

ARTS

FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

George's Story



It has been well documented that Arts play a pivotal role in reducing stress and anxiety in healthcare settings. The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing spent two years investigating the effects of the arts on health and wellbeing and concluded that, 'The time has come to recognise the powerful contribution the arts can make to our health and wellbeing.'

They published their report in July 2017 entitled *Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing* in which they present evidence that, 'shows how arts-based approaches can help people to stay well, recover faster, manage long-term conditions and experience a better quality of life.'

They found that 'visual and performing arts in healthcare environments help to reduce sickness, anxiety and stress.' Measured improvements include:

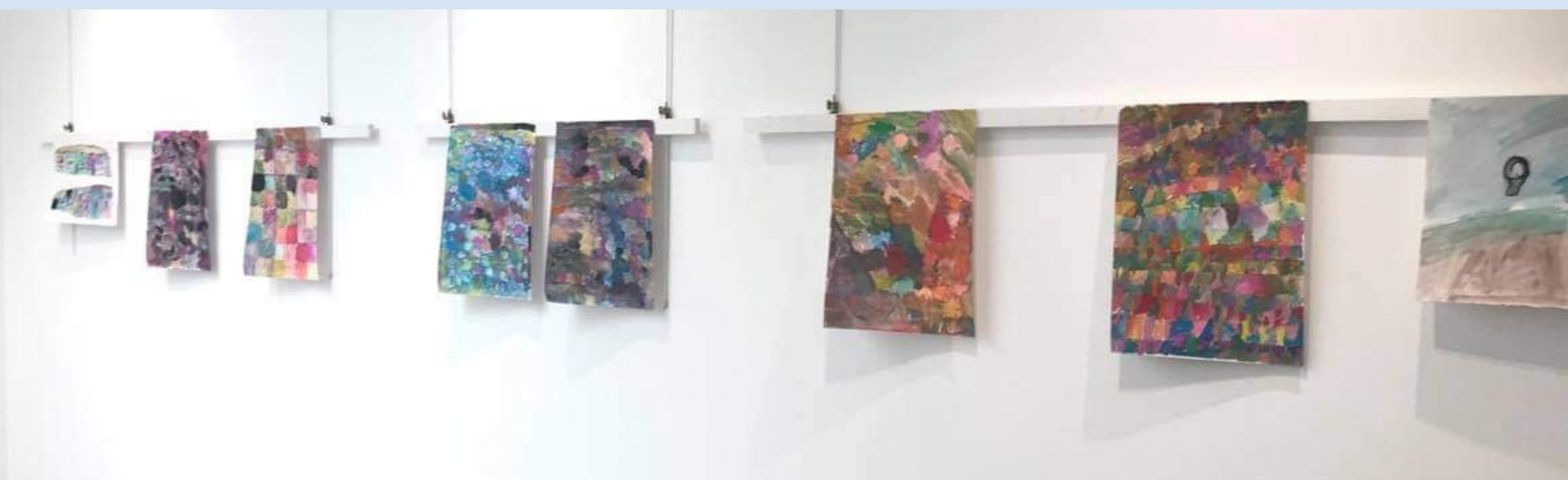
- inducing positive physiological and psychological changes in clinical outcomes
- reducing drug consumption
- shortening length of hospital stay
- promoting better doctor-patient relationships
- improving mental healthcare.

Our Arts for Health and Wellbeing work in Cardiff and Vale healthcare settings has indeed proved these statements to be true. However, we have also recognised the benefit of the Arts in physical healing as well and mental, spiritual and emotional.

In Intensive Care settings, music has helped lower the heart rates of patients, and a patient in our Stroke Recovery Service, George Pope, has shown us the pivotal part that creating art has played in his recovery from a stroke.

George has been with us undertaking rehabilitation to regain movement in his arms and the ability to walk again. During this time, he has used his innate passion for art to create wonderful paintings.

The work that George has created has been exhibited at the HeARTh Gallery in University Hospital Llandough and appreciated by everyone who has had the pleasure of seeing it. George has attributed a great deal of his progress to the ability to be creative and paint, and to be encouraged and supported to do this by both medical staff and the Arts for Health and Wellbeing programme at Cardiff and Vale UHB, supported by the Cardiff & Vale Health Charity



Recovery and Wellbeing through Art

George Pope, a current patient in our Stroke Rehabilitation Centre.

“Art has helped me in all sort of ways. In one particular way, it has helped my right hand move better and recover. Art also helps me to relax.

I started art two years ago due to attending some free lessons and I thoroughly enjoyed them. I then decided to buy my own equipment later on so that I was able to continue to make my art at home and then I realised I was getting good at it.

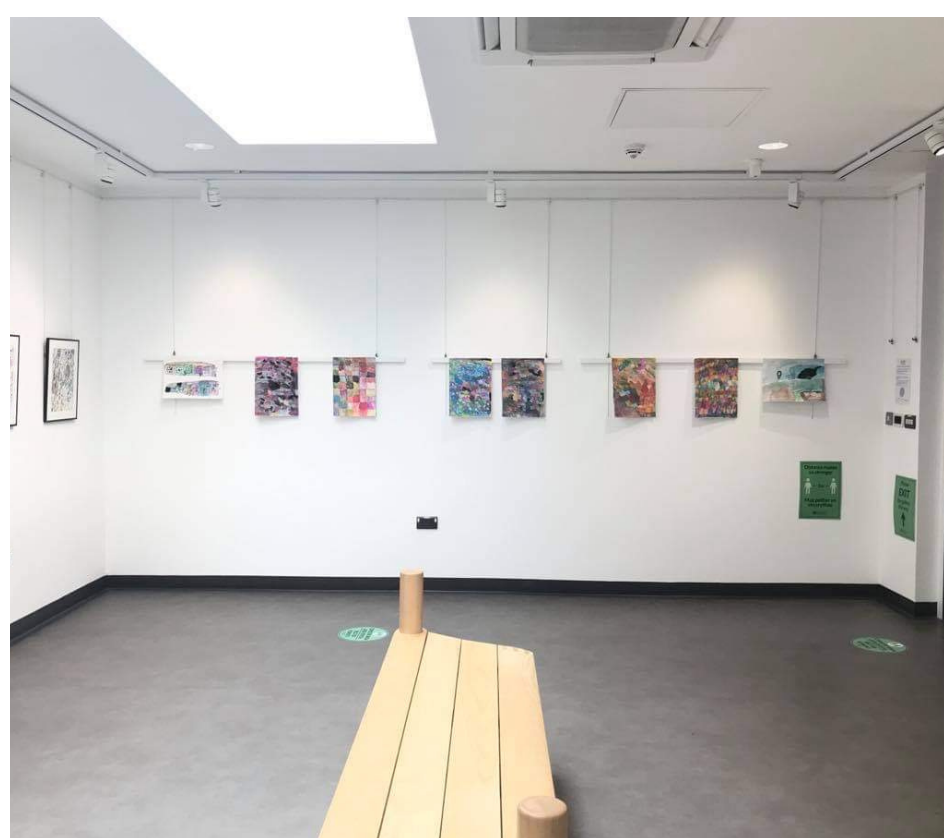
For my artwork, I am inspired by life in general. If I see a fox for example it inspires me to do wildlife scenes. My art has come on so much since I have been in hospital and I enjoy creating from my imagination. I have had lots of time to think and I am really happy that my art work will be shown in an art gallery.

My paintings show the truth, some are happy, some are sad and some are confused – that’s just life. My 1960’s inspired pieces are all happy, sad and confused and that is what’s real to me.

When I am able to go home, which will be soon, I will continue to make my artwork and I hope to enter an art show in Cardiff. I am proud of my art and want people to see it.

The effects of my stroke are now healing well and I am now learning again how to walk up steps after six weeks. My art helps motivate me to recover and I am able to use both arms now to make my artwork.”

George Pope
Stroke Rehab Centre



It's been an absolute pleasure having wonderful George on the ward, he is a ray of sunshine for so many staff and patients and has brightened up the ward with his art work and his personality day after day. He is often found in the day room churning out painting after painting and is always happy to share his work and his inspiration with others.

has progressed incredibly in terms of his upper limb movements during his stay with us and, I feel, his motivation to do his painting has contributed to this as he was able to practice bi lateral motions with his painting tools. He is a SRC star!

Natalie McCulloch (Occupational Therapist Technician)

George's enthusiasm and sheer joy in producing his artwork is clear for everyone to see, and has had a really positive influence on the mood and morale of the staff at Stroke Rehab Centre. It has also provided huge motivation for himself with his rehabilitation goals and to engage in therapy, as he is keen to sit out of bed and go to the day room and use his affected upper limb to help produce his pictures.

Chris R (PT)

George has allowed his passion for art to drive his rehabilitation and to regain functional coordinated movement of his left arm. He spends hours creating and inspiring others to create on the ward, but also uses his talent to express how he feels and to keep himself engaged in rehab with staff and patients through his recovery.
Jessica Evans (MPRA)

The encouragement to paint from staff, occupational therapy, physios and nurses has given him great confidence for his general wellbeing. Painting has helped him to express his feelings in a positive way. It has also given him an opportunity to exercise his hand in a practical way doing what he enjoys most.

Mo - George's sister and Ward Based Caterer at University Hospital Llandough

We all love seeing George painting at Stroke Rehab Centre. He's got such a lovely eye for colour, using it to express his emotions. He sometimes paints from memories or his vivid imagination, or cheeky representations of staff, showing his joyfulness! Painting has been a huge part of George's rehab journey, not least of all in how it's helped him to regain full use of his left arm and hand, which had been affected by his stroke. George's artwork has been a wonderful talking point and has helped staff get to know him. We're so impressed with his creativity and dedication to his work.

Jen Thomas (Occupational Therapist)

George has been glowing. Big wide grins. Loving talking to people about his paintings, including the display in the Hearth Gallery.

Author unknown

George has brought so much joy to our department because of his character and energy but his art has been enjoyed by us all too. He has even done portraits of us all!

Jess Simms

Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team

It has been a delight to converse with Natalie McCulloch, a staff member within the Stroke Rehabilitation Centre who has been a supporter of the Arts for Health and Wellbeing team for many years. Speaking to me about George and his passion for making art on the ward, it was decided that we would showcase and share George's Art and story within the Hearth Gallery at University Hospital Llandough.

George's experience with art, from recovery to enjoyment, showcases how immense creativity can be for our happiness, wellbeing and connection to others. The staff at Stroke Rehab Centre have welcomed his passion for painting and have been incredibly encouraging for him to keep being creative.

The Hearth Gallery is a welcoming place for all and it was a delight to showcase George's artwork for three weeks allowing visitors, staff and patients to enjoy his creations and read his story of how art really helped his recovery from stroke, both physically and mentally.

A huge thank you to George, Natalie and all the Staff at Stroke Rehab Centre.

Molly Lewis - Exhibitions and Hearth Gallery Coordinator – Arts for Health and Wellbeing.

The aim of the Arts for Health and Wellbeing team at Cardiff and Vale UHB is to improve lives through Art.

We are so proud that patients like George benefit from the Arts and their ability to access them whilst recovering from illness or injury in our care, and will be continuing our work to help other patients heal and recover.



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