



This report on the "*Creating positive Health*" conference was compiled by Nick Jones for Cumbria Cultural Forum.

Disclaimer: Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of statements and information provided in this report the author and publishers cannot accept responsibility for any inaccuracies.



A big hand for Beth and her guitar, Sam and his sax, Helen and her quiches, Patricia for her textile creations, Amanda and her mouse, Carys and her handprints, Sofie, Will, John and Claire for their hands, and Olivia for her left foot.



CREATING POSITIVE HEALTH



The role of the arts and creativity in positive health and wellbeing

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A Report on a Cumbria Cultural Forum Conference

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We hope that this report will be a source of inspiration, ideas and information for colleagues from both the arts and health sectors and that it will inspire new partnerships and fresh initiatives.

Professor John Ashton CBE, North West Regional Director of Public Health
Professor David Vaughan, Principal, Cumbria Institute of the Arts

1. Introduction

Achieving improvement in public health has always required the skillful application of a wide range of approaches and techniques and a willingness to explore new ways to improve wellbeing in the population. In recent years the evidence that engagement in the arts can produce measurable benefits in the prevention and treatment of ill health has increased exponentially. In the North West we have seized the opportunity to develop new approaches to complement and expand our existing programmes of work.

The cooperation between the Cumbria Cultural Forum and the North Cumbria PCTs has been timely and welcome and this conference provided an opportunity to explain and showcase some of the evidence, to share good practice, to form new partnerships and to understand differences in approach. We are grateful to the many practitioners, artists and researchers who contributed to the overwhelming success of the day. The event was over-subscribed and those lucky enough to get a place were delighted and inspired by the presentations and opportunities for involvement. Drawing Cumbria's local food producers into the event too proved a master stroke. Lunch, as well as being the most popular part of the day, conveyed the serious message that what we eat has a significant impact on our wellbeing!

I've always imagined that if you're allowed to paint you get better and I'm always getting better.

Alexander Thynn, 7th Marquess of Bath. Quoted in "The Successful Self" by Dorothy Rowe. Harper Collins. ISBN 0006373429

2. Background

A major conference on the importance of art in healthcare was held in Cumbria in November 2005.

The conference, entitled *Creating Positive Health*, was organised by Cumbria Cultural Forum. Set up by Cumbria County Council in 2004, the Forum works on behalf of the cultural sector in Cumbria to advocate and promote culture as one of the county's most important and valuable resources and to encourage cross-sectoral working to maximise joint initiatives and benefits.

The conference explored the benefits of working with artists and the arts to—

- improve people's health and enhance healthcare
- raise awareness of health issues
- speed recovery
- improve healthcare environments.

Examples of pioneering art-related projects, activities and techniques already being used by the NHS in Cumbria were showcased. The conference brought together a host of important speakers and incorporated inspirational activities and demonstrations as well as practical training. Speakers and activities included—

- **Clive Parkinson** (Invest to Save: Arts in Health Programme, Manchester Metropolitan University) speaking on Creative approaches to health—examples and evidence
- **Dr Gavin Young** (GP at Temple Sowerby Health Centre, near Penrith), speaking on Practice and Evidence in Cumbria
- **Mike White** (Centre for Arts and Humanities, University of Durham), highlighting world-wide developments in using art in healthcare
- **Miranda Tufnell**, (a craniosacral therapist from North Cumbria), exploring using the senses and imagination to improve both mental and physical wellbeing
- **Alison Jones** (Looking Well Healthy Living Centre in Bentham, near Lancaster), looking at how art can help promote healthy eating
- A 'Slow Lunch', supported by Cumbria Organics and the Northwest Organic Centre, introduced by local celebrity chef **John Crouch**.





The language of science alone is insufficient to describe health; the languages of story, myth and poetry also disclose its truth.

Michael Wilson 'Health Is For People' (1975)

3. Why? Making the case for arts and health initiatives

Contemporary dialogue between scientists, artists and philosophers is directly affecting and benefiting the health sector, leading to new ways of diagnosing, analysing, prescribing and treating illness and disease. It is in this context that artists are finding new ways of working and exploring new avenues.

The conference set out to explore, understand and strengthen linkages, complementarity and partnership working between the arts and health sectors. These linkages are now widely recognised and documented, both at senior government level and within the health and cultural establishment. They confirm that the arts contribute directly to the quality of care and health management in a clinical setting and that they also play a role in prevention and control of illness. These developments have been acknowledged at every level—from ministerial to clinical practice.

Chris Smith, when Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, identified several different ways in which the arts could make a positive difference to healthcare including—

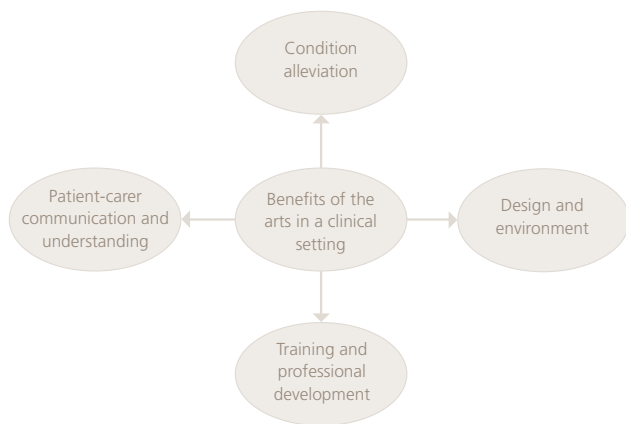
- promoting the benefits of good health and wellbeing
- providing stimulating and striking environments in hospitals and healthcare settings
- providing therapeutic uses for music and drama in the process of healing
- improving the mental, emotional and spiritual state of health service users and professionals
- identifying health care needs by engaging excluded groups in arts activities in collaboration with professionals
- improving sensory awareness, mental activity and physical dexterity
- helping people to communicate effectively with each other
- giving artists opportunities to develop their practice
- rewarding carers and staff.

Peter Hewitt, Chief Executive at Arts Council England, commissioned Dr Rosalia Staricoff to write “Arts in health: a review of the medical literature” in 2004. Her research confirmed the benefits of the arts in a hospital setting—for staff, patients and carers. Her report has made a significant contribution to strengthening the evidence base and to improving understanding of the impact of the arts on health.

Her findings show that, in clinical settings, encouraging patients to engage with the arts can help them to manage pain and the side effects of some treatments, to alleviate stress and anxiety and to come to terms with what can be major and distressing episodes in their lives. Incorporating the arts into the design of healthcare facilities has positive benefits for staff, patients and carers. Integrating the arts into the training and professional development of health professionals helps them to communicate more effectively with their patients, from all social and ethnic groups. It also helps them to understand their situation and needs more fully.

“In the future, whenever a hospital or a GP’s surgery is built, you wouldn’t dream of doing that without an artist or a creative on the team.” Estelle Morris (former Minister for the Arts)

Assessing the benefits of the arts in healthcare

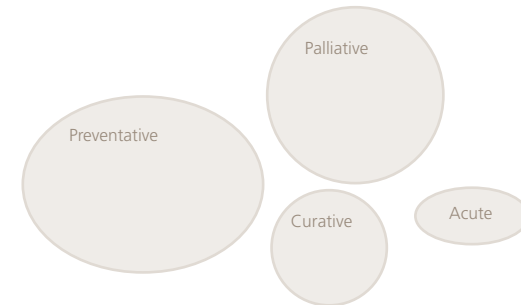


Areas where the arts can be of benefit in a clinical setting

There are four main areas where the arts and health sectors can interact—

- preventative
- curative
- palliative
- acute.

Broadly speaking, the contribution of the arts is significant in prevention, moderate in palliative and mental health care, low in curative medicine and very limited in acute treatment.



Relative impact of the arts on different types of healthcare

Preventative—Lifestyle issues and themes

Current research and evidence suggests that regular practice of and exposure to arts and creativity plays a qualitative role in contributing to a sense of health and wellbeing. The arts are very well placed, therefore, to—

- help raise awareness of issues affecting health
- maintain good health
- prevent some ill-health.

This is where the arts and health sectors, working together, can make a significant impact on lifestyle issues particularly diet, nutrition and obesity; fitness and exercise; alcohol, tobacco and drug use and abuse; sexual health; health issues affecting young people; and mental health. These themes form the core of the Government White Paper, *Choosing Health*. The diagram on page ten illustrates how art and creativity link with key lifestyle factors and influences. Education and advocacy go hand in hand with artistic process, as do mental attitudes, levels of physical activity, family history, personal relationships, diet, healthy communities and environment. In each of these areas arts and creativity can play a positive role.

For too long arts in health and arts in education have been regarded as nice added extras but there is a healing power of contemplative concentration that comes with creativity. It is our task to promote the transformational power of the arts. Peter Hewitt (Arts Council England)



Major links between the arts and factors affecting individual health and wellbeing

Conference speakers and workshop leaders explored how this preventative, qualitative role of the arts can be directly linked to lifestyle. When things start to go a little wrong, often before any specific medical condition has arisen, increased access to the arts can be very beneficial. It is in this preventative role that investment in arts and health initiatives yields significant dividends. When medical conditions arise and are diagnosed, the arts can still play a role, but it is likely to complement and be secondary to medical treatment.

Curative—Helping people to get better

Some conditions, for example mental illnesses like depression and trauma, respond very well to exposure to the arts and creativity.

Palliative—Helping people feel better

In the middle ground, where health professionals are dealing with long term, chronic conditions and managing palliative care, access to the arts can help alleviate both physical pain and mental distress, complementing medical treatment and improving quality of life, for example for people in long-term care and the elderly.

Acute—Helping the healing environment

In cases where illness or injuries are acute and life threatening, the role of the artist is much more limited. That said, artwork in hospitals, high quality interior design and exposure to live music and opera have been shown to be beneficial.





The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.

Albert Einstein

4. How? Effective working together—partnerships and approaches

This section looks at issues raised by **Professor John Ashton, Clive Parkinson** and **Mike White** regarding ways in which the arts and health sectors could work together most effectively. They drew attention to some of the cultural barriers—both internal and external—that may need to be overcome; and suggested that lessons could be learnt from other societies, particularly about attitudes to health, diseases and the treatment of illness.

The World Health Organisation's twenty-year-old Health for All programme aims to—

- encourage people to take responsibility for their health
- develop partnership working
- re-orientate public health services to work more closely with the community.

“The Health for All package should be thought of as a health virus that is needed to infect every aspect of society to really optimise health in a holistic way. When you think about it like that you must realise that culture and art are totally wrapped up in all that. That's how we make sense of it all.” Professor John Ashton

This interrelationship underpins new thinking on good practice in preventative, community-based health programmes. It is at the heart of the Government White Paper, *Choosing Health*.



The arts can improve health and wellbeing by working with individuals, in the community and with key partners

Clive Parkinson (Director, Invest to Save: Arts in Health Programme, Manchester Metropolitan University) stressed the importance of responding to the Strategic Review of the Department of Health’s role in arts and health. This focused on—

- challenges and solutions
- evidence and examples of best practice
- next steps.

His presentation provided a broad overview of the potential in thinking and working creatively around the public health agenda.

“I really believe that creativity, culture and the arts offer us potent tools for addressing some major issues; but I don’t want to leave you with a feeling that the arts are merely subservient to a health agenda, because it’s the primacy and experience of the creative activity that really makes the arts unique and liberating.” Clive Parkinson

Concerned to create an open and flexible context for arts and health work, he advocated against a target-driven approach. He recognised that this would be challenging, especially if artists were not to lose sight of what it is that makes them so passionate about their practice. Communicating the creative vision to those whose primary focus isn’t the arts was essential.

Both **Clive Parkinson** and **Mike White** (Centre for Arts and Humanities, University of Durham) recognised that really productive partnership working was open to new practice that placed creativity and health in a much broader, deeper cultural context. How we live every aspect of our lives affects our wellbeing. If both the arts and health are seen as somehow separate from everyday life, then problems arise. They highlighted the need for better communication through a common language and suggested that we could learn from other cultures and other countries.

“So, this arts and health agenda isn’t just about the fine arts; it’s far broader and if we look to successes and failures from around the world we can build on the growing range of evidence to develop creative approaches to public health that includes popular cultural activity that has resonance with us all; but that doesn’t dilute what it means to be creative and culturally healthy.

“I think the health and arts communities speak totally different languages, randomised controls on the one hand and cultural entitlement and self determination on the other.

“The challenge is to develop our relationships so that those working in the health sector and those engaged in the arts can begin to share common language and explore potentially beneficial ways of working without diluting what it is that makes the arts unique and humane. I don’t see it as an easy feat.” Clive Parkinson

If the arts and health sectors are to work together effectively, both need to understand each other, work to strengths and identify common ground. Understanding differences of approach is a good start—

Health Sector	Arts Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophisticated Infrastructure • Focused approach • Direct evidence based • Rational • Process > people • Focus on weakness • Symptom led • Priority led • Linear • High-tech • Higher cost • Risk averse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primitive infrastructure • Holistic approach • Evidence indirect • Intuitive • People > process • Works from strength • Cause led • Discursive • Iterative • Low-tech • Lower cost • Risk attracts

Some broad, perceived differences in approach and context between the arts and the health sectors

Partnership in practice: The Invest to Save: Arts in Health Programme
Clive Parkinson explained that this was a positive collaboration between Arts Council England North West, the Department of Health and Manchester Metropolitan University. It will focus on—

- mapping the scene
- networking
- responsive training
- research.

Delivering these priorities depends on supporting strategies—

- promoting personal health
- developing the workforce
- building in research and development
- using information and intelligence.

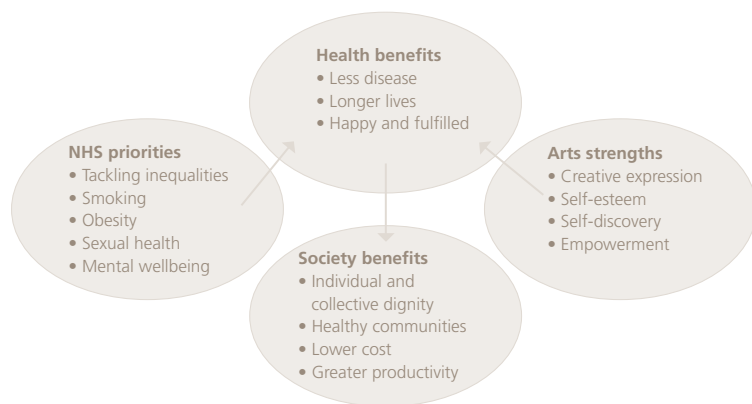
This process will support and be supported by wider partnerships within the community and other agencies.

“Real progress depends on effective partnerships, including local government, the NHS, business, advertisers, retailers, the voluntary sector, communities, the media, faith organisations and many others. People look to Government to lead, coordinate and promote these partnerships and expect that the other players take their health and the health of their families seriously and are prepared to engage constructively in a shared effort.” *Choosing Health*

Research and evaluation will explore and demonstrate—

- the transformative power of the arts on health
- the role of the arts in health promotion
- the economic value of the arts
- the benefits and broad value of the arts to patients, health care staff and the healing environment.

The challenge will be to develop evaluation methodologies that answer these calls and are both robust and consistent with artistic and creative values.



Arts and health sector linkages to individual health and community wellbeing

The role of the arts in changing perceptions about and towards health

“People need to know what should be going on in terms of culture, ritual, rites of passage, things that we need to make sense of our lives.” *Professor John Ashton*

Ignorance is a direct factor in attitudes to health and wellbeing and can affect approaches, practice and outcomes. The artist can not only observe but also change the way we see and understand the context within which the medical infrastructure operates. Much disease in the western world is directly related to lifestyle issues such as affluence, stressful working conditions and prolonged life expectancy. It’s also affected by peer pressure and environmental conditions. Media pressures and commercial interests conspire to create a culture of dissatisfaction, fuelled by consumerism, sometimes producing direct and negative impacts on both mental and physical wellbeing. Disease in the Third World has very different origins arising from deprivation and ignorance. Multinational drugs companies have cashed in and not always with the patients’ interests at heart, as John le Carré makes alarmingly clear in his novel “The Constant Gardener”. In a note about the novel, he writes “As my journey through the pharmaceutical jungle progressed, I came to realise that, by comparison with the reality, my story was as tame as a holiday postcard.” *Published by Hodder and Staughton. 2001. ISBN 0340 83709 8.*

“More and more of life’s processes and difficulties—birth, death, sexuality, ageing, unhappiness, tiredness, loneliness, perceived imperfections in our bodies—are being medicalised. Medicine cannot solve these problems. It can sometimes help but often at a substantial cost. Worst of all, people are diverted from what may be much better ways to adjust to these problems...If health is about adaptation, understanding and acceptance, then the arts may be more potent than anything that medicine has to offer.” *Richard Smith British Medical Journal Editorial. (December 2002)*

The emphasis highlighted here, is not so much on prevention and cure of the primary diseases of poverty, deprivation and ignorance as on creating a new market for highly profitable lifestyle drugs and treatments by undermining individual difference and removing self-worth and responsibility. The media and business interests are working together to promote unrealistic expectations regarding appearance, longevity, sexual stamina and prowess. This is resulting, paradoxically, in an increase in primary diseases, including obesity and anorexia and nutritional conditions in young children; sex, alcohol and drug related conditions amongst young people; and burgeoning mental health problems affecting all ages.

"It is difficult to describe what we mean by wellbeing without asking the question What is health for?...Factors which make for health are concerned with a sense of personal and social identity, human worth, communication, anticipation in the making of political decisions, celebration and responsibility." Michael Wilson 'Health Is For People' (1975)

"There is a disparity of treatment offered to people in socially deprived areas. The job of the health service, in fact, the job for all, is to engage people using arts expertise to reduce isolation." Dr. David Colin-Thomé (Department of Health)

"Over the last century, art and culture underwent a removal from the local, the participatory, the ritualistic. Post-war, art and culture became elitist and distant and since then many have become passive viewers. But culture gives us place; it offers us an attachment with those around us, with history and with the future. It is basic and potent; and that is why a culture that we are all equal participants in is so central to 'well' individuals and societies."

Cultural Medicine Arts Council England Northwest and Department of Health. 2005



Contextual factors affecting individual health and wellbeing





This is an important project. It is a unique opportunity for the North West region. The arts have an impact on all our lives in a variety of ways; as audiences, participants or instigators. This research project, by examining the relationship between creativity, culture and the arts on public health and wellbeing, will give us valuable insight into the effect and reach of the arts in the 21st Century.

Melvyn Bragg on the Invest to Save: Arts in Health Programme,
Manchester Metropolitan University

5. What? Examples of good practice

This section draws on a number of examples of good practice described by the speakers and contributors to the conference. Together they constitute a strong body of primary evidence of what the arts is doing to help individual and community wellbeing.

Examples of positive outcomes—

- reduction in stress, depression, anxiety, blood pressure, pain intensity
- improved confidence, self-esteem, artistic skill, quality of life, personal growth, self-determination and sense of control and a 'transformation of identity'
- perceptions of improved quality of the service, of doctor: patient relationships and staff job satisfaction
- shortened treatment, reduced GP consultations, lower drug consumption
- strong catalyst for cultural change and organisational development.

A Breath of Fresh Air

In *A Breath of Fresh Air* **Miranda Tufnell** and **Brenda Mallon** worked together to explore how people with conditions which did not respond to conventional medical treatment could be alleviated through listening to the stories that the body was telling. Working with movement, dance, writing and drawing they enabled people to open up to their own thoughts, dreams and imaginings.

"It just happened really—I took the colours that attracted me. This is my heart which was all scrounged up...these are my wings...this is me flying...underneath is the physical and emotional gunge." Fiona

Miranda has worked for many years with **Dr Gavin Young** at Temple Sowerby Health centre near Penrith. Despite being a self-proclaimed cynic, Dr Young gave a deeply personal account in full support of art used within a health context.

Around twelve years ago his son was involved in a serious road traffic accident. Dr Young was deeply impressed at the therapeutic value of taking singing lessons—they required a concentration and creative input that helped him to disengage from day to day difficulties. He believes that art helps us to make sense of the apparently senseless, such as illness—that it allows a way of interpreting experience. For example Janacek's piano pieces "On the overgrown path" were written to help the composer cope with the death of his daughter.

He feels that the arts allow people to find their own solution and to see things differently. "Can art transform? Yes... it can exorcise things from the past, pain in particular and I think getting things out on to paper, on plaster and to walls or into music is redemptive and helpful.

"The deeper things within human beings are difficult to measure...but because they are not measurable doesn't mean they don't matter...indeed they are immeasurably important."
Dr Gavin Young

Examples introduced by Clive Parkinson

Awareness Raising

War Child

Clive introduced the notion of explicit and implicit arts and health projects—explicit where the health gains of a project were central to a project and implicit where the agenda is far wider, but the potential for health and social outcomes are huge. War Child, an organisation supporting children affected by war, was cited as a strong example of a project with strong health outcomes but that isn't labelled up as an arts and health project. <http://www.warchild.org>

War Child involves children in designing child rights advocacy initiatives. This includes the production of child rights materials including comic books, posters, music cassettes, events, a Child Rights Newsletter as well as media spots.

Mumps

Three projects from the West Midlands delivered over the last three years were cited as strong, proactive arts and health projects. All were developed by Walsall Community Arts Team.

Combining print with film and new media, Resident Films and Born Communication worked with young people from the Electric Palace to develop a campaign comprising a DVD (made up of adverts), posters and flyers to raise awareness of mumps and how to prevent it. Their ideas were vital in attracting the attention of other young people.





Smoking

The Truck Stop Rock project undertaken by Walsall Community Arts Team addressed smoking amongst long distance lorry drivers.

“I packed in smoking for 15 years but when I got divorced I started again. When you’re in a traffic jam and you’re dying to get home, you light up and things seem to get better. It’s having something to do with your hands.”

Paul, 52 and a continental truck driver, was speaking from a haulage yard in Walsall while his lorry was unloaded. Cup of tea in hand—and with the constant roar of traffic on motorways overhead, he was taking part in a health needs assessment.

Paul wasn’t talking to a health worker with a clipboard and checklist at the ready, but country and western singer, Jean Vincent. She turned his words into a song entitled ‘10, 20, 30, 40, 50 a day’, about a chain-smoking truck driver. Or to be more precise, she used the words of 42 truck drivers as the basis for four songs about their lives—and their health.

Diet—Food for Thought

Again, this project addressed dietary habits and knowledge with a target group of manual labourers. It had a specific brief to—

- challenge attitudes to buying fruit and vegetables
- encourage employees to reflect on current diet and explore steps to change behaviour
- engage 200/300 employees through creative interventions including working with storytellers to gather stories around eating habits
- enhanced understanding around eating habits.

Exercise—Bronchial Boogie

This project used wind instruments to look at issues around childhood asthma. Evidence-based outcomes—

- increase in number of children with good inhaler technique from 67% to 100%
- increase in number of children using reliever medication less than once a day from 33% to 83%
- increase in the number of children reporting NO sleepless nights from 47% to 90%
- increase in the number of children reporting NO day symptoms from 40% to 90%.

Male Sexual Health in Prison

“Shagmag” is a prisoner-designed sexual health magazine.

- the majority of prisoners are young and male
- 60% to 70% per cent of them were using drugs before imprisonment and over 70% suffer from at least two mental disorders
- it is estimated that at least 80% of prisoners smoke
- male prisoners are much more sexually active in the community than the general population, all age groups having more lifetime sexual partners and more partners in the year before entry to prison than would be expected from the general population. They are also six times more likely to have been young fathers.

Arts on Referral

This approach enables health practitioners to advise, recommend or prescribe arts activities as part of a course of treatment.

Mental Health

“We spend £81 million a year on antidepressants and the cost per patient can be as much as £300 a year. If we can wean just a few of these patients off such drugs through the use of arts in healthcare then it will be worth it.” Dr Robin Phillip, Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy and Public Health Medicine at the University of Bristol.

Working with the Media

Although popular culture can view the arts as elitist and alienating, the following examples demonstrate how the mass media have been used very creatively to raise awareness and highlight health issues.

The Campaign Against Living Miserably

CALM is about tackling depression amongst young men. CALM exists because young men told us it's what they wanted. There are many reasons why young men need a campaign like CALM. Everyone has their own life, with different interests, circumstances, pressures and problems. But men don't always talk about their problems, look for or know where to go for help when life gets on top of them.

Soul City

In South Africa, radio and television had been used to address public health issues. Each Soul City series is made up of—

- a prime-time television series—thirteen one-hour episodes (series 1-3 were half hours)
- a daily radio drama—45 fifteen-minute episodes

- booklets—three full-colour booklets per series
- an advertising/publicity campaign which keeps people talking and thinking about Soul City
- an advocacy campaign around one of the major topics.

Coronation Street

A storyline in which a character was diagnosed and subsequently died of cervical cancer, generated huge viewing figures and scared women to take up cervical screening. “Health experts writing in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) estimate around 14,000 extra cervical smear tests were carried out in the North West as a result of the [Coronation Street] storyline, costing the NHS an estimated £470,000.” BBC

Jamie Oliver

It was interesting to note how much publicity and action the “Feed Me Better” initiative had gained. The petition collected 271,677 signatures and was delivered to 10 Downing Street. The campaign became front page news and Government announced a massive cash injection into school meals.

Looking Well is an arts-led Healthy Living Centre in Bentham, North Yorkshire, managed by the nationally renowned arts and health charity, Pioneer Projects Ltd.

“It's a godsend: it's my second home. I can do more things here than I ever knew I could.”
from the Looking Well webpages

Looking Well is a warm, friendly and lively meeting place used by local people, visitors, artists and people working in health, social care and education. The centre celebrates the art of living, offering opportunities to develop skills in the arts of cooking, gardening and marking significant life events as well as visual arts, theatre, music, dance and writing. It has a strong voice in local health services, identifying and responding to local health needs and has achieved national recognition for its groundbreaking approach to community health. It gives everyone the chance to discover hidden talents and make new friends.

Regular groups and activities include—

- creative arts sessions for all ages
- support groups for people with mental health problems, long term illnesses, women and carers
- Tai Chi and relaxation classes
- creative physical activity for all ages.

We will support new 5 A DAY initiatives in deprived communities—from 2006 more primary care trusts (PCTs) will provide support for cookery clubs and food co-ops to encourage fruit and vegetable consumption. From 2006 we will extend healthy community collaboratives to new areas and we will use collaborative techniques to support action through local partnerships.

Choosing Health White Paper.

6. Food, art and health

One of the highlights of the day was the organic lunch. This was coordinated by Cumbrian celebrity chef **John Crouch** and sponsored by Cumbria Organics, the Northwest Organic Centre and the Soil Association. Delegates gave the lunch the thumbs up as the high spot of the day. The links between high quality locally grown seasonal food and healthy individuals and communities are strong. The lunch was a practical demonstration of this, enabling delegates to take time out to meet local producers and to try their products.

Slow lunch—Recipe for health and wellbeing

Ingredients—

- creative cooking
- conviviality
- community
- fresh, local, organic food and drink
- nice place
- companionship.

Method

Select your local food and drink producers carefully; invite them to bring their food along on the day; find a nice place and a good excuse for lunch; add an enthusiastic group of hungry people; mix well; flavour with imagination; allow plenty of time to bring out the conviviality and companionship; enjoy delicious food, good company and feel good!





The Slow Lunch was organised by **John Crouch**. John has worked in all sorts of kitchens, has run his own catering business, restaurants and cafes, taught innumerable cookery courses all over Cumbria and beyond, been a 'media chef'—in radio, TV and magazines—and demonstrated at events such as farmers' markets, The Royal Lancashire Show, trade fairs and for North West Fine Foods. "The recipes I do are very simple, so people remember them and will try them, but always use high quality Cumbrian ingredients, such as char from Windermere, Solway shrimps, Cumberland ham and local cheeses. Lots of Cumbrian place names are related to food: Troutbeck and Keswick—it means 'cheese farm'—and Haverigg, 'haver' being oats." From an article by Sue Allan for Cumbria Life, Autumn 2005

The Soil Association has always maintained that health cannot be defined as simply the absence of disease but rather a profound state of wellbeing and vitality. While considerable improvements have occurred in disease treatment, serious concerns about our overall health persist due to increases in allergies, infertility and many diseases. It maintains that organic food, with fewer toxins and more nutrients, can make a difference to health, for example because it contains fewer pesticide residues and food additives. Fundamental is the assertion that healthy plants, animals and people depend on healthy soil and that is dependent on compost and manure and regular crop rotation.

"Public and political tastes are moving away from 'cheap' poor quality food produced in ways that compromise human health, harm the environment and undermine animal welfare." Patrick Holden, Director, Soil Association

"People are increasingly interested in what they eat, how it's grown, the effect on our environment and whether it's sustainable." David Cameron, Leader Conservative Party, January 2006

If you are interested in developing an arts and health project, whether as an artist an arts development officer or a health professional, there are some basic principles and guidelines that you should consider at the planning stage. It's a good idea to talk to someone who has experience and to look at some of the arts and health publications and websites to see what other people are doing. You will also need to ask some fundamental questions.

7. Next steps—making it happen

Why? Why do you think an arts and health project is a good idea? How will it help you achieve your goals in both arts and health terms?

What? Once you have decided that you would like to go ahead, you will need to consider what kind of project to set up. This means thinking about the people who stand to benefit from it, their needs, skills, interest and situation. Then you will need to find out which artists and arts organisations are suitable to work with you, or, if you approaching from the arts angle, which health sector is most likely to benefit from and be in a position to work with you. Your project will be more dynamic and vital if it addresses issues and content that inspire and enthuse.

How? Consider how you will plan and set up the project including venues, length of project, frequency of activities, practical details, eg equipment, facilities, health and safety issues, support, cleaning and washing arrangements, storage and maintenance, display, exhibition or publication. Allow plenty of planning time—the NHS bureaucracy can take time to respond.

Who? Who will you involve and in what capacity? It may be a good idea to have a small steering, planning or support group. Who will you work with and for?

Funding and resourcing? Think about how much your project will cost and where you can get funding, income, support in kind to resource it. Funding often comes with conditions so make sure you can comply with all criteria. Allow extra funds for contingencies and unforeseen costs. Make a virtue of using simple and mobile tools, facilities and resources. Digital media, community radio and hi-tech solutions are a vital part of the artist's toolkit and often highly appropriate in healthcare settings.

Skills? Make sure you are working with people who know what they are doing. Artists need specialist skills and training to give their best in healthcare settings. Equally, healthcare professionals need to be comfortable when working with artists and to anticipate and be prepared for changes to routine, sometimes unpredictable outcomes.

Evaluation, follow up and legacy. Did the project meet its objectives? What are the outcomes? How can it be followed up? What lessons were learnt? How would future projects be different, better?





This Government is committed to sustaining an ethos of fairness and equity—good health for everyone in England. We are already taking action throughout society to tackle the causes of ill-health and reduce inequalities. Choosing Health sets out how we will work to provide more of the opportunities, support and information people want to enable them to choose health. It aims to inform and encourage people as individuals and to help shape the commercial and cultural environment we live in so that it is easier to choose a healthy lifestyle.

Tony Blair. Introduction to Government White paper “Choosing Health”

8. Appendices, biographies, links, contacts

A quick search will come up with many sites covering arts and health issues—this is just for starters

Organisation/Links Website address

North Cumbria NHS Trust Arts for Health: www.ncumbria.nhs.uk/home

Invest to Save www.mmu.ac.uk/artsforhealth/research/invest-to-save.htm

North West Public Health Team www.gonw.gov.uk/gonw/PublicHealth/?a=42496

Arts Council England North West www.artscouncil.org.uk/regions/homepage.php?rid=5

The Centre For Arts And Humanities

In Health And Medicine, Durham University www.dur.ac.uk//cahhtm

Looking Well Healthy Living Centre www.pioneerprojects.org.uk/lookingwell.html

Prism Arts – Cumbria Based Arts Agency www.prismarts.co.uk

Kings Fund Independent Medical Research Charity www.kingsfund.org.uk

National Network for Arts and Health www.nnah.org.uk

Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust www.mbpct.nhs.uk

Culture North West www.englandsnorthwest-culture.com/cultural

Cumbria County Council www.cumbria-artefacts.org.uk

Arts Development Agencies www.cumbria-artefacts.org.uk/organisations-contacts/ladas

Sunbeams Music Trust www.sunbeamsmusic.org

Lime Arts www.limeart.org

Medical Humanities Peer Review <http://mh.bmjournals.com>

Trusts and Foundations www.culture.gov.uk/arts/funding_for_arts/artsfunding_trusts.htm

Slow Food www.slowfood.com

Soil Association www.soilassociation.org

Cumbria Organics www.cumbriaorganics.org

Books and publications

This list highlights some recent publications

Title	Author	Publisher/Distributor	Date
Choosing Health: Making Health Choices Easier	NHS	NHS	2005
When I Open My Eyes	Brenda Mallon, Miranda Tufnell, Tim Rubidge	Contact Tim Rubidge. 01434 345059	2004
Arts in Health: a Review of the Medical Literature	Dr Rosalia Staricoff	Arts Council England	2004
Arts in Healthcare		Arts Council England Available from Marston Book Services Ltd www.marston.co.uk	2002
Cultural Medicine, Investment in Cultural Capital for Health	Editor Lee Taylor	Arts Council England Northwest and Department of Health	2005
The Arts in Healthcare— Learning from Experience	Editors Duncan Haldane, Susan Loppert	Kings Fund www.kingsfund.org.uk	1999
The Healing Environment: Without and Within	Editors Deborah Kirklin, Ruth Richardson	Royal College of Physicians www.rcplondon.ac.uk/	2003
Arts and Public Health, A Shared Vision for the North West		Arts Council England Northwest and Department of Health	2005



Biographies

Professor John Ashton

Professor John Ashton CBE, North West Regional Director of Public Health and Regional Medical Officer has specialised in psychiatry, general practice, family planning and reproductive medicine and finally public health. He is well known for his work on planned parenthood and healthy cities and for his personal advocacy for public health. John holds chairs in the Liverpool Medical School, Liverpool John Moores University, the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Manchester Medical School and the Valencia Institute of Public Health in Spain. He is the author of several books including “The New Public Health” a standard textbook on public health. Since 1993 he has held his regional position and has played an active part in developing government policies for public health. He was awarded the CBE for service to the NHS.

John Crouch

John is a well known figure in Cumbria both for his involvement in local politics (he is a county councillor and former Mayor of Allerdale) and for his enthusiasm and skill in the culinary arts. He has a particular interest in local produce and has been working with local organic producers to deliver healthy, environmentally conscious and above all delicious food.

Alison Jones

Alison Jones is an artist who has been working in community-based arts in health since the mid 80s. Following an innovative arts-led community-based consultation, she set up Looking Well (and Pioneer Projects, the charity that runs it) in 1997 with local people in her home town of Bentham, east of Lancaster. She is the Creative Director of the charity and continues to be active in promoting recognition of the value of arts and creativity in improving the health of individuals and communities.

Clive Parkinson

Clive Parkinson is the project leader on the Invest to Save: Arts in Health programme, a three-year, Treasury-funded project developing the North West’s regional arts and health infrastructure through networking, training and research. He has a broad range of experience in the statutory and voluntary sectors, as an artist working in a hospital for people with learning disabilities and as the manager of a drop-in centre for people with schizophrenia. Prior to his current role he was Director of Arts for Health, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, where he was instrumental in integrating the arts into the Cornwall NHS LIFT Programme, organising training for artists, health professionals, designers and architects and developing creative responses to public health issues.

Miranda Tufnell

Miranda Tufnell is a nationally recognised dancer who is also trained as an Alexander Technique teacher. In this she worked part-time for fourteen years at Temple Sowerby Surgery. Out of this grew the Breath of Fresh Air Arts and Health project with dancer, Tim Rubidge and writer/psychotherapist, Brenda Mallon. She is co-author of two books on creativity and the body.

Professor David Vaughan

Principal of Cumbria Institute of the Arts since 1991 Professor Vaughan is currently Vice Chair of SCOP (Standing Conference of Principals), a Board Member and Director of North West Universities Association, a member of the Higher Education Funding Council’s QALT Committee (Quality Assessment, Learning and Teaching Committee), a member of the DfES/HEFCE/UUK/SCOP—Measuring and Recording Student Achievement Group and a member of the DfES PQA Implementation Group Vice Chair of UCAS Board of Directors. He is Chair of GLAD (the Group for Learning in Art and Design), Chair of the HEAD Trust (Higher Education Art and Design Trust), Chair of the Management Board for the Higher Education Academy—Learning and Teaching Subject Centre for Art, Design, Media based at the University of Brighton and Chair of Arts Council England/DCMS Creative Partnerships—Cumbria. He is a founding Director of Cumbria Cultural Skills Partnership.

Mike White

Mike White is from the Centre for Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine at University of Durham with a special interest in community-based arts in health. The rapid emergence of this field of work in the UK in the 1990s has begun to impact on policy in the arts funding system, on cross-sector partnerships in health service delivery and in local authority cultural strategies. It has combined creative activities with health education and demonstrated social and therapeutic value. It has become an influential part of a world-wide movement to develop arts within healthcare.

Gavin Young

Gavin Young has been in general practice at Temple Sowerby surgery for twenty-four years with a special interest in women having home births. His was the first practice in the country to employ an Alexander Technique teacher. In his spare time he plays the bagpipes and enjoys singing lieder and English songs.

Acknowledgements

The "*Creating Positive Health Conference*" was overseen by a steering group led by **Euan Cartwright** (Cumbria Cultural Forum), with support from **Jane Muller**, and latterly **Fiona Huntington** (North Cumbria NHS Trust) **Kate Gascoyne** (Cumbria Organics) **Polly Moseley** (Arts Council England North West) **Karen Bassett** (Cumbria Institute of the Arts) **Miranda Tufnell** (practitioner) and **Nick Jones** (Cumbria Cultural Forum).

