



Mandate Event: The Arts Health Research Intensive

Hosted By: Snape Maltings, Suffolk

Date: 4-8 February

SCAN Mandate Attendees: Iona McCann, Outreach Manager, Art in Healthcare

The Arts Health Research Intensive was held at Snape Maltings in Suffolk from the 4-8 February 2019. It was presented by the Arts Health Early Career Research Network and the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine in partnership with Snape Maltings' Creative Campus.

The discussion

The Arts Health Research Intensive provided a rich introduction to the evidence base around the arts in health and fundamentals of evaluation and research exploring the following over 5 days through group-based debates, activities and presentations:

- The development and scope of the art and health field
- The psychological, physiological, social and behavioural effects
- Research and evaluation methodologies
- Practicalities and issues in carrying out research

It was delivered by leading researchers in the field Dr Daisy Fancourt from University College London and Jill Sonke, Center for Arts in Medicine, University of Florida.

Five 'Take Aways' from the discussions were:

1. **Shared learning is vital** - there were around 60 delegates from all over the world and across art forms – this was probably the most important aspect of the Intensive; being able to learn from these many and varied projects, experiences and contexts.

2. **Working with partner organisations is key.** There is a big difference between evaluation and research and realised that within the resources of a small organisation, it would be very difficult for research to be undertaken by one organisation on their own. It can therefore be beneficial to work with organisations like Universities to undertake research.
3. **Although growing, arts and health research is still limited,** particularly within the visual arts – we know as a sector that art is vital for health and wellbeing but need to continue to add to the evidence base to help show this – particularly to our colleagues in healthcare.
4. **Training in this field is limited and costly so being able to learn from each other is vital.** Networks are of such value. Art and health networks are more evolved in England than in Scotland so we should keep working collaboratively to develop this further. I also found it so important to learn from work in other art forms and from projects that were really integrated in healthcare.
5. **It is essential to develop and disseminate more research to drive the manifesto that art is vital for health and wellbeing of individuals and society.** Exploring in what ways, what kind of wellbeing? The [‘Creative Health’](#) report by the All- Party Parliamentary Group on Arts Health and Wellbeing was an important point for the sector in the UK and has had a real impact on policy and practice, though more investment is needed, particularly within communities. When thinking about barriers to participation, I think it is important to look at health inequalities and working in areas / with communities where this is more likely to exist

The information above was summarised by SCAN from an event report provided by attendee Iona McCann.