

CREATIVE ROUTES TO HEALTH

A TOOLKIT
FOR INVOLVING
THE ARTS



Background

This document is a contribution to a process that involves changing the hearts and minds of people engaged in the task of delivering services. The traditional methods for service providers to assess needs and design projects to spend money and improve the living conditions of their fellow citizens have failed to deliver a healthy and happy community. In modern Scotland we have the highest rates of coronary heart disease, cancer and mental illness in Europe. Our young people, especially young men are taking their lives early at an alarmingly high rate. Success is measured by our place as the fourth largest economy in the world. This is indeed an empty success when our citizens are unhappy, increasingly ill with age, lead sedentary lives and feel afraid to engage with their fellow human beings in the streets. This document challenges what we understand as success and health and points to another way of healing our citizens and communities that is inclusive, creative, empowering and provides one dimension of a successful framework for a health improvement agenda.

Throughout the developed world, there is copious and increasing evidence of the power of the arts to enhance and sustain wellbeing. In Scotland, and the rest of the UK, there is an increasing number of impressive agencies and initiatives dedicated to ensuring that the arts, and artists, play the fullest possible role in complementing, and aiding, the work of statutory health and social work agencies. In the Highlands, there have been highly successful one-off projects in the past, and currently a handful of significant local initiatives, but much still needs to be done to mirror the structures which operate successfully in the rest of the country. Most importantly, strategies and action plans related to health care and social work provision need to acknowledge the benefits of, and identify mechanisms for, involving the arts in a positive and practical manner. This document is intended to offer evidence, food for thought, examples of best practice, and sources of information, to aid a process of integration.

Jermaine Allison
Robert Livingston
November 2002

We are in the process of creating,
A shared vision.
In order to do so, It is necessary,
To connect all parts of the system,
To integrate the similar,
And the dissimilar,
Unleashing the power of creativity.

Margaret Newman

'Creative Routes to Health'

A Toolkit for Involving the Arts - Jim Neville & Helen Anton 2002

Introduction

There has been much debate and advocacy undertaken over the last few years into the possible value that the arts could contribute to both current and proposed health initiatives. Particular and detailed discussion, exploring the arts and mental health and more specifically the use/incorporation of the arts in mental health promotion have, taken place nationally and locally.

It is broadly recognised that the raising of the profile of the arts in relation to mental health during the Mental Health Awareness Year in 1999, the joint working of Highland Health Board and HI Arts, and the many initiatives by organisations and individuals Highland wide (whether under the umbrella of HHB/HI Arts or independent of them), has at very least suggested that arts/ health initiatives may have a positive effect on outcomes aimed at tackling nationally targeted issues. These issues include social inclusion, stigma, disenfranchisement, individual and community empowerment etc. It is similarly recognised that the incorporation of the arts in mental health initiatives may have gone some way to expose, and perhaps begin to impact on, some of the real and perceived barriers to improved mental health for all of us.

Coinciding with this ongoing dialogue has been the broadening of the debate as to what exactly is meant by health promotion and an opening up of the dominant medical model to one that includes other possibilities as to what mental health promotion could/should encompass. This debate has taken place locally and nationally with a recognition that many of the national strategies and the political drives behind them have been broad enough to include these hoped for wider and inclusive definitions.

Here in Highland, there has been an increase in the number of events and forums for dialogue and dissemination. Many of these have been driven by HHB/ HI Arts. The experience and backgrounds of those contributing to such events have also broadened to include many who have previously been unaware of or closed to the possibility that the arts could/should contribute to health. Despite these initiatives and despite the fact that national strategies acknowledge and encourage exploration and dialogue into the possibilities that the arts could offer health initiatives, our own local approved Mental Health Framework for the Highlands has no mention of the arts, and does not have any flexibility within its funding priorities to include the wider view of mental health promotion that has evolved out of the above dialogue.

This document has been produced because, despite the debate and advocacy undertaken, the role of the arts either in a therapeutic or a more general context does not figure significantly in key healthcare documents and strategies and is not high on the agenda of key planners and funders.

At the July 2001 Arts and Mental Wellbeing meeting the issues highlighted above were discussed at length. The following question was posed:

How could investors in arts/health initiatives take the current situation forward and continue debate and dialogue in such an apparently closed climate?

It was proposed that the compiling and dissemination of an **advocacy document** might help to raise awareness of the work that was being done.

The document could also include a literature review exploring the uses of the arts as a tool/vehicle for health promotion, highlight the potential for future development and go some way towards developing a set of guidelines and principles in using the arts in health projects. It was proposed that the initial preparation for such a document should include the following:

- Desk research including internet
- Scottish case studies
- Roles of existing arts-based companies across Highland
- Project descriptions
- Explore funding structures
- Develop a set of guidelines/principles for including the arts in projects
- Highlight the need to reduce stigma and tackle inequalities and social exclusion

Subsequent discussion resulted in funds being available to second a researcher for two days per week over six weeks to research the document and take it to first draft stage. The researcher was also asked to include activities that involved outdoor pursuits, e.g. forestry management, environmental conservation, path building, dry-stane dyking etc, and to include initiatives that involved exercise/sports activities, e.g. cycling networks/sport for all, etc. Case studies were to be taken from a broad and varied spectrum of initiatives across the Highlands of Scotland and be representative of as many age ranges and abilities/disabilities as possible.

Guidelines and Principles for Creative Health Projects

- **Commitment** – awareness that from small acorns large oak trees can grow – but this requires a lot of work and can take many years. Those getting involved are required to balance that involvement with their other everyday concerns and commitments. The initial discussions and planning, the realisation of the project, ongoing project management and audit can seldom be entirely carried out by sticking to rigid working times. This implies that flexibility is paramount. There is also a danger of much work being done by only a few.
- **Plan for a long haul** – it will take a long time to jump through all the hoops necessary to get a project up and running. It will take much longer to see, and be able to measure, evidence of community integration, raised confidence, self-esteem, improved mental health and reduction of stigma.
- **Use Local skills** – As one would expect, there are many skills and talents within communities and there is much knowledge and experience. Although it is likely that advice or guidance from organisations/agencies may be required, the goal in accessing such assistance should be community empowerment and a striving for independence. In any community there are likely to be planners, solicitors, architects, administrators, artists, healthcare professionals, builders and so on. Some communities may be fortunate enough to have a councillor or MSP. In the case of CAYP in Cromarty, for instance, it is likely that some of these professionals will have children and will therefore have a local, personal, community interest in becoming involved. As one person said, “Why jump through a lot of hoops to access information from organisations when you can knock on your neighbour’s door? Why spend hours on the computer writing a proposal or description of a project, when you can lift the phone and have a chat after tea time?”
- **Take ownership** – This can foster commitment and allow for individuals/ groups to “go that extra mile” in planning the running of a project. It can also allow for ongoing dialogue so that compromise and common meanings can be arrived at when differing views or methods are being discussed.
- **Projects should be led from the bottom up, not prescribed top down.** They should be allowed to form their own shape rather than be forced into another shape that is deemed a better fit by funders, administrators or strategists.
- **Mission Statement** – This need not be anything grand. It can take the form of a paragraph or simply a name, title or logo that inspires. Taking ownership of the mission statement can help focus people in times of doubt about direction or when differing views are expressed. It is also important to take care with our documentation and watch what words and phrases we use – no matter how well-meaning. There is no point in having a vision, a philosophy and mission statement if the language we speak in our documentation is at odds with these. This applies as much to individual organisations as to administrators and strategists.
- **Growing together** - Arts and health should grow together and be cornerstones of the project. Sticking art on to an existing health project or vice versa makes no sense. If we accept that the arts in some way enhance the possibility of improved health and that health promotion is now wide enough to include non-medical/biological function for individual and community, then any well-run arts project will be inherently healthy in some way. It may transpire that the arts are

used as a hook to get people interested or gradually introduced over time. This is more to do with the language that people are familiar with and their expectations. It is important however, whichever strategy is used to promote, create and run a project, that arts and health are equal partners from the outset. The arts can have a positive effect on health in many ways. The arts can be introduced into people's lives in creative and unthreatening ways. Imposing the arts on someone who has not elected to receive 'an enlightening experience' can be condescending and could damage the credibility of any project. Similarly it could close people to the possibilities that the arts may have to offer.

- **Defining** - Philosophers have long argued about what art is or is not. They are still arguing. We will never define art. Let us accept that artists are artists and not experts in semantics. What is important is that the **dialogue** about what is or is not art or how it may in varying degrees offer possibilities for health promotion, is encouraged. This advocacy document is testament to that commitment to dialogue.
- **Professionalism** - If artists are unsure what is or is not art, then how do those involved in projects know who will be best for any given situation? What is important is that they look for safe practice, experience and professionalism in artists' work and demeanour. Here local knowledge can be very important. The use of other artists or people who are used to working with artists can be used to check on an artist's professionalism. With this there is a necessity to have an open mind and to trust that artists can be professional. There is a myth that artists are not organised, precise, disciplined, professional. Those artists who are professional in their approach will welcome the opportunity to show that they are, and will understand the need for stringent vetting. Those who are not will fall by the wayside and will not be committed to working through the vetting process. Studio visits, scrutiny of portfolios/profiles, networking with people the artist has worked with and care and attention to contracts are all reasonable and sensible ways to safeguard how resources are allocated and artists are chosen.
- **Networking and communication** - The need to network from the outset was highlighted throughout the data collection process. Simply, it helped to talk with others who were doing similar things. It offered avenues of support at difficult times, instilled hope when it was perceived that little progress was being made. It helped avoid duplication and fostered joint working/partnerships. It created contacts and friendships, sometimes across the globe. This in itself contributed to psychological wellbeing. Most importantly, communication and networking contributed to dialogue and offered possibilities. As the Scottish artist Alan Davie says, "You can't see life when you're in it".
- **Being allowed to make mistakes** - Making mistakes has always been something to be avoided. Following a known route to a certain end can often provide a reliable product. Certainly, learning and confidence can grow when reflecting on a process done well. Funding and audit requirements are geared to emphasise measurable aims and objectives. Resources are limited and often earned after much hard work and commitment and they can ill-afford to be wasted. However, experience and knowledge are increased when we have the opportunity to learn. More often than not it is through unforeseen circumstances and decisions, which on reflection did not turn out as we had hoped, that we learn most. Reflecting on them can be a positive learning experience by increasing our repertoire of healthy adapting and coping strategies. It is often the surmounting of a difficult situation that results in individuals' and communities' increased confidence and ability to cope. However, this is not a substitute for good planning and audit. Instead, a focus on outcomes, and an acknowledge-ment that individuals and groups will have to find their own shape, will increase the likelihood of creative and imaginative work. Positive and negative experiences can also be shared.

- **Conceived with local culture integral** - Some projects have been set up or reshaped to fit the needs of funders or because of the need to expand or redesign services or buildings. In some this has involved a change to corporate identity, policy emphasis and mission statement. It would appear that those projects that have remained true to local culture and that have actively involved local input in initial planning and in ongoing projects, have been most successful. Specifically, they have managed to engage with the local community, engender community involvement and integration and have therefore been able to keep hold of a stable membership. This has proved very important when project funding no longer remains available and programme and services offered have required volunteer input, subscription or fees. Similarly, organisations whose management structure maintains a strong local representation, or whose public face or contact is local, have fared well. When successful, this has been achieved without losing dynamism, without avoiding new or contemporary issues, and has often involved exposing communities to new ideas and enriching traditional cultural experience.
- **Funding** - "Can we have locally available revenue funding that does not tie us to a specific shape?" Most participants voiced some kind of frustration at the emphasis on targeted and project funding. There were many examples given but all participants, although frustrated, understood the rationale for this and tried to work within it. People were generally tied to tight requirements for funding that stifled creativity and that often acted against the possibility of sustaining projects.

There was a consensus that the Highlands of Scotland were different from many other areas and that a dialogue about the geography and the funding could take place to achieve potential creative solutions particular to the area. This type of solution was compared with the way medicines and treatments were often prescribed on a symptomatic basis, so that you could end up getting four or five different tablets for symptoms and side effects, rather than looking at the cause, i.e. a reactive instead of a proactive approach. It was suggested that a root and branch overview of funding might solve some of these issues; however it was acknowledged that in the process funding generally would become very chaotic and many projects would cease to exist.

A possible solution was looked at whereby the Highlands were viewed as a 'core and cluster'. In this view, the Highlands could benefit from both devolved and centralised networks. Areas like Ullapool, Fort William, Lochinver, Aviemore, Inverness, Nairn, Wick, Portree and Gairloch could be established centres of activity, spanning out to network with individuals and organisations in each surrounding area. Each centre could be linked to the other centres and all affiliated to a central core. Authority and accountability could be devolved and funding able to cross boundaries, allowing for outreach work and partnerships whereby networks of individuals and organisations could span out. Funding could be prioritised, not by dividing it equally amongst each area or by population, but on a needs basis. Due to distances involved and resource implications, a small project in Northwest Highland may cost more than a larger project in Inverness where costs can be kept lower. However, larger established organisations could then do prolonged outreach work in remote areas and offset the cost from both central and periphery sources.

There was some discussion that this could be driven and financed by a creative Health Tourism initiative that sold Scotland at home and abroad as a place to take part in healthy pursuits. The private money involved could then subsidise many projects including any future art, green pursuits, 'exercise on prescription', etc initiatives. Tying in with centres for Higher Education could ensure sound research, networking, value for money, quality, and safe practice. It was generally acknowledged that North West Scotland misses out on a lot of possibilities due to

the geographical nature of the area, e.g. Sutherland does not have a job centre and yet is one of the largest bounded areas in Europe?

- **Research** – There are sound research methodologies which can explore arts/mental health promotion initiatives. There are also individuals and organisations locally who could validate such research. It is not that the dominant culture of administration and medicine do not recognise anything other than qualitative research. It is just that they are not familiar with any other way. Increasingly, empirical evidence is struggling to measure health outcomes adequately in terms of lived experience, quality of life. With the voices of service users becoming more and more important in planning health and cultural strategies, other ways of asking research questions and answering them need to be adopted. People's individual experiences and histories have long been overridden in favour of the big histories of the dominant cultures. Some argue that it is this lack of a voice or an individual history or memory that contributes to disempowerment, disenfranchisement and lowering of health.

Much of contemporary research in health, sociology, ethnography etc is involved in exploring the fact that there are many possibilities and not one single truth. If our strategies are to be based on sound research, then time and resources need to be made available to carry this out. If not, research will lose validity and will not stand up to scrutiny. If we expect professionalism from those who aim to set up, manage or contribute to projects involving the arts and mental health, then our research needs to be equally rigorous. In the absence of such rigour it can hardly be surprising that those who would prefer to stick with a reactive and deconstructivist model of health delivery will view with scepticism the inclusion of the arts in that delivery.

A Park

Some time in the park is a good thought
Away from busy shops and the things you have bought

The quietness fills the air around
And the white swans glide on the pond they have found

The grass nearby is fresh and green
As the sun shines down, beauty is seen

People relax in the peace of the day
Letting all their cares drift away

The park is filled with a stillness of it's own
Where time stands still for you alone.

Avie Ritchie

Case Studies and Examples of Good Practice

For some time now it has been argued that the Highlands and Islands have some distance to travel in achieving better links between the arts and healthcare sectors. There is little doubt that many existing arts projects within the Highlands would gain added value from greater involvement with the healthcare sector and vice versa.

However, to ensure that positive steps are taken in reaching the desired destination, a change in attitude amongst budget holders and planners needs to be introduced and encouraged. At the current time the medical model takes the lead and the role of the arts is not well understood. Despite some tentative steps being taken and a little progress made, the role of the arts largely does not exist in key healthcare documents and strategies and is seldom on the agenda of planners and funders.

To help travel this road, it is accepted that the production of an advocacy document, drawing together existing local, national and international evidence, while raising the visibility of work already being done and the resulting benefits, would be a good starting point.

The value of creativity in the community:

There can be no argument that creativity is a powerful resource which is often not being used to its full potential. It can be used as a tool to change people's lives, to open up doors to new experiences and to enhance our environment.

Arts in the community can often be the only way for people to experience art and its benefits are far-reaching. Art brings benefits to our primary senses. Touch, sight, hearing and to a lesser degree, smell, are all strongly and positively engaged when participating in an arts project. There are also many broader social and developmental benefits. We know that some of the most successful projects have thrived in disadvantaged areas where there has been a crisis of self-confidence - challenging its participants to do things which they didn't believe they could do and making them more able to deal with future challenges. However, many of the benefits associated with arts projects in the community are simply not quantifiable; like a stone thrown into a loch it is impossible to see how far the ripples reach.

To demonstrate this further, the following case studies have been selected because of their innovative approach to the promotion of wellbeing and resulting confidence building. It is hoped that these case studies will enhance and strengthen the document and serve as encouragement to decision makers as to what is possible.

On a **national** level, there are many projects and initiatives currently taking place which have forged strong links between the arts and healthcare sectors and, most importantly, from which the Highlands can take some inspiration. These include:

Dancing Nation. Four People, Four Stories. Four Communities:

Featuring a group of breakdancing young men from Warrington, a dance company for people with and without disabilities from London, an African-Caribbean youth group from Birmingham and an adult community dance company from Oxford, Dancing Nation reveals the importance and impact of community dance.

Further information from:

Foundation for Community Dance, Cathedral Chambers, 2 Peacock Lane, Leicester, LE1 5PX, 0116 251 0516

Nurses Purchasing Cards:

The National Network for the Arts in Health has been asked to provide an information pack for those Ward Sisters wanting to use the arts to improve the ward environment for patients. Further information from:

NNAH, 140 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, London, SE1 7AE, 020 726 1263

Imagine London:

Imagine London was set up two years ago by the King's Fund, an independent health charity, to explore young people's perceptions of how London could be made a healthier place in which to live. Further information from:

The Kings Fund, 020 7303 2400

One national project that merits further discussion is that of the Common Knowledge Project which is currently taking place in Tyne and Wear.

Common Knowledge Project:

Looking at the wider picture, The Common Knowledge Project places arts activity at the heart of community health development and clinical practice. It pioneers a new approach and a vibrant network of artists, health professionals, teachers and academics. Local Authority representatives, voluntary sector entrepreneurs and community participants are working together to achieve a common aim – **to achieve and practise healthier citizenship through creative collaboration.**

This healthy citizenship may be achieved through adopting the following goals:

- To disseminate useful knowledge and information
- To mutually define arts in health in the Tyne and Wear Health Action Zone
- To achieve community participation.
- To support collective aspirations in community health
- To change the way people work
- To create a positive emotional environment for the project

There are three stages to the Common Knowledge process:

1. A two-day induction, gathering together up to eighty people of mixed backgrounds and interests. Two such events took place in Tyne and Wear, each exploring how the arts can identify and address health needs and review experiences within communities. These were followed up with groups of Common Knowledge participants in specific areas of Tyne and Wear, sharing ideas and formulating projects.
2. Currently, twenty pilot projects are being developed across the Health Action Zone, each tackling a unique application of arts in health for community or clinical settings, informed and supported by the network. Issues of mutual concern or curiosity are then explored through an 'Action Day'.
3. During 2002 there will be a regional 'showcase' of events to celebrate Common Knowledge and deliver the infrastructure for genuine joined-up practice in arts and health.

Action Days and Pilot Projects:

Action Days cover a topic of common interest ranging from arts on prescription to therapeutic uses of music, to visiting inspirational arts in health projects.

Pilot Projects currently underway:

- 'It's on the Table' – a series of 15 interlocking tables on the themes of nutrition and conversation.
- A video animation project looking at communication between health professionals and client groups.
- A health-themed friendship garden in a local primary school.
- Embroiderers Guild members working with people with Alzheimer's.
- Singing and music for terminally ill people, involving a local medical practice.

All of the above are cross-sectoral projects devised by participants of Common Knowledge and therefore creating a sense of ownership and wellbeing.

Further information can be obtained from

**Mike White, CAHHM, the Business School, University of Durham,
Mill Hill Lane, Durham, DH1 3LB, 0191 374 7169 mike.white@durham.ac.uk**

The Mirror

Mirror show me what is real
Tell me 'bout the way I feel
Have I got a smile today
To send me on my merry way
Or is my face long and frowned
Looking at the sorry ground

Oh mirror help to ease the pain
Tell me I'm handsome again
You can halt the hands of time
And take me back to my prime
But I have changed for the worse
You have given me this curse

My eyes' bolts of blue are hard
Like your steely cold façade
Underneath my soul so black
Turns cold when no mirrors block
True horrors of this waiting game
When far I roam from your frame

Show me the man, say what's to come
Show me the money as yet unwon
Be my guiding unfaltering light
Reflection tell me which way was right
Make the difference, make the change
Mirror make me all the range

In the morn, with night not yet gone
The face I don, is an evil one
Hair to shave and to comb
Same today and the morn
Mirror please make anew
Everything in your view.

Alastair Cruickshank 21.11.97

Other National Examples:

Survivors' Poetry Scotland (SPS):

'Developing the voice and building self-advocacy skills through creative expression'

Launched in 1995, SPS is a vibrant and innovative arts organisation based in Glasgow. It is a rapidly growing, user-led project which offers a variety of workshops and events within the community. In its own definition, a 'survivor' is a person with current or past experience of a psychiatric hospital, people using tranquillisers or other medication, users of counselling and therapy services, people who have suffered child, physical, sexual and racial abuse, drug and alcohol addiction, as well as other people who can empathise with such experiences, including disabled people. Such problems can cause a collapse of self-confidence and a sense of social exclusion and for these people Survivors' Poetry can, and does, provide a lifeline.

Examples of work to date:

Workshops:

SPS writing workshops stimulate creativity and enable people who identify as survivors to create work that they can be proud of. According to one participant, writing 'gives me a sense of being in control of things'. The creativity in each person's work is appreciated and encouraged in a supportive environment.

During 2000, SPS ran around 150 workshops across Glasgow and new groups met in Anderston, Tollcross, Tradeston, Bridgeton and Kirkintilloch. Twenty of these workshops were led by visiting professional writers. A successful project also took place in Govan with a series of a dozen writing workshops with groups of adults with learning difficulties.

Performance Group:

In addition to the above, over 50 workshops/rehearsals on drama and performance skills were held. These enabled participants to create dramatic sketches and performances of poetry, drama and song. In November 2000, the group produced its first full-length play, 'Studies In Grey', written by members of the group and performed at Ramshorn Theatre, Glasgow. SPS performances also took place at the Scottish Poetry Library as part of the Edinburgh Fringe. Members also visited two separate Glasgow art galleries and wrote on the theme of specific works of art.

Other Events:

Regular performance and social evenings are also held in Glasgow, and give participants the opportunity to gain confidence by reading their work to a friendly and appreciative audience. One highly successful event was a shadow puppetry evening: during two workshops on the preceding week, participants created puppets and prepared poems and scripts with the help of a visiting puppeteer.

As part of Glasgow's West End Festival, The Margaret Blackwood Housing Association SPS held an exhibition of their work, and staged five lunchtime seminars on different aspects of art and health.

Monthly poetry readings at the Botanic Gardens, Glasgow, and Tollcross Courtyard also took place, as did a Halloween reading which attracted over 100 children and their parents; this was the first of what it is hoped will be many events for children.

Publications:

SPS continue to publish 'Nomad', a challenging journal of high quality creative writing which combats stigma by giving survivors a voice.

Also published in 2000 was a commemorative book of poems by Susan Watters and a booklet by the Govan Lifeskills Group, and 'No Title', a guide to survivor groups and how to publish their work.

A booklet of poems and images of homelessness by SPS volunteer, photographer Jim McCann, was also the subject of a three-page photo spread in the Big Issue, images from this have also been used in a Shelter campaign. Work is also in progress for a new SPS anthology, to showcase the best of survivor-writing Scotland-wide.

Training:

Fifteen people from SPS and other writing groups across Scotland undertook a weekend's training in facilitating survivor writing workshops organised by SPS Network Project. SPS aims to enable members of its workshops to develop the skills necessary to lead groups themselves. Twelve of the fourteen people currently working in Glasgow as SPS facilitators started as survivor members.

Scotland-wide Network Project:

Although SPS was founded in Glasgow, there is considerable demand for groups throughout Scotland. One recent priority has been to help people in local communities to build pilot groups. The Network Project is seeking to develop a national framework through which survivor and therapeutic writing can prosper.

During 2000, the focus of work had been for existing groups to identify and help to prioritise development needs. At the present time, the work is concentrated in the south of Scotland, although significant links have also been made with groups in Dundee, Perth, Aberdeen. SSP work in the Highlands is at a temporary standstill, but should be resurrected in the future. One of the main priorities for the organisation, however, is the debate surrounding evolving a national identity and structure for the organisation.

Funding to allow SPS activities to take place is provided by Greater Glasgow Health Board, Scottish Arts Council National Lottery Fund, Scottish Arts Council, Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland and Glasgow City Council.

Further information can be obtained from:

**Survivors' Poetry Scotland, Templeton Centre, 62 Templeton Street,
Glasgow, G40 1DA, 0141 556 4554. www.sp Scot.co.uk**

Dundee Rep Theatre - The Community Company

'It's almost like being a child again, being able and encouraged to play. We don't see the mental health, we see the person.'

Based in the heart of Dundee, Dundee Rep is a unique organisation within the UK, providing one of the most comprehensive arts services in Scotland. It is a healthy and thriving artistic community, offering a varied programme of work performed by its resident company of actors as well as a full-time contemporary dance company – Scottish Dance Theatre, and the highly successful Community Company.

The Community Department:

Dundee Rep's Community Company developed from the Community Department in response to the sense of ownership local people had for their theatre, and their appetite for participatory work. It began in 1986 when the cast of professional and community actors came to perform 'They Fairly Mak Ye Work', an ambitious stage production set in Dundee and telling the story of local people. This also provided the model for another highly successful production in 1996, 'On the line – a celebration of Timex'. Many of their productions help to raise awareness of local issues, including health issues, and carry a message to a wide audience.

Another success and innovation of the Rep was the establishment of the first full-time drama therapist in the UK, providing high quality therapy programmes for adults with a severe and/or enduring mental illness. Following a highly successful Therapeutic Theatre Day in 1995, the whole area of art and mental health began to prosper.

Arts Advocacy:

The functions of the Community Department also include the Arts Advocacy Project.

With funding from the National Lottery Charities Board, the Arts Advocacy Project was set up in 1997, to offer people with mental health difficulties access to the arts as a means of developing self-advocacy skills, in order to facilitate creative expression and to help participants to have a stronger voice in the community. The response to that project was so positive that when the initial funding ran out in May 2000, the NLCB offered a further 3-year project grant to develop the work.

The Arts Advocacy Project works in partnership with local organisations to provide access to arts-based activities for local people with experience of mental health difficulties. A key aim of the project is to raise awareness of the value and importance of arts advocacy through consultation, training and public events.

The overall aim is to create a programme for the delivery of Arts Advocacy work that will be a model for involving isolated and disadvantaged mental health service users in the community.

The Arts Advocacy Project initially delivered workshops and programmes to mental health service users in a number of healthcare and social care environments. The benefits of the work for users led to an enormous demand for the work from psychiatric hospitals, day-care hospitals, social work departments and mental health organisations. Working together with these departments, organisations and associations, this project aims to:

- Provide access to the work for users via those organisations and established contacts.
- Meet regularly with Arts Advocacy groups in community venues and develop major projects with those groups.
- Integrate its work with other Community Department groups and with a strong and increasingly active community arts network.

This will further enable the project to:

- Provide an opportunity for mental health service users to have a voice, to be involved in the local community and to be part of an integrated community arts programme as a way of reducing isolation.
- Continue to raise and develop self-advocacy skills amongst disadvantaged mental health service users and to encourage and develop the expressive and creative talents of mental health service through its programme of work.
- Establish self-organising and self-sustaining groups that will support mental health service user involvement in community arts into the future.

At the current time around 90 people, all with experience of mental health illness, are participating in art, drama, and creative writing and photography groups through the Arts Advocacy project. It is an important opportunity for people to get involved in arts as a means of self-expression and empowerment. It is also a way of having a voice in the community which they might not otherwise have.

The work produced has received critical acclaim, and the writers and photographers have collaborated to produce 'Cured', a glossy, illustrated book and a photography exhibition shown in London; and a company of actors from the drama group have taken their first production on tour. Further information can be obtained from:

Dundee Rep Theatre, Tay Square, Dundee, DD1 1PB, 01382 227684.

www.dundeereptheatre.co.uk

ArtLink:

'It's about expression rather than suppression, reversing the old view towards mental health when you went into hospital, were dumped there and given medication.'

Artlink has been supporting opportunity and choice in the arts for people with disability since 1984. It recognises that the arts can create opportunities for:

- Social action
- Inclusion in local communities
- Learning
- Recreation
- Structured training and supported employment

Since their inception they have been running a variety of short and long term arts programmes in Edinburgh and the Lothians, and their vision remains 'to make the arts accessible'.

They currently run seven programmes and aim to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access the arts according to their needs and interests.

These seven programmes are:

Escort Service:

Enabling people with a wide range of disabilities to get out and about to arts venues and events in the company of volunteer escorts.

During 1999 this project had 200 clients, 110 volunteers and undertook 1000 outings.

Hospital Arts:

This project programmes three art galleries and an extensive programme of participatory arts projects in hospital throughout the Lothians.

During 1999 this project involved 290 participants, during 321 sessions with 6 artists.

Arts for Mental Health:

Facilitates cultural participation for people with mental health problems in order to promote increased social contact and self-confidence and to combat stigma.

During 1999 this project involved 70 participants, during 498 sessions with 12 artists.

Community Involvement Programme:

Investigates methods of supporting the inclusion of people with disabilities in a range of community-based resources.

During 1999 this project involved 42 participants, during 117 sessions with 13 artists. 628 people attended these sessions.

Art of Change:

Arranges a wide range of arts opportunities for people with learning disabilities within their homes, community venues or in the 'Art of Change' Studio.

During 1999, 48 participants were involved in 600 sessions, through 21 separate events. 15 artists were involved.

Artlink Midlothian:

Develops centre and community-based arts activities for users with learning disabilities from the John Chant Centre in Penicuik and organises a range of arts activities for people with mental health problems in the Orchard Centre and Midlothian communities.

During 1999 this project involved 77 participants and 6 artists, through 174 sessions.

Artlink West Lothian:

Provides community-based arts activities for people with mental health problems and also a community studio and gallery space in Broxburn.

During 1999 this project involved 20 participants and 6 artists, through 100 sessions.

Artlink acknowledges that the arts are an important tool in achieving positive inclusion in local communities and works towards building partnerships to achieve this. It recognises that everyone has the right to participate freely in the cultural life of their community and works towards achieving this, based on the resources available.

Funding for Artlink comes from the following sources: Scottish Arts Council, City of Edinburgh Council, West Lothian Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian NHS Trust, National Lotteries Charities Board, Mental Illness Specific Grant, Lothian Primary Care Trust, Lothian Hospitals NHS Trust.

Further information can be obtained from:

13a Spittal Street, Edinburgh, EH3 9DY, 0131 229 3555,
easyweb.easynet.co.uk/artlink

Arts and Older People:

It is widely recognised that the arts are very much concerned with people, their ideas and feelings, and to this end age should not be a barrier. Everyone is capable of being creative and appreciating art in their own individual way. All art is subjective, with our perceptions based on our own ideas, knowledge and experience.

During 1996 a seminar was organised for artists working specifically with older people. One of the main outcomes of this work was a summary of the positive aspects of artists working with older people. These included: it's fun; it's good to play; it increases esteem, self-respect and confidence; it gives people a chance to do something new; it allows people to leave something important behind; it's important to have ownership over something that you make, or make as part of a group; it's important to **be** part of a group; it enhances people's environment; it passes the time; it keeps 'the old grey matter going' and it creates conversations – people start talking to each other.

For many old people it is actually the lack of access to the arts which can often be the main problem. As a means of addressing this, Age Concern have instigated a great many successful projects. For example, the establishment of classes, facilitated by professional tutors, in art and creative writing which were the result of an increasing number of enquiries from older people wanting to participate in activities 'other than bingo and knitting'. For a significant number of people on a low income, accessing other established provision was not affordable and presented additional difficulties, including time of day, formal learning environment and inconvenient location. As classes began to thrive and produced tangible results, including exhibitions, performances and articles in print, decision makers became more aware of the importance of arts activity in people's lives. Other benefits have included an improvement in the general wellbeing of participants, the formation of friendships and a sense of inclusion in the community.

Age Concern continue to be involved in many interesting and varied projects, including the performing arts, visual arts, language, broadcast and media arts, reminiscence and intergenerational projects. Reminiscence and intergenerational projects are particularly innovative and merit a closer look.

Intergenerational Projects:

Intergenerational activities have become increasingly popular in recent years and can include all generations, from babies and children through people of working age to retired people and the 'very old'. Intergenerational activities provide benefits and enjoyment to older and younger people, enriching both individuals and society.

Reminiscence Projects:

Reminiscence is defined as 'a collection or remembrance of some past fact or experience' and reminiscing is something we all do. Reminiscence as a discrete activity is not an art form, although, increasingly, reminiscence groups are using art and arts-related initiatives to aid their work. Reminiscence can be used as a tool, used to gather together valuable memories that can stimulate the imagination and result in dynamic artforms in any or many media.

Reminiscence work can be extremely beneficial: it can increase an older person's self-worth and self-esteem if other people show an interest in their memories, and this can add value to their past lives.

Age Concern also run an annual Age Resource Awards scheme which regularly includes an Arts category. The aim of the scheme is to raise awareness of older people's accomplishments, with awards offered to both groups and individuals of people aged 50+ who are involved in voluntary activities nationally or locally where their skills, knowledge and life experiences are playing an integral part. This includes the group winner of 2001, Spin-off, a project which took place in Arran. Following a successful class teaching textiles, run in 1991, several of the participants formed 'Spin-off' (Arran Spinners, Weavers and Dyers). The group run workshops, teach spinning, natural dyeing and weaving to all age groups. They remain passionate about their craft and are eager to preserve and pass on the simplest textile skills once used in the home before they are lost to memory.

More recently, the Scottish Arts Council have launched the Third Age Research project which involves grants of between £5,000 and £10,000 awarded to six different arts organisations, working in different artforms, to carry out a series of pilot activities with older people. These included Scottish Ballet involving people over 60 in a performance dance company called Gener8; Dundee Contemporary Arts have been introducing the over-60's to a range of new media and digital art, and Moniack Mhor (near Inverness) is offering a training course specifically for older people on writing for publication.

It is hoped that this research will give the Scottish Arts Council a very good indication of the most effective way to direct their support to older people in the future.

Age Concern, 113 Rose Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3DT, 0131 220 3345
www.ageconcernscotland.org.uk

Shower

Rain, rain, drips down the pane
Falling to the ground without a sound
Falls on the road as down it flowed
Lands on the traffic in the outside lane

Wipe, wipe, away with a swipe
A push to the side and on we ride
On through the puddles in the driving rain
A splash on the corner and we're home again

It falls from the sky so randomly
With no sweet snowdrifts for us to see
Into the gutter and down the drain
Back to the sea and home again

I watch from inside at this passing scene
Silently no more, the rain had been
Over the land a wet shadow is cast
On roll the clouds now the shower has passed

Alastair Cruickshank 7.10.93

Highland Based Projects:

Eden Court Theatre Outreach Programme

'One of the biggest problems in many areas is the lack of good opportunities and incentives for young people to stay or return to their own areas.'

It is recognised that the young people of the Highlands are particularly disadvantaged by their location and the sense of remoteness which exists, making access to the arts difficult and, at times, impossible. In this large but sparsely populated area there is no lack of enthusiasm among young people for drama activity, but drama and theatre practitioners often leave the area to find work. Opportunities for young people to participate in theatre arts and to develop their skills is therefore often only possible by providing jobs for imported specialists. In the past the lack of local expertise has fostered the assumption by some people that drama cannot be homegrown in the Highlands, resulting in a lack of confidence.

Eden Court is the only professional building-based theatre serving the Highlands, and it is ranked as one of the top ten provincial theatres in Britain. Over the last six years the theatre has shown its commitment to education and community outreach with an ever-growing programme of arts projects of all kinds. The aim of the outreach programme is to offer the highest quality of participation with professional administration and the back-up of the theatre.

The Outreach Team consists of the Arts Education Development Officer who organises performance arts projects for children and young people, the Film Development Officer and the Drama Artist. It has also employed nine youth drama workers to be based throughout the Highlands, offering young people access to theatre arts participation in their local area while continuing to be part of a single vision.

Over half a million pounds has been awarded to youth theatre arts partnership projects between Highland Council Education Service and Eden Court Theatre since 2000. A Board of Management oversees the projects, which are managed by the Arts Education Development Officer with Eden Court's Drama Artist fulfilling the role of team and training leader.

Examples of projects:

Starfeis:

This 4-year youth drama development project was funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Trust between 1996 and 2000. Five drama workers based in separate areas of the Highlands worked in and out of schools, setting up youth theatre projects in which any teenager could take part. These areas were Inverness, Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh, Ross & Cromarty, Caithness & Sutherland and Badenoch & Strathspey. The project ended in mid-2000 with a pan-Highland youth arts festival, receiving funding of £99,000 through the Millennium Festival.

The ACTivators:

This two year children's drama project received funding from the Scottish Arts Council Lottery, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Friends of Eden Court and the Highland Council. Four full-time drama workers deliver a programme to 'kick start' drama activities in schools and offer after school drama for children between 5 and 13 years of age. Local adult volunteers are offered support and some training to assist them to take on youth theatre work in their own communities, leaving a legacy when the project ends.

Schools have responded to the offer of ACTivator workshops and projects and have been given an introductory social skills workshop; thereafter projects have been arranged with individual teachers and after school groups have been set up.

These four drama workers are based in the following areas and visit a number of different schools:

- Inverness East, Badenoch & Strathspey where eleven schools and two Gaelic medium schools are attended, together with three out-of-school groups.
- Inverness City, where four schools are involved.
- Inverness West, Badenoch & Strathspey, where ten schools are involved and three out-of-school groups.
- Wester Ross, where twelve schools are involved and one after school group.

After Schools Arts Project (A.S.A.P)

The after school theatre arts programme will run between 2000 and 2003, and receives funding from the New Opportunities Fund. Targets for this project include and prioritise disadvantaged areas (those included in the Social Inclusion Programme).

Four full-time theatre arts workers lead extra-curricular and out-of-school arts activities with young people in one of four areas:

- Lochaber, with priority areas of Upper Achintore, Kinlochleven and Ardnamurchan.
- Caithness and Sutherland, prioritising Ormlie, Thurso and SIP areas on the north coast of Sutherland.
- Alness New Community Schools, including 5 feeder primaries.
- Inverness Community Schools including 5 feeder primaries.

Out of Eden:

Eden Court also raised money for a youth drama development programme in Skye & Lochalsh. The project, which runs between 2000 and 2003, enables a youth drama worker to be appointed in the area. The drama worker works with Portree and Plockton High Schools and on projects in feeder primaries that have asked for drama assistance. After-school activities will increasingly take priority, while every effort is being made to encourage local adult volunteers to take on drama projects with assistance being given from Out of Eden.

To summarise, Eden Court Outreach have achieved the following:

- Employment of twelve staff, reaching 5000 young people throughout the Highlands.
- Projects covering nine different areas within the Highlands.
- The range of work varies from large-scale to small-scale, from Eden Court to village halls.
- It works both in and out of schools.
- It explores social and curriculum issues.
- It takes place in both English and Gaelic.
- It gives the workers the opportunity to develop through training programmes.
- Most of all it gives children and young people the opportunity to participate.

For further information on Eden Court's Education and Outreach Programme, contact **Sonia Rose, Eden Court, Bishops Road, Inverness, IV3 6SA. 01463 239841. sonia.rose@highland.gov.uk**

Cromarty Action for Young People (CAYP)

CAYP grew out of an initial awareness in the Cromarty community of the need for decent facilities for children and young people of all ages.

It started with concerns about the total lack of anywhere for teenagers to go in the evenings, concerns regarding the safety of young people, and increasing vandalism and delinquent behaviours. There were already in existence a local playgroup and limited child-minding places for after-school hours.

A determined group of parents set up a public meeting and invited representatives from amongst others, Highland Council and Ross & Cromarty Enterprise.

Q. What do we need?

A.

- A dedicated space for pre-school child care, after-school care and youth club
- Trained staff to ensure highest standards of care
- Project and revenue funding
- A suitable building
- A committee with the skills and commitment to realise this

A committee was set up and met monthly for four years. CAYP Ltd was formed in 1997. Highland Council agreed the lease of a local building, and a grant of £199,577 from the National Lottery Fund was awarded later in 1997. Building commenced in May 1999. The building opened for use in September 1999.

Local collaborations, **"Together we can amaze"**.

- Ongoing liaison and partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Wildlife Trust, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, The Highland Council Ranger Service and Moray Firth Partnership, to develop a stimulating outdoor area to encourage appreciation of environmental and outdoor physical pursuits and projects.
- Ongoing liaison and partnership working with artists in drama, music, dance, visual arts and cinema, including initial work with Ross & Cromarty Artist in Residence to design interior and external signs and subsequent work with the wider Cromarty community to design a community tapestry.
- CAYP film and drama club have produced two pantomimes and two short films. A local TV and film production company have assisted CAYP in film making projects. The company offered training and the use of equipment and editing facilities free of charge.

Wider collaborations, **"Together we can amaze"**.

- "Safe, Strong and Free" puppet group workshops exploring awareness of bullying, strangers, and unwanted attention from known adults
- Highland One World Group workshops exploring self-awareness, respect for self and others and gender issues.
- CAYP welcomes visits from others willing to share experiences. Visits include: disabled people, police, local baker, mushroom farmer, community nurse. Children in turn visit others. Visits include: local bakery, post office. Visits are also arranged to the local library once a month and the local wild-life park annually.

- CAYP celebrates other cultures and celebrates Diwali, Hannuka, Chinese New Year and Hina Matsuri along with Christmas, Easter and Halloween. The children are also learning sign language.
- In conjunction with Highland Health Board (providing nurses undertaking a health promotion secondment), Community Education, Workers Educational Association, CAYP held 'Healthy Happenings' for parents looking at healthy eating, herbs, aromatherapy, organic foods. The parents' group have gone on to create an allotment in the town. CAYP has sought funding to offer free crèche facilities to those parents attending parent network classes.
- As a direct result of those initial health promotion secondments, a cohort of Cromarty residents was instrumental in raising awareness of the proposed GM crop plantings on the Black Isle. Their original concerns and the main current concern of the Anti GM protest was the lack of dialogue taking place within the local community and nationally concerning GM trials and future full-scale production. It would appear that dialogue is now ongoing.
- Media Education and Scotland Against Drugs did a project with teenagers at CAYP. Teenagers also took part in Highland Youth Conference, Young Quality Scots Awards, Planning Aid for Scotland and two events meeting MSPs. Some teenagers have also completed training in first aid, food hygiene and baby-sitting.

Note

Partly due to the decline in traditional industry, and the fact that Cromarty is at the end of a road, the traditional fishing village fell into decline. Residents of Cromarty had the opportunity to move to a new housing scheme on the outskirts of Cromarty away from the increasingly inadequate housing conditions of the fishing village. Then from the late 1970`s to the present, the boom and bust of the oil industry, the rise and fall of the aluminium smelter in Invergordon and government housing policies at the time, all contributed to a situation which saw an influx of people to the area. The availability of renovation grants and the pro development stance following the new industries at Invergordon and Nigg, meant that; incomers' could snap up the old fisher houses and renovate them. Cromarty is now a conservation area and regarded as an architectural gem. Tourism currently plays a major role in its economy and resurgence. Currently then in Cromarty, many of the original residents occupy the housing scheme outside the town, and the 'incomers' occupy the original village. Although many have adapted to this change in circumstances, and shared schooling, employment, leisure facilities and family merging have taken place, historically there has been some residual, mutual resentment and distrust in the now heterogeneous community.

In offering care and support to the children and families of Cromarty; in offering training and employment; and in working hard together for a number of years to realise these goals, CAYP has had a considerable impact on bridging this traditional community split. CAYP has at various times received funding and assistance from the following: Pre-school education funded by **Highland Education**. Day care and out-of-school care funded by fees and by **Highland Childcare Partnership**. Parents Network classes funded by **RACE**. Out-of-school leisure clubs funded by **fees and supported by volunteers**.

Cromarty Action For Young people, East Hall, Burnside Place, Cromarty, IV11 8XQ, 01381 600822 cayp@cali.co.uk

Stimulating Creativity:

'Creative development is fundamental to successful learning'.

Stimulating Creativity was launched by HI Arts in September 1997 to run as a year-long pilot to explore the potential benefits of linking the arts and childcare worlds. Partnerships were created between local musicians, visual artists and drama practitioners and childcare groups in four representative areas: Ross & Cromarty (traditional music), Orkney (drama), Skye & Lochalsh (classical music) and Argyll (visual arts).

The original idea behind the project came from a survey undertaken by Highlands and Islands Arts Ltd. (HI Arts), which demonstrated that a large number of working artists were based in the Highlands and Islands, many of whom voiced a clear desire to work more extensively in the communities in which they lived. As a means of addressing this, the initial discussions began with the then Rural Childcare Officer with the aim of moving the HI Arts ideas and the Childcare sector ideas forward.

It is recognised that the arts are an extremely powerful tool to aid the development of young children, and creative play in the early years is of vital importance in a child's development. There was also the recognition that an increasing number of children are spending more time in childcare settings, and with the emphasis on core subjects being prioritised in the school curriculum, other activities such as drama and music can receive little attention.

Childcare, therefore, presents an important channel through which local culture and language can be passed on and developed. Encouraging expressive activities, which are based in communities and which use local talents, is a positive way of enhancing this element of children's lives.

All these threads were drawn together, and following a successful application to the Scottish Arts Council National Lottery Fund, the Stimulating Creativity project was launched.

At the outset, the major anticipated benefits of this demonstration project included:

- Enhanced children's social, intellectual, personal and physical development.
- Increased access for communities in rural areas to arts activities, arts opportunities and new resources.
- Improved level of skills in childcare sector and professional development for artists.
- Increased employment opportunities for artists in their own communities.

Activities during the year included a varied and well-documented programme of training, pilot activities, awareness raising and the development of permanent resources.

The project aimed to:

- Set up an accessible and safe structure offering participants opportunities for the exploration and development of ideas to stimulate creativity on many levels.
- Encourage, increase and develop the involvement of participants in arts activities by focusing on the pre-school and primary age group who are at an important stage of physical and mental development and will therefore carry and use the experience throughout their lives.
- Provide employment for local artists in each area.
- Provide an element of training for artists, childcare staff and others in the childcare sector e.g. parents, volunteers.

This would be achieved by:

- Working with key childcare groups and local arts organisations sharing advice and resources.
- Initiating a series of pilot arts activities in the participating groups.
- Raising awareness of the value of partnerships between the arts and the childcare sector to the children, the childcare workers, the artists and the wider community.
- Providing cascade-training experiences through the shared skills of the artist and childcarers.
- Developing permanent resources in each area based on the advice of the artists and play leaders involved in the pilot activities.
- Documenting the pilot project to provide recommendations and guidelines for the future.

The project was overseen by The Steering Group, made up of representatives from Highlands and Islands Arts, Children in Scotland/Rural Forum, Highland Pre-School Services, Scottish Pre-School Play Association, Out of School Care Federation in the Highlands and Islands, Orkney Pre-School Play Association and the Scottish Childminding Association.

In addition, many local arts organisations were identified as advisers, including: Skye & Lochalsh Young Music Makers (Skye), Feis Rois (Ross & Cromarty), St Magnus Festival (Orkney) and TInCAN, the International Contemporary Arts Network (Argyll).

Two co-ordinators were appointed on a job share basis as a more effective way of supporting the four areas which are geographically widespread. A further advantage was that the co-ordinators were also locally based in two of the areas. Their combined, in-depth working knowledge of two areas gave them a head start in practical aspects of the work. Their complementary skills in visual arts, drama and co-ordination provided a well-informed basis to share ideas and problems.

The conclusion of the pilot project saw a final conference held in September 1998 to link the experiences and observations of the adult participants in Stimulating Creativity, to gather input from a cross-section of professional childcare and arts representatives and together develop a framework for an Art in Childcare Strategy for the Highlands and Islands.

Financial support was provided by the Scottish Arts Council National Lottery Fund, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Argyll & the Islands Enterprise, Orkney Enterprise, Ross & Cromarty Enterprise and Skye & Lochalsh Enterprise. A 28 minute video, 'Artplay' was also produced with support in kind from television production company, Move On Up.

Because of the success of this pilot project, the intention had always been to undertake a second phase of Stimulating Creativity, based on the findings and outcomes of the pilot. HI Arts recently secured funding for a 2-year project which will provide a rolling programme of training for childcare workers and artists throughout the Highlands and Islands. This post commenced in Spring 2002 and is testament to all the work previously undertaken.

**HI Arts, Suites 4 & 5, Ballantyne House, Academy Street,
Inverness, IV1 1LU, 01463 717091. www.hi-arts.co.uk**

Local Projects:

Although there is a perception that there is a lack of larger scale projects linking the arts and healthcare sectors in the Highlands, there have been some very interesting small-scale projects, often operating in isolation. These include:

Age Concern:

Several successful projects have taken place around the Highland area, including an intergenerational project, which brought together participants from the Lunch Club and pupils from the local school, primary 7. They worked closely together to produce four mosaic panels representing the seasons. The panels are now complete and hang with pride on the walls of the local community centre.

In addition, a local Age Concern Community Worker recently undertook a fundraising event, 'Mystery Art in a Shoebox' to enable her to raise money specifically for arts activities. Local artists were asked to donate a piece of their work, small enough to fit into a shoebox. The boxes were then sold for £35 each.

One of the most successful and long-term projects took place around the Millennium. Kinlochleven Century to Century Project (now the Phoenix Art Club) began life as an idea from a local resident. She successfully applied for a Help the Aged Millennium Award which enabled her to fund a project giving the people of Kinlochleven the opportunity to record their stories through oral and visual means. Participants worked closely with two multi-skilled tutors who guided them through the project and helped to develop individual abilities. The project resulted in two exhibitions and mixed media 'books', created by those involved. The success of the project helped to raise self-esteem and develop new skills. At the end of the project the group sought further funding to continue as an Art Club, to allow members to develop their interests.

Artlink Highland:

Artlink Highland is a registered charity which seeks to respond to the interests of people with a disability to the arts. This is achieved by:

- Extending the range of arts activities in which disabled people participate and may administer.
- Promoting equality of access and opportunities for participation in the arts for people with experience of disability in the Highlands.
- Moving, by means of the work outlined in the above objectives, towards the achievement of fully integrated arts in the Highland area.

The potential user group for Artlink Highland embraces all age groups from children to the elderly, comprising people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health problems or sensory impairments. Artlink Highland organises different events, projects, workshops and exhibitions, and projects are directly organised and led by trained and experienced arts workers in dance, drama, music, visual arts, film and animation, pottery, creative writing and art therapy. Artlink has also compiled an extensive register of these artists which it has shared with a number of hospitals, centres, schools and disability organisations. The register also includes disabled artists.

Along with the Artlink Highland Register, other innovative projects have been undertaken by the group, including:

Linkworkers:

During the 1998 Highland Festival a scheme was introduced which provided a transport and companion service, enabling people to attend a range of events. Highland promoters offered concessions and, in some cases, free tickets for companions, and Highland Special Arts (now Artlink Highland) paid the transport and any expenses that were incurred.

Multi-media Project:

Three local artists collaborated on a multi-media project in a new Community Centre. The project involved pupils with additional needs from the local secondary school and non-disabled senior staff. Those taking part were given the opportunity to work with paint, materials, drama, music, dance and the recorded voice. The finished animation was then shown on a big screen.

Disability Equality Training:

During 2001, local artists and administrators were guided through a detailed philosophical and practical look at disability rights issues. This training helped to raise the profile and opened up a forum for debate.

Artlink Highland, Secretary, Kiltearn Steading, Evanton, Ross-shire, IV16 9UY

Soloists:

Art.tm, the Highlands' leading contemporary art gallery, has been involved in several projects which have successfully linked the healthcare and arts sectors. Amongst these was the **Soloist – exhibition of outsider art in Scotland** which took place in late 1998. The Soloist exhibition referred to the term *Outsider Art* by showing the work of artists who might otherwise fall outwith art's original definition. The exhibition sought to contribute to the opening up of boundaries which often encompass works by artists who are perceived to create outside the establishment.

It was the aim of the exhibition to show that there is *Outsider* practice taking place in Scotland. Further to this the exhibition sought to empower those creative individuals who make their own art form in their solitary position outside the art establishment, in the hope that more *outsiders* will be encouraged to demand that their work finds an audience.

The exhibition itself uncovered self-taught artists whose vision and manner of working is compulsive and unique. Six artists in total were involved in the project, all of whom had shown their art work in public before and through this process their talent would be offered to a wider audience. The artists involved included Alexander Allison, producing figurative drawings, central to each of which is his own signature which is different every time; Eve Reid who paints mystical, other worldly religious ideals, and David McCormick whose work is decorative and full of pattern, contained within these patterns are domestic objects or fantastical creations. The show itself went on to tour throughout Scotland and a CD-ROM was produced.

**Art.tm, 20 Bank Street, Inverness, IV1 1QU 01463 712240
info@arttm.org.uk**

List of documents currently shaping the agenda for change in Scotland.

1998

Implementing the Care Programme Approach (SWSG/Accounts Commission) Survey (1998))
Mental Health Promotion in Scotland - Board Position Paper (HEBS (1998))
Modernising Community Care: An Action Plan (1998)
Priorities & Planning Guidance 1999-2002 for the NHS in Scotland (NHS MEL(1998)63)

1999

A Shared Approach. Developing adult mental health services (Accounts Commission for Scotland (1999))
Services for Women with Postnatal Depression (NHS MEL(1999)27)

2000

Community Care - A Joint Future (Joint Future Group (2000))
Our National Health: a plan for action, a plan for change (2000)
Risk Management (2000)
The Same as You? A review of services for people with learning disabilities (2000)

2001

A Framework for Maternity Services in Scotland (2001)
Allies in Change Route Map (2001)
Annual Report – Mental Health and Well Being Support Group (2001)
Delivering Integrated Mental Health Care in Scotland's Primary Care Trusts (Institute of Healthcare Management, June 2001)
Independent Advocacy: "A Guide for Commissioners" (2001)
LHCC Development: The Next Steps (2001)
Needs Assessment for a Comprehensive, Local Mental Health Service (2001)
Rebuilding our National Health Service: New Performance and Accountability Arrangements for NHSScotland (2001)
Services, Care, Support and Accommodation for Mentally Disordered Offenders in Scotland: Care Pathway Document (NHS HDL(2001)9)

For further reading please visit individual project web sites. Contact your local Health Promotion Advisor with specialist responsibilities for Mental Health Promotion or your local arts development officer for help in developing local arts projects.

Arts & Health Contact List

Artlink

Director: Jan Bert van der Berg
13a Spittal Street
Edinburgh, EH3 9DY
0131 229 3555
<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/artlink>

Fusion Hospital Arts is also part of Artlink
Tel no: 0131 537 6127
<http://www.fusion-artlink.co.uk>
fusion-artlink@lineone.net

CAHHM
Centre for Arts & Humanities in Health Medicine
University of Durham Business School
Director: Dr Jane Macnaughton
0191 374 1294
Projects: Mike White
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Grampian Hospitals Art Trust
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pace@ednet.co.uk

The National Network For The Arts In Health (NNAH)
118 Commercial Street
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E1 6NF
020 7247 6015
info@nnaah.org.uk
<http://www.nnaah.org.uk>

Lesley O'Hare
The Music Institute
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Dunfermline
KY12 7JA
Lesley.Ohare@smtp5.fife.gov.uk
01383 314 118

Paintings in Hospitals Scotland
Director:
Princess Margaret Rose Hospital
41-43 Frogston Road West
Edinburgh
EH10 7ED
<http://www.pihs.org.uk>

Painting rental scheme in hospitals, and prisons.

Arts as medicine

The papers from the conference last year should be available very soon. Project Ability in Glasgow have further information.

0141 552 2822
info@project-ability.co.uk

Appendix

The Researchers

Jim Neville was chosen as researcher as he had a proven record and interest in arts/mental health dialogue. He had been involved locally over a number of years in projects and forums linking arts and mental health from both directions, and had been proactive in contributing to dialogue and strategy leading to the recent NOF application. He was also chosen due to his local knowledge and existing contacts with individuals and organisations working in arts/health fields.

- He is currently employed as a mental health nurse with Highland Primary Care NHS Trust. He has experience of working with clients with acute, and severe and enduring mental health concerns, and with clients with alcohol and addiction problems and has worked in both hospital and community settings.
- Throughout his nursing practice he has been interested in exploring how the arts can be used as a tool/vehicle for learning, teaching and dissemination in nursing with colleagues, clients and students. He is particularly interested in its uses in reflective practice, clinical supervision and practice-based research.
- He has recently been awarded a Masters Degree in Advanced Professional Practice in Health Care. He used this degree to research and explore the use of arts in his own nursing practices. The main themes explored were those of reflective practice, clinical supervision, practice based research, and in particular the dialogue between the individual and the dominant culture of which he/she is a part.
- He is also a practising artist exhibiting widely both locally and nationally.

Helen Anton is a practising photographer who also works part-time for Art.tm in Inverness. Previously for HI Arts she researched and compiled *Not Just Another Badminton Court*--a highly successful handbook on presenting the arts in village halls--and a guide to setting up local visual arts groups.

Data collection and methods – note by Jim Neville

It was clear from the outset that data collection and the limited time and resources available for doing so would determine the ultimate scope of the initial draft. Although spanning six weeks, the amount of time for data collection and critical reading, literature search and writing of document would be ten days.

The researcher was furnished with the names and contact numbers of suggested contacts locally and nationally. A decision was made to make best use of local knowledge and to identify initiatives by cascade, initially talking to known contacts and following leads from there. It is evident that the number of initiatives in the fields of arts/health was enormous and that those involved had knowledge and links to others. Similarly the scope and range of projects was varied and spanned a broad spectrum of methodologies, subjects, projects, settings and groups. There were also a multitude of funding structures and audit requirements for both funding and measuring of project outcomes. Some projects had been ongoing and established for a number of years, others were one-off smaller scale projects. Some were managed by established management structures and committees and employed various full and part-time staff on a permanent basis, while others used staff on a project basis as funds became available. Others were initiatives run by individual freelance artist/practitioners but had links to larger organisations. Some staff had recognised training in aspects of health or the arts; few had both. It was envisaged that the researcher would follow those leads either by telephone, e-mail, website browsing and arranged direct interviewing. This would be complemented by a broader internet and literature search to supplement interviews and identify other organisations. Due to the time constraints, not all of the

contacts suggested by the research commissioners were followed up. Similarly, only a selection of the organisations and individuals identified were written up as case studies.

It was envisaged that dialogue between commissioners and researcher could bridge any gaps and eliminate the possibility of spending time collecting data that were already available. Inevitably the initial draft would be incomplete; however those contacts made, and the data collected, would be sufficient to tease out common themes and go some way to creating a set of practice guidelines based on the knowledge and experience of the participants and on the critical reading of accessed texts. It is envisaged that any further work required to complete the document or to produce a brochure for dissemination could be targeted, thus ensuring optimum use of available resources.

Those interviews carried out were intended to be as open as possible, whilst ensuring that core information was accessed. It was planned to construct the interviews as dialogue and in an informal manner. Interviews were documented using disciplined listening and minimal note taking, then subsequently transcribed, allowing for familiarity with texts and intimacy at the point of data collection. Contact by e-mail or telephone could subsequently clarify any remaining ambiguity. This was supplemented with available documentation about the organisation, e.g. brochure, business plan, annual report as appropriate and available. The researcher has also decided that individual interviewees should remain anonymous. This proved to be beneficial as some contributions were 'off the record'. This willingness to speak informally contributed to a rounder picture of the experience of participants in working within organisations and with often tight guidelines for project management and funding. Frustrations were voiced and wish lists offered. This in turn aided the compilation of guidelines.

Data analysis

Guba and Lincoln (1989, p179) have argued that the act of enquiry begins with issues or concerns of participants and unfolds through a dialectic of iteration, analysis, critique, reiteration and reanalysis, eventually leading to joint constructions of conclusions. These constructions are then tested for their 'fit' in terms of their practical usefulness and relevance.

Although not previously proposed as a research project, the researcher approached it in terms of a practice based project. He believed it was important to ground methodologies within contemporary research literature, especially since the scope of data collection and interpretation is dictated by the limited time set aside for the purpose. This will give some validation to any conclusions reached or guidelines outlined.

The researcher views as a cornerstone of this study that data generated by the participant are fused with the experience of the researcher and placed in context. This dialogue between researcher and text, or reader and interpretations, acknowledges that researcher and reader bring to the analysis his or her own preconceptions (Koch, 1994, 1996). Heidegger, (1889-1976), rejected the notion put forward by Husserl, (1859-1939) that we are observing objects separated from the world of objects about which we try to gain knowledge; rather we are inseparable from an already existing world (Magee, 1988). Heidegger`s phenomenology emphasised understanding more than description. Experiences can only be understood in terms of one`s background, or historicity, and the social context of those experiences.(Burke Draucker,1999). The researcher feels strongly that this philosophy underpins the use of the arts in health initiatives and the move away from traditional models of categorisation and control as

treatment modalities in health and in viewing health promotion strategies. He views this as holistic. Thus the philosophy underpinning data collection, interpretation and the shaping of any future advocacy document echoes that of utilising arts to improve health.

The dominant culture of science, technology, funding, management is driven by quantitative audit methods. To date, little credence has been given to non-empirical methods for addressing health promotion strategies and initiatives. Similarly, methods used fall within a deconstructivist or modernist paradigm. However, any future use of the arts in mental health initiatives and their validation as a legitimate method will involve evaluating the products and processes of art engagement and production, and linking this to measurable health changes for the individual or community. This will use both qualitative and quantitative research methods and rely on research methods aimed at eliciting the lived experience of participants.

It may be necessary to move away from setting goals to working towards a known or perceived end, and instead to move towards a 'looking for possibilities'. This philosophy places emphasis on the journey rather than the destination, and focuses on continuing dialogue between the dominant culture and those possibilities that lie outside it. Not a 'this way or that' or science versus art, but instead a search for common meanings. The researcher then intends to work within post-modern principles. Richardson's definition of post modernism may be helpful here (1994):-

"The core of post modernism is the doubt that any method or theory, discourse or genre, tradition or novelty, has a universal and general claim as the "right" or the privileged form of authoritative knowledge. Postmodernism suspects all truths claims of masking and serving particular interests in local, cultural and political struggles...The postmodernist concept of doubt distrusts all methods equally. No method has privileged status."

This methodology offers an approach that in the future may provide new insights and knowledge about human experience. This in turn may drive initiatives on mental health and its promotion.

It is perceived that future research methods into the use of the arts in mental health initiatives will:

- draw on both local and national/international perspectives
- use academic, local and illegitimate knowledge, and plural voices, to broaden interpretative spaces
- encourage multiple perspectives and challenge the legitimacy of there being only one unitary theory.

*I'll ha'e nae hauf-way hoose,
but aye be whar,
Extremes meet - It's the only
way I ken,
To dodge the crass conceit o'
bein` richt,
That damns the vast majority
of men.*

Hugh MacDiarmid



HI-ARTS

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