental artwork in health and social care settings to create a sense of “cared for space”, and provide support for this.
Strategic objectives

2. To employ the arts to promote health and wellbeing
This means using the arts to convey health messages as well as an activity that promotes health and wellbeing

2.1 We will use the arts (such as dance and performance) to promote physical activity, for example with older people, Looked After Children, people with disabilities and mental illness, and for staff

2.2 We will recognise the contribution the arts can make to raising confidence and esteem and promoting wellbeing

2.3 We will use the arts with service users and vulnerable people to combat social isolation

2.4 We will promote health literacy through participation in the arts and through art works

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Strategic objectives

3. To equip our people to use the arts to support them in their work
This means providing appropriate training for artists to work in healthcare, for art therapists and for all staff who wish to integrate arts activities into their work

3.1 We will provide high quality training opportunities for staff to raise awareness of the benefits of the arts in health, and for staff who want to build their professional and creative skills in using the arts in their work and to develop their creativity

3.2 We will recruit and support high quality professional artists to facilitate service users to participate in the arts and support all staff to benefit from participation in the arts

3.3 We will ensure artists receive regular professional training to ensure safe and excellent practice

3.4 We will build and embed the arts into organisational development processes for managers and staff and integrate them into Trust processes to enhance professional practice

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Strategic objectives

4. To measure the impact of the arts on quality and outcomes of care and disseminate this information
This means building on existing work to collect and analyse data to demonstrate the impact of the arts on healthcare quality, health and wellbeing, as well as the economic benefits accrued through reduced costs of care.

4.1 We will work in partnership with research institutions locally and internationally to develop interdisciplinary research into arts in health, based on practice in Belfast Trust

4.2 We will utilise a range of tools and approaches to record, measure and demonstrate the impact of the arts on health, wellbeing and healthcare costs

4.3 We will raise awareness of the benefits experienced from integration of the arts within the Trust

4.4 We will develop the Belfast Trust as a model for the integration of the arts in health and social care and promote internationally

4.5 We will encourage and support the exhibition of art works and artistic performance resulting from engagement of staff and service users in the arts

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Strategic objectives

5. To foster effective partnerships across disciplines and agencies, and with users, carers, communities and volunteers in support of arts in health
This means an interdisciplinary approach, where artists are seen as part of the team; it means working in partnership with other agencies such as Arts Care, Arts Council, Local Government, Public Health Agency and other Trusts; engaging with users, carers and communities; and working with volunteers to support the arts in health.

5.1 We will encourage health and social care professionals to see artists as part of the multidisciplinary team and recognise their contribution to service user/client outcomes

5.2 We will use the arts to help build relationships within the Trust, between staff, and with users, carers and visitors

5.3 We will work with local councils to connect to their power of wellbeing

5.4 We will use the arts to help engage with local communities, community partnerships and voluntary organisations

5.5 We will engage with schools to develop an awareness of the arts in health, to promote health and wellbeing and to engage school children in arts programmes with service users

5.6 We will develop partnerships with universities and colleges locally to introduce the arts in health into professional training

5.7 We will recruit volunteers who can work with the arts to support the artists in making arts activities widely available within the Trust

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**Action plan**

An action plan will be developed and updated annually. This will be available on the Trust intranet hub.

**Governance arrangements (Steering and reporting)**

The implementation of this strategy will be supported by the Arts in Health Steering Group, which will report annually to the Executive Team and Trust Board. Membership of the Steering Group will include the chair of the Trust Arts Committee, Arts Care CEO, representation from Artists in Residence, Arts Care Chairperson, Art Therapy, and all Trust Directorates, the Arts Council and Belfast City Council. Others may be co-opted as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

The Arts Care Committees and the Arts and Environment Project, The Royal Hospitals Committee, have a key role to play in implementing this strategy locally and require support to enable them to undertake this role.

**Explanation of terms**

- **Artist-in-Residence**
  A professional artist/musician/dancer who delivers regular high quality arts activities in specific healthcare settings and who contributes to developing a vibrant cultural life within a healthcare environment

- **Art Therapist**
  A healthcare professional who enables a client to effect change and growth on a personal level through the use of music, drama or visual arts in a safe and facilitating environment

**References**


**Appendix 1**

The Arts in Health Steering group included:

- Medical Director
- Associate Medical Director for Public Health
- The Royal Hospitals Arts and Environment Project Committee Chair and Arts Co-ordinator
- Chairpersons and additional members from local Arts Care committees
- Arts Care Artists in Residence and Clown Doctors
- Arts Care Chief Executive, Chairperson, Operational Manager and board members
Appendix 2
Local Arts in Health Research Projects

Three internationally significant local research projects demonstrate the benefits of the Arts within the Belfast Trust area:

• "Forever Growing" Creative Ageing Partnership Programme, Queen’s University, Belfast (Elliott, Morison and Grant 2010)

The aim of this project was to investigate the impact of a comprehensive arts programme on older people with moderate to severe dementia in supported residential care settings. The project was located in Sydenham Court and Mullan Mews Supported Housing in Belfast in which the older people and staff participated in a series of music, dance, drama and visual art workshops over a six-week period.

Key Outcomes
- Increased levels of social interaction and reduction in isolation amongst the older people
- Reduced stress and anxiety amongst the older people and healthcare staff
- Improved professional care relationships between older people and healthcare staff

• Dance Mirrors: Embodying, Actualising and Operationalising a Dance Experience in a Healthcare Context (2008)

The aim of this PhD study was to investigate the impact of participation in a Laban-based contemporary dance programme on a group of men with moderate to severe traumatic brain injury and the healthcare staff who care for them. It was based in the Neuro-Rehabilitation Unit, Knockbracken Healthcare Park.

Key Outcomes
- Reduced levels of disturbance amongst service users
- Increased memory recall and functional movement in service users
- Enhanced relationships between service users and healthcare staff
- Increased opportunities for life-long learning through creative capacity and skill building

• The Dreams Project (Arts Care Mater Hospital Arts in Health Research Project 2006)

The aim of this project was to assess the value of participation in a visual arts programme for service users, staff and community groups. This three-year research project engaged service users and staff in a range of workshops with a group of artists facilitating different visual art forms such as painting and printing.

Key Outcomes
- Overall improvement in mood levels amongst staff and service users
- Reduced levels of stress amongst service users with mental health issues
- Reduced levels of stress amongst healthcare staff
THE "CARED-FOR SPACE"

Hospitals can appear to be cold, imposing places...

...use of public art can make healthcare spaces feel loved, comfortable and caring.

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