

Report to: East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 28 September 2023

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Title: The Creative Health Position Paper

Purpose of Report: To inform the Health and Wellbeing Board on the Creative Health Programme in East Sussex.

Recommendations:

East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

1. Note this briefing and attached Position Paper in appendix 1.
 2. Support the Creative Health Programmes development.
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1 Background

1.1 Discussion with the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Public Health Board recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board be informed on the development of the Creative Health Programme in East Sussex.

1.2 East Sussex County Council Public Health have been utilising creative health to drive and support population level health Improvement. The Position Paper sets out the theoretical background and further operational opportunities.

2 Supporting Information

2.1 Creativity is a fundamental aspect of human existence. All peoples, all cultures and all times in human history show us that creativity, the sharing of stories, the expression of experience and the sharing of perspectives through a wide range of activities (from painting, sculpture, drama, literature, dance, music and everyday creative acts from cookery to crafts and hobbies) has a key role in enriching and illuminating our experience of life. This has been known and embraced as a reality for centuries, but it is only relatively recently that research into the effectiveness of Creative Health projects have shown us the potential of creativity in its widest sense to not only enrich our experience of life, but to actively and positively improve the physical and psychological health and well-being of those that participate in it.

- 2.2 The National Centre for Creative Health defines Creative Health as 'creating the conditions and opportunities for arts, creativity and culture to be embedded in the health of the public'. Research shows us there are a wide range of positive benefits from different "creative" activities that can accrue to both active and passive participants and whilst not a panacea, Creative Health has a significant potential to support a wide range of populations and communities across the county including those at particular risk of poor health and wellbeing outcomes, health inequalities and social exclusion.
- 2.3 The upcoming Turner Prize exhibition and award in Eastbourne, coinciding with the Towner Gallery's centenary, brings an opportunity to heighten awareness of the potential of the creative health agenda to support prevention of physical and psychological ill health. The content within the Eastbourne ALIVE "wraparound" events, linked to the Turner Prize brings a unique opportunity for ESCC to become a Creatively Healthier County.
- 2.4 Aligned NHS facing Creative health priorities, will be led by the appointment of a Creative Health Associate by NHS Sussex, supported by the National Centre for Creative Health.
- 2.5 Building upon work during the Covid 19 Pandemic including the Everyday Creativity projects and aligned to a wide range of national and local strategies aimed at supporting key cultural, heritage, arts, health and social care agendas, East Sussex County Council Public Health have been developing a Creative Health programme of works.
- 2.6 A crucial step in the development of this programme is this Position Paper (contained in Appendix 1). This sets out the key concepts, evidence and policy environment that supports the Creative Health Agenda. It sets out a range of opportunities, and an approach to Creative Health that can address the needs for the communities of East Sussex across the Life course (Starting Well, Living Well, Aging Well and Dying Well) where Creative Health related works could be of significant assistance. The Position Paper outlines existing works and, in a series of appendices, suggested developments and outcome measures that would be used to evaluate the impact of the programme.
- 2.7 The Creative Health agenda presents several clear opportunities and potentially powerful tools to help support a number of key strategic priority areas. The Creative Health agenda sits within and supports the wider health and wellbeing ecosystem across East Sussex. The strategic plan will align with ESCC, NHS Sussex and wider health and care system strategic documents and priorities including:
- [Healthy lives, healthy people: East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy](#)
 - [Sussex Integrated Care Strategy: Improving Lives Together](#)
 - [East Sussex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)

- [Adult Social Care Strategy | East Sussex County Council](#)
- [East Sussex Cultural Strategy](#)

The Position Paper sets out three specific strategic priorities for the Creative Health agenda:

Strategic Priorities	Meaning
1: Creative Health and the individual	Utilising Creative Health approaches to improve people’s health and wellbeing.
2: Creative Health and community	In collaboration with partners in the culture, arts, heritage, health, and social care systems, to build and support creative health across East Sussex localities and communities ¹ .
3: Creative Health, Systems, Networks and Partnerships	Work with the NHS Sussex ICS and wider cross sector partners to embed and champion creative health across a wide range of service offers and settings, backed with robust approaches to Research and Evaluation.

Fig

1 Creative Health Priorities from the Position Paper

2.8 These contribute to population health and wellbeing, and fit well with the NHS Sussex Integrated Care System priorities:

- improving outcomes in population health and healthcare.
- Addressing inequalities in outcomes, experience and access.
- Enhancing productivity and value for money.
- Supporting broader social and economic development

2.9 Work programmes, captured in a Delivery Action Plan, are being developed for each life course stage with partnership opportunities and the specific focussed works for different communities and vulnerable groups. These include but are not limited to Black, Asian and other minoritised communities, the LGBTQ plus communities, those with additional access needs, those exposed to or at risk of health inequalities, those with long term conditions - ranging from Cancer to Chronic respiratory Diseases and mental ill health, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, children and young people (including Children Looked After and Care Leavers), refugees, asylum seekers, the elderly and those at risk of isolation and or loneliness. Crucially the Action Plan will seek to address the wide range of needs met by the Dying

¹ Communities refers to groups or cohorts of people with knowledge/lived experience of creativity or practice of cultural, heritage, or artistic practice.

Well agenda - acknowledging that dying is an inevitable aspect of human existence.

2.10 Through this the objectives will contribute to enhancing quality of life and reducing health inequalities. It is anticipated that this Plan will be published in late September 2023 and cover a three-year period (2023-2026). The Plan will link to and support the Culture East Sussex Strategy.

3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 East Sussex has a wealth of cultural, artistic and heritage opportunities which could help in supporting the health of the communities we serve. The Position Paper, supported by the Health and Wellbeing Board, will enable the works that are to follow in pursuit of making East Sussex a creatively healthy county.

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Appendix 1: The East Sussex Creative Health Position Paper

ⁱ See [An Evaluation of the Everyday Creativity Programme February 2022](#)