

The Importance of the Arts for Health

Epidemiological & Health Economic Analyses

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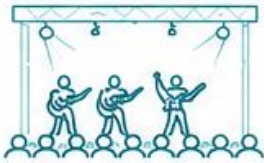
UNESCO Chair in Arts & Global Health

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Phenotyping arts engagement as a health-promoting behaviour

MODES OF ENGAGEMENT

ATTENDING



Live arts and cultural events and activities

CREATING & PERFORMING



Creating, practicing, performing, and sharing art

PARTICIPATING



Social, civic, spiritual, and cultural arts practices

CONSUMING



Arts via electronic, digital, or print media

LEARNING



Learning in, through, and about the arts

FORMS OF ARTS ENGAGED WITH (EXAMPLES)



DANCE / MOVEMENT

Aerial, ballet, ballroom, contemporary, hip-hop, jazz, cultural, tap, and more



LITERARY ARTS

Storytelling, fiction, poetry, memoir, screenwriting, literature for children, and more



MEDIA

Film, animation, video, digital media, technology, games, new media, and more



MUSIC

Classical, jazz, rock, hip-hop, choral, world, electronic, drumming, pop, and more



THEATER / PERFORMANCE

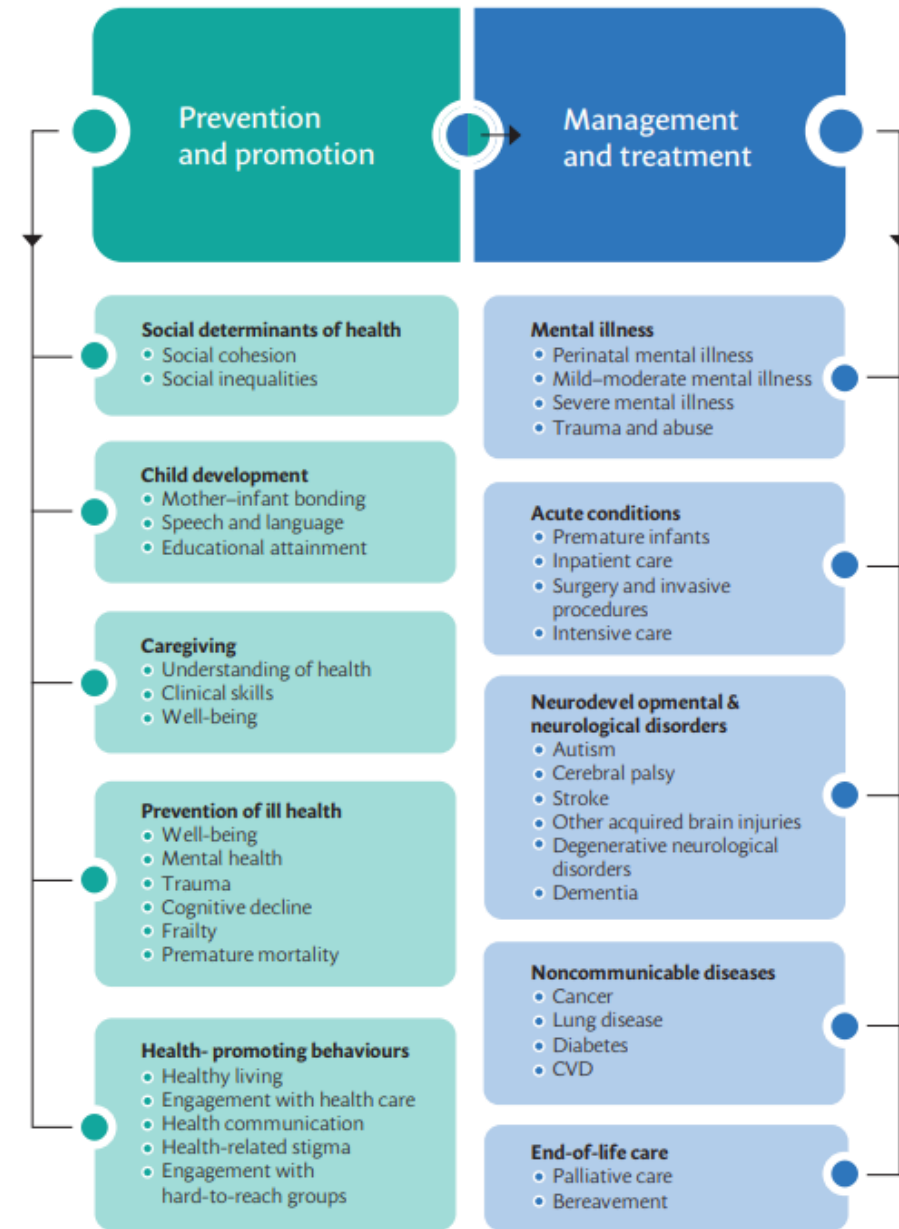
Theater, musical theater, puppetry, opera, spoken word, circus arts, comedy, and more



VISUAL ARTS, CRAFT & DESIGN

Painting, sculpture, photography, ceramics, textiles, design, illustration, street art, and more

The global evidence base



Caveats: considering the health economics of the arts

Value for money is complex to conceptualise for the arts

The arts have so many domains of influence:

- Health, education, criminal justice, employability, cohesion, creative industries etc etc

Value for money can be thought of in different ways:

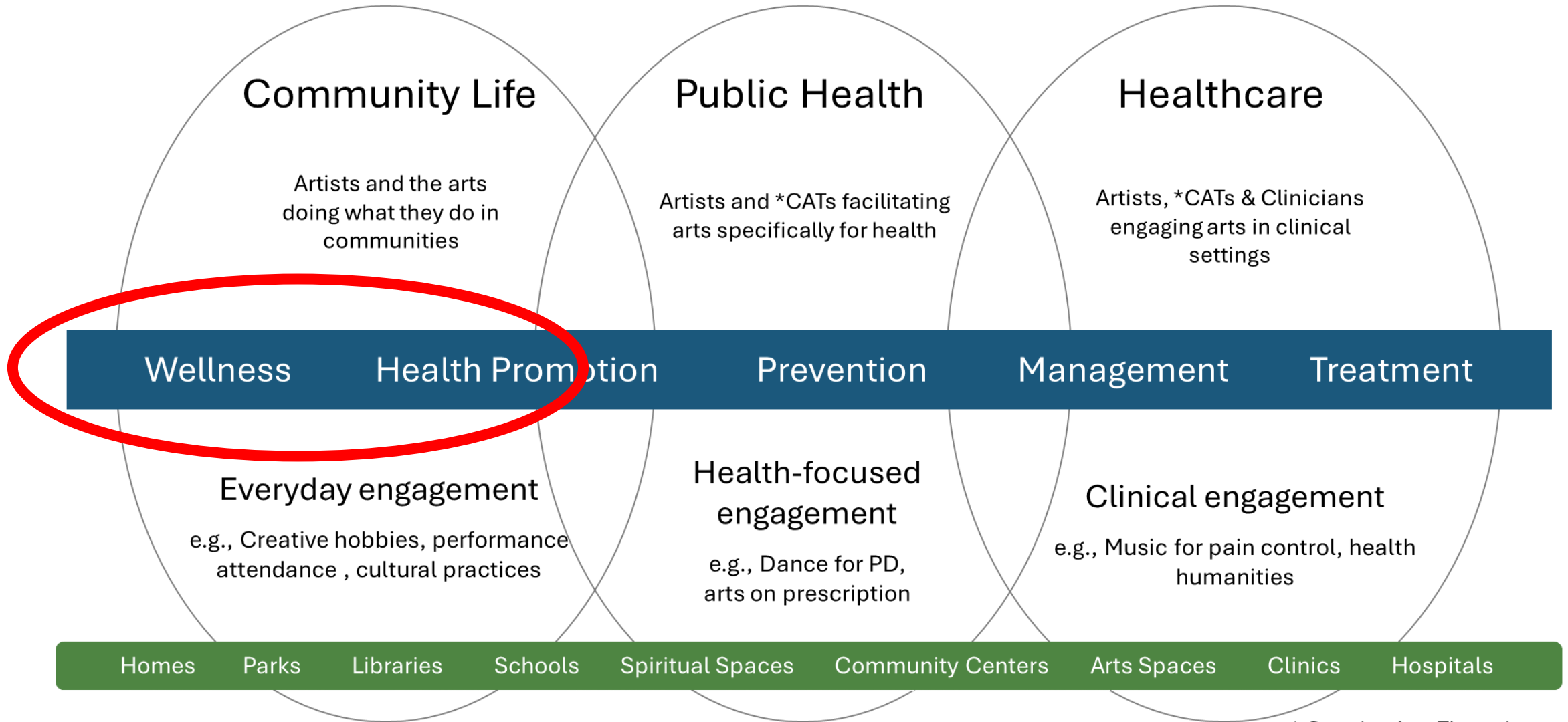
- **Efficiency** – do arts activities/interventions deliver the intended volume of activities/outputs in relation to costs?
- **Equity** – do arts activities/interventions reach all people that it intends to
- **Effectiveness** – do arts activities/interventions achieve a high volume and/or range of outcomes in relation to costs?
- **Economy** – is investment in the arts economically advantageous (i.e., spending less per output, or overall)?

AND... whole system approaches like arts initiatives can be complex to consider in traditional “value for money” terms

Outcomes can be valued very differently

- Value of matched and in-kind investment
- Value to the health system
- Value to the economy
- Value to individuals

The Arts & Health Landscape



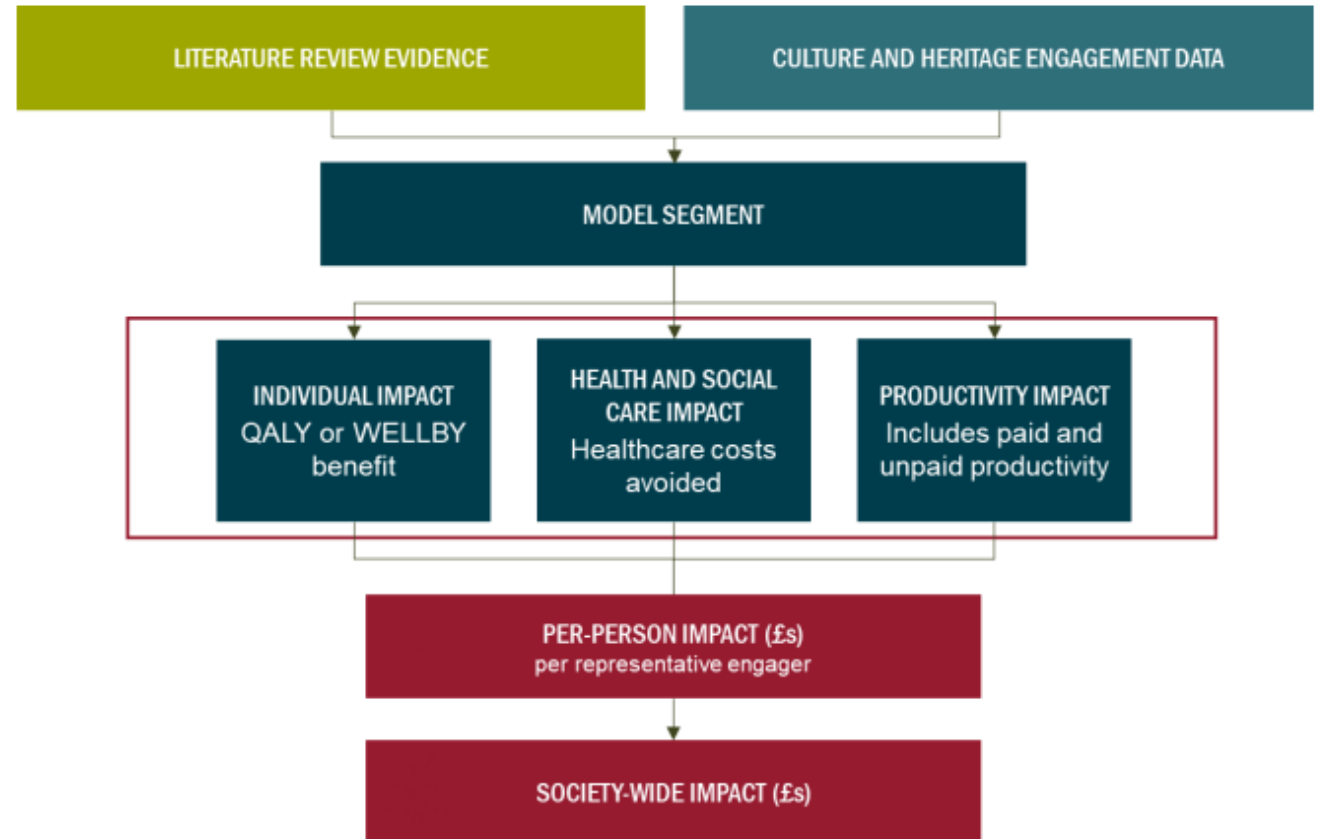
* Creative Arts Therapists

CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL: MONETISING THE IMPACT OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A report prepared for the Department for
Culture, Media and Sport

12 NOVEMBER 2024

Modelling Approach



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open Access



Arts, mental distress, mental health functioning & life satisfaction: fixed-effects analyses of a nationally-representative panel study

Senhu Wang¹, Hei Wan Mak² and Daisy Fancourt^{2*}

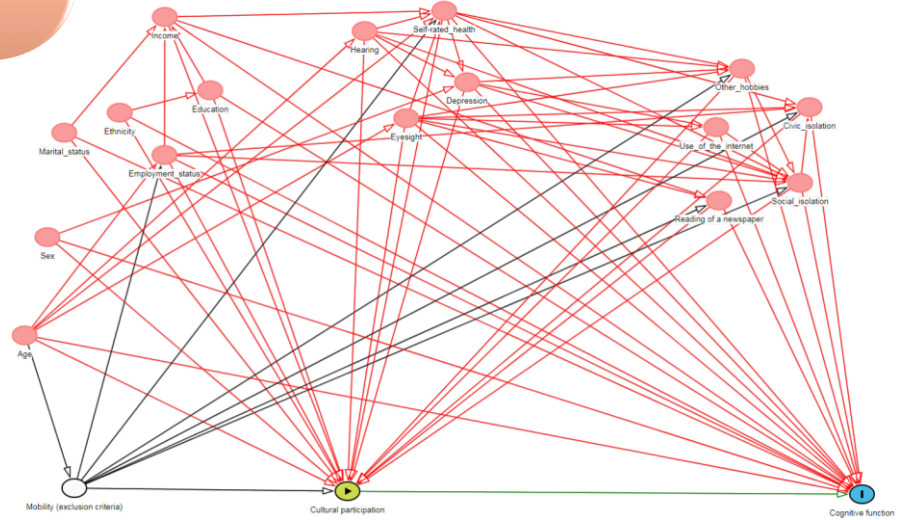
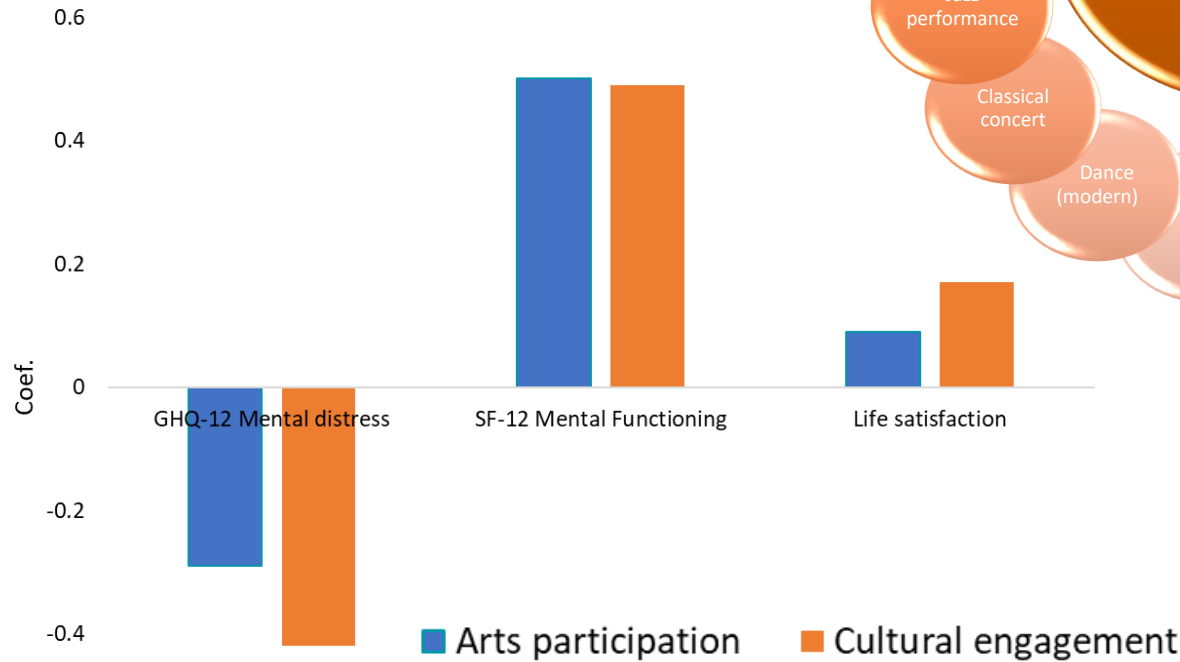
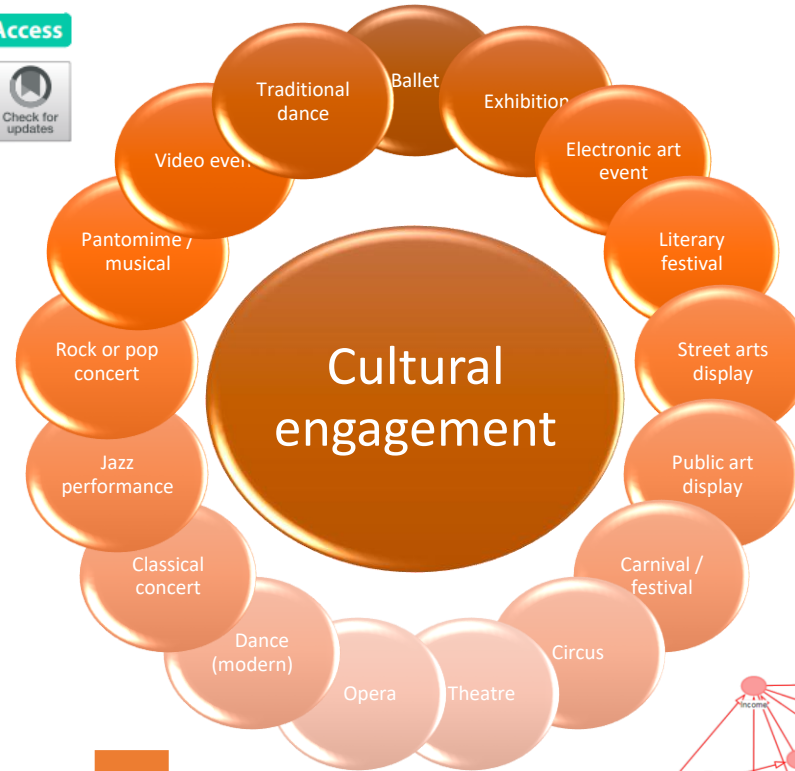


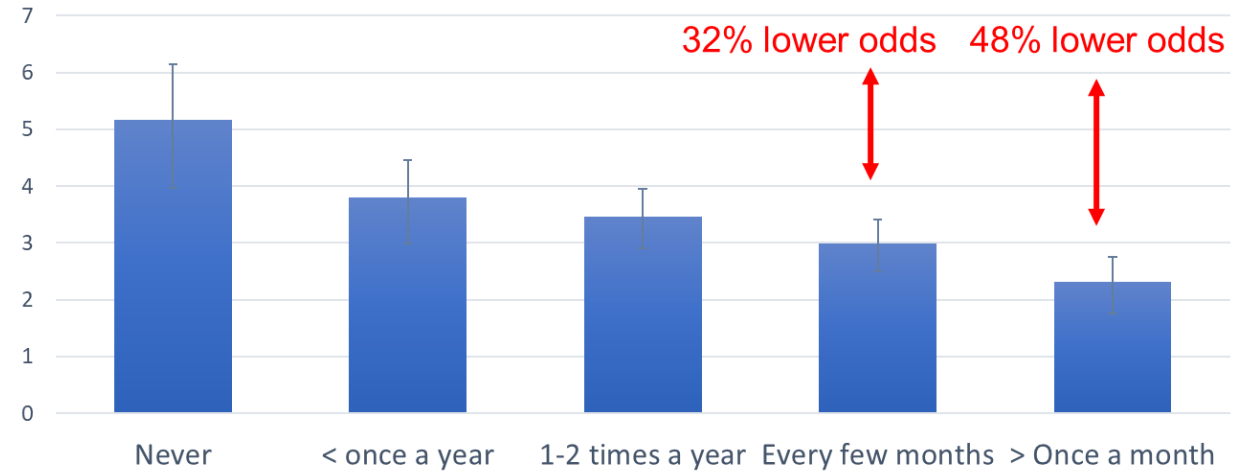
Table 13 Society-wide benefits assuming benefits apply across the entire adult population

#	Model name	Per person impacts	Engagement rate	Engagement level	Society-wide benefit
1	General engagement and general health in adults	£992	46%	18,780,000	£18.64bn
2a	Attendance and mental health in adults	£649	18%	7,383,000	£4.79bn
2b	Participation and mental health in adults	£448	56%	22,731,000	£10.19bn

Source: Frontier Economics.

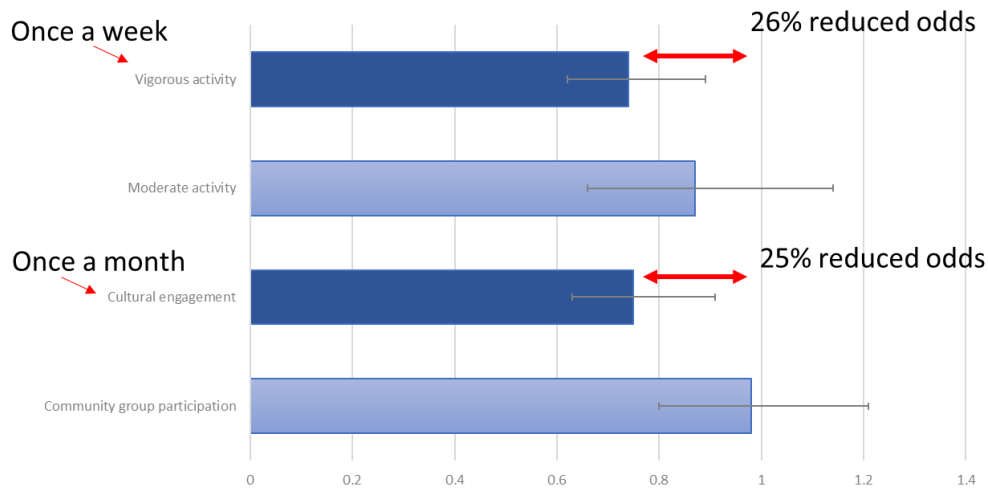
Prevention of mental illness

Cultural engagement:
depression incidence rates over 10 years per 100 person-years



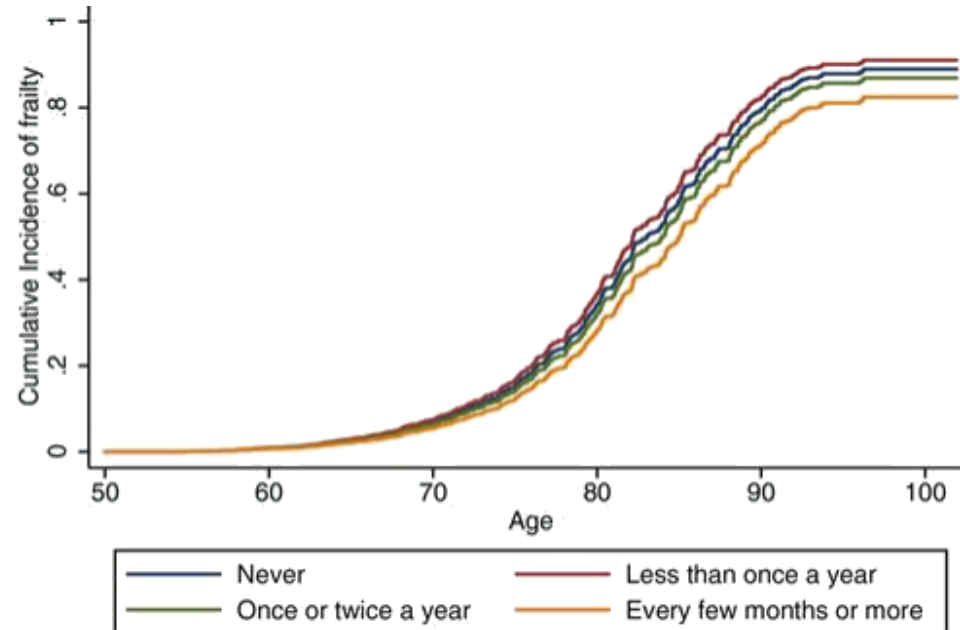
#	Model name	Per-person benefits				Society-wide benefits				
		Engage-ment	Individual impacts	NHS and social care savings	Productivity impacts	Total	Individual impacts	NHS and social care savings	Productivity impacts	Total
8	Engagement with cultural venues and depression in older adults (over 50)	9,646,000	£66	£26	£56	£148	£0.64bn	£0.26bn	£0.54bn	£1.43bn

Physical Health

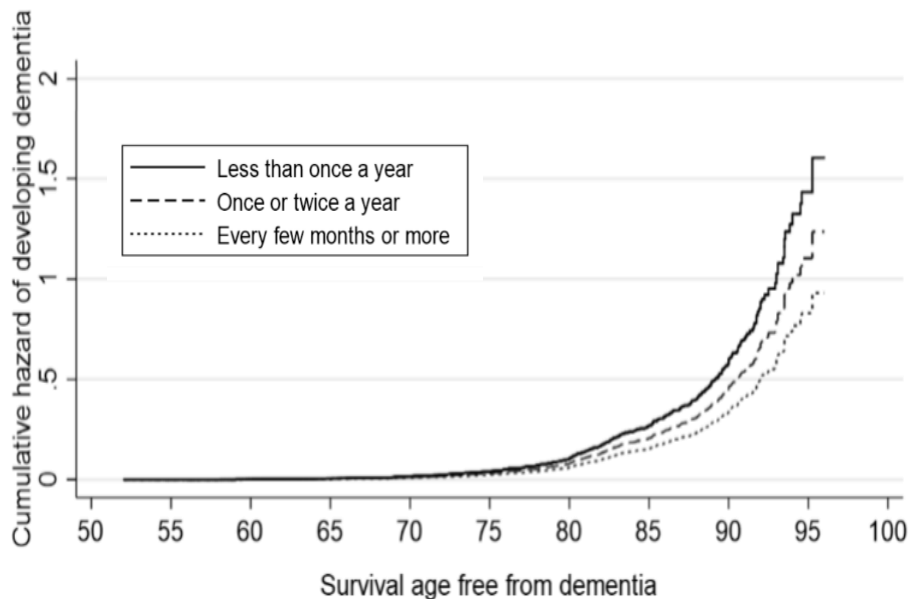


← Chronic pain incidence

Development of frailty →



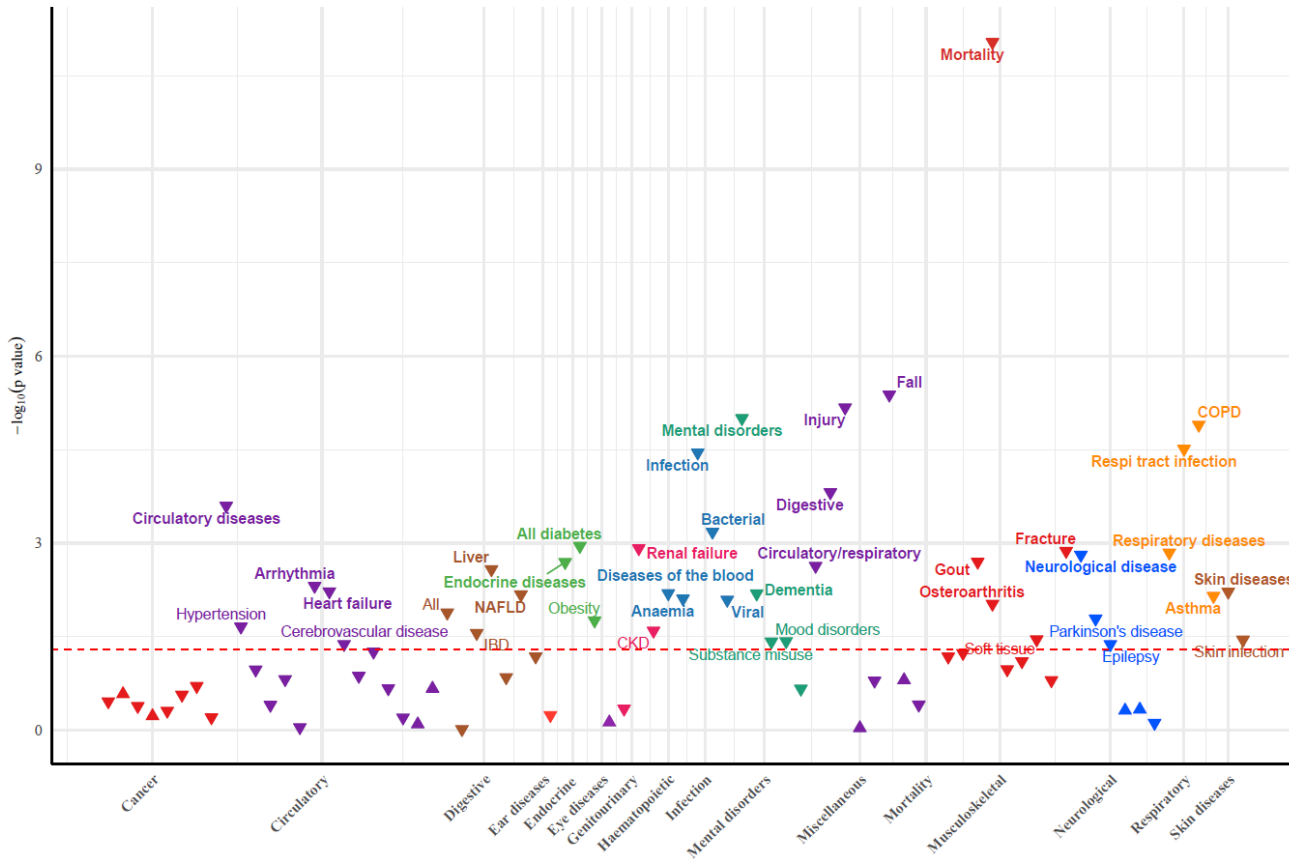
← Time free from dementia



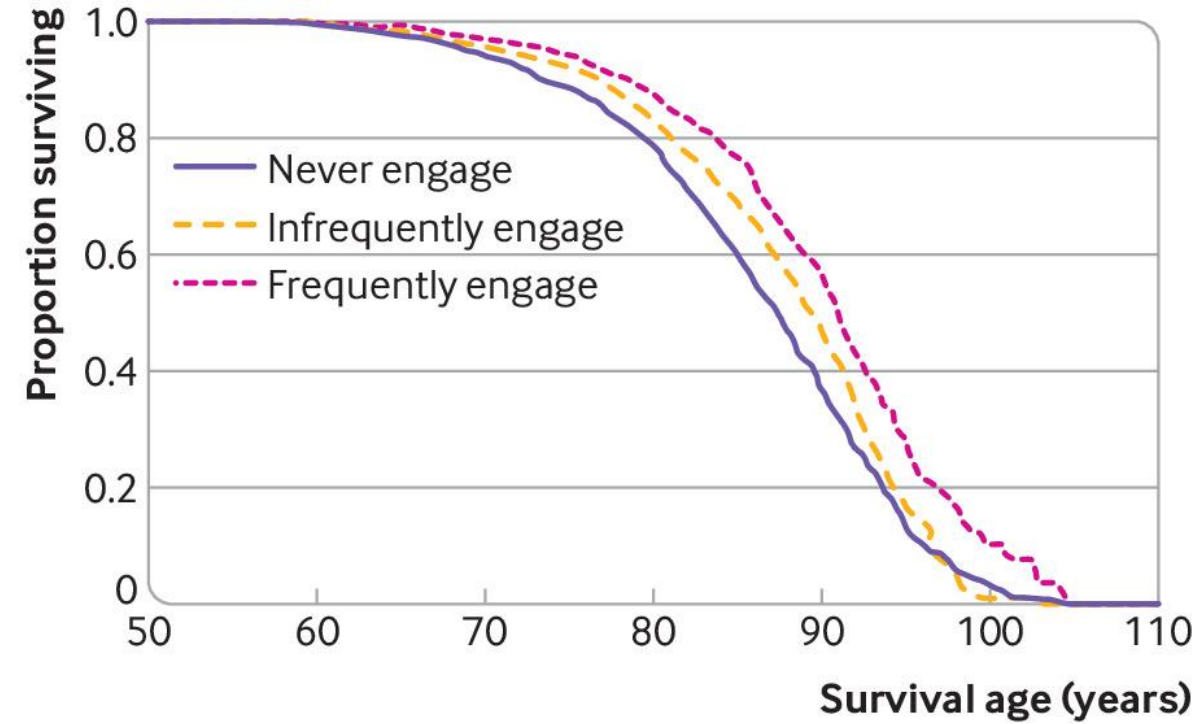
#	Model name	Per-person benefits				Society-wide benefits				
		Engagement	Individual impacts	NHS and social care savings	Productivity impacts	Total	Individual impacts	NHS and social care savings	Productivity impacts	Total
9	Engagement with cultural venues and dementia in older adults (over 50)	5,018,000	£19	£75	£7	£101	£0.09bn	£0.38bn	£0.04bn	£0.51bn
10	Museums and dementia in older adults (over 50)	4,077,000	£46	£189	£21	£256	£0.19bn	£0.77bn	£0.09bn	£1.04bn

Morbidity & mortality

Hospital episodes for ICD-10 diagnoses



Survival age by frequency of arts engagement



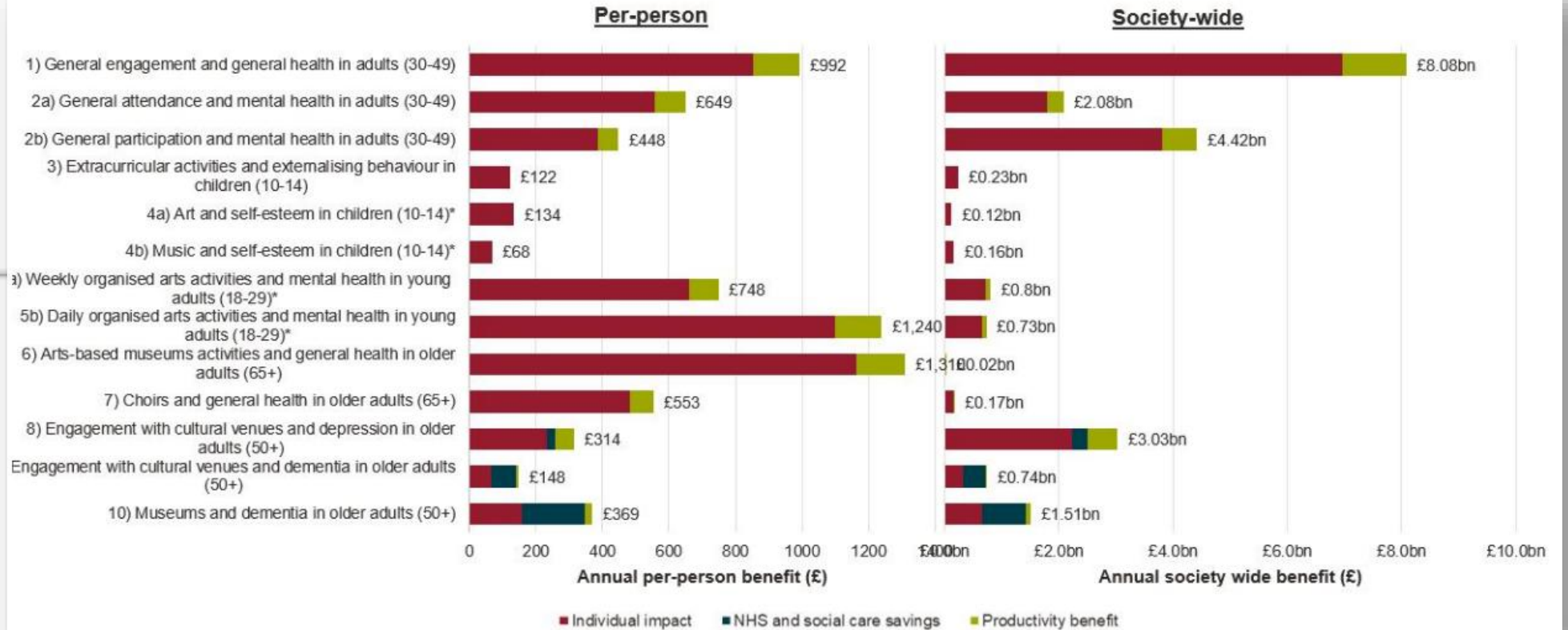
**Healthspan
&
Lifespan**

Overarching findings



CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL: MONETISING THE IMPACT OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A report prepared for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport

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Examples of Operationalisation of Findings in Wales

Assessing the Economic Impact of the Arts on Health and Healthcare Services in Wales
January 2026

Prepared by:

Mr Jacob Davies, Researcher in Health Economics, Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation (CHEME), Bangor University

Mr Greg Flynn, Researcher in Health Economics, CHEME, Bangor University

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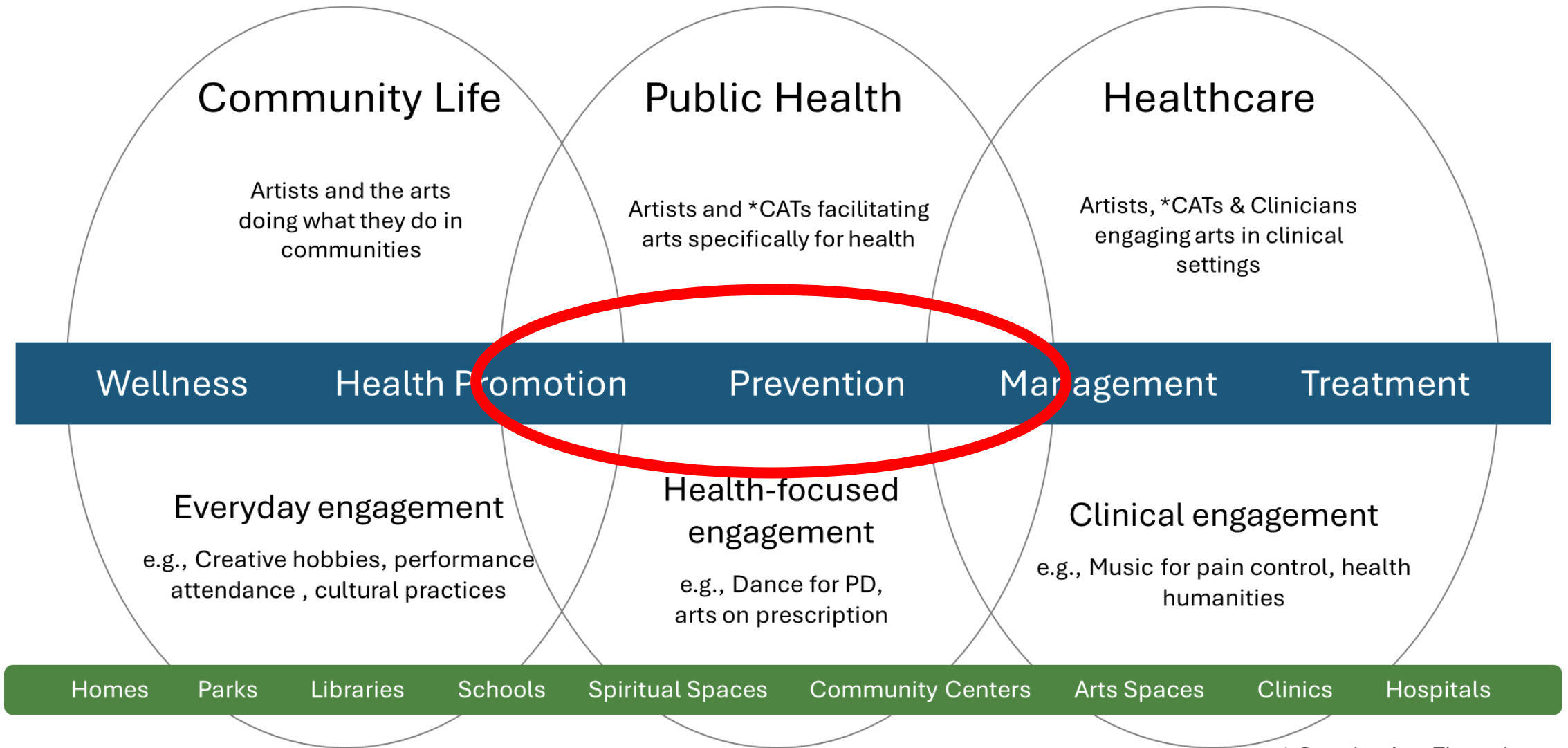
Table 3: Annual total society-wide financial benefits generated through participation & attendance to ACW multi-year funded organisation arts and cultural activities

Form of engagement	Average annual engagement: ACW multi-year funded orgs	Annual per-person productivity benefit	Annual per-person health and wellbeing benefit	Total annual per-person benefit	Total society-wide benefit
Participation (adult)	270,926	£63	£386	£448	£121,374,848
Participation (CYP)	430,535	-	£101	£101	£43,485,045
Attendance (adult)	233,348	£91	£559	£649	£151,442,852
Annual society-wide productivity benefit generated (participation & attendance)					£37,798,732
Annual society-wide health and wellbeing benefit generated (participation & attendance)					£278,504,013
Annual total society-wide benefits generated (participation & attendance)					£316,302,745



£1 : £11.08

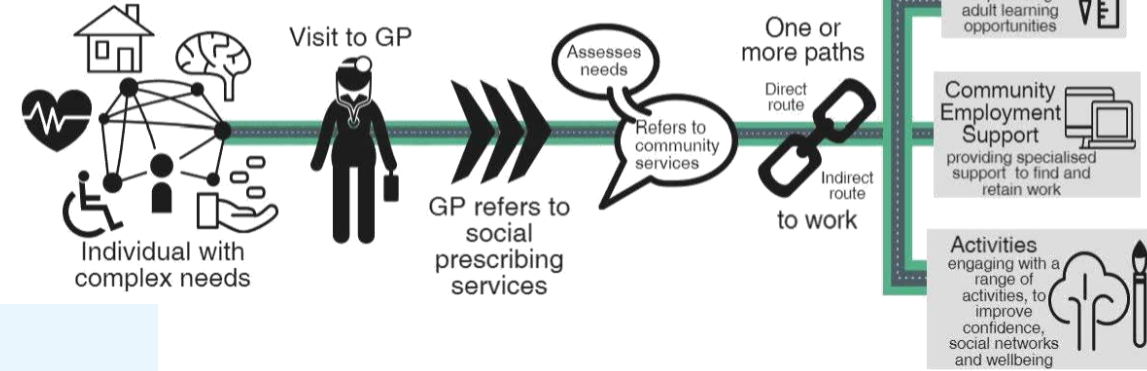
The Arts & Health Landscape



* Creative Arts Therapists

Social prescribing initiatives Around the world

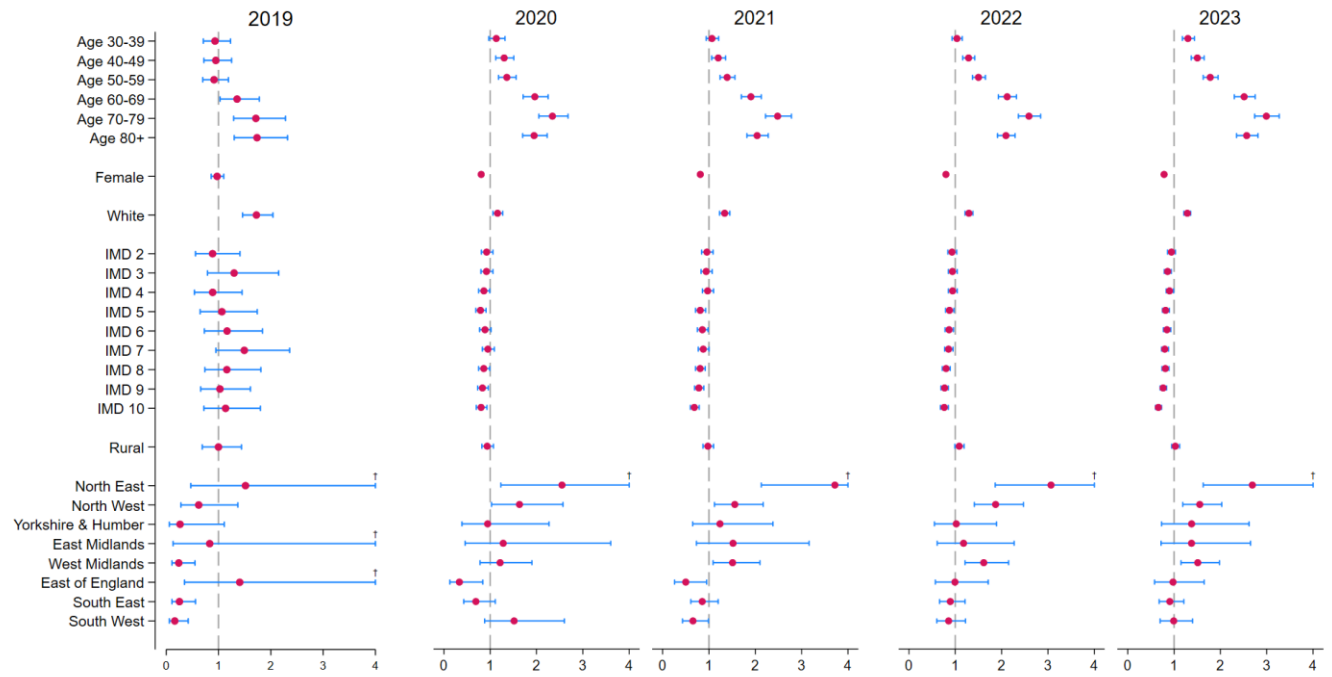
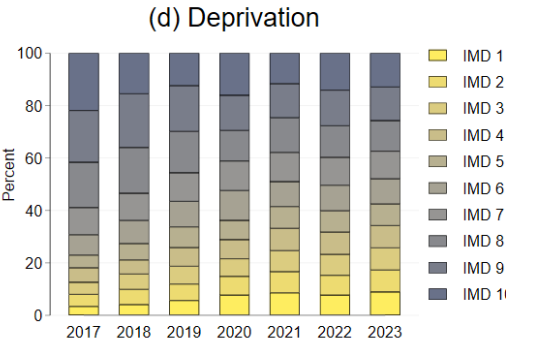
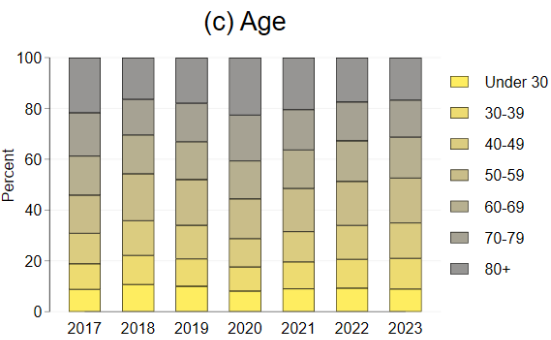
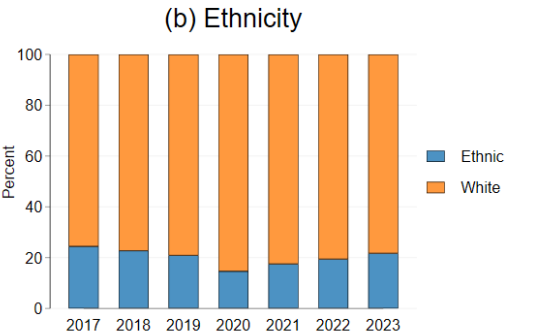
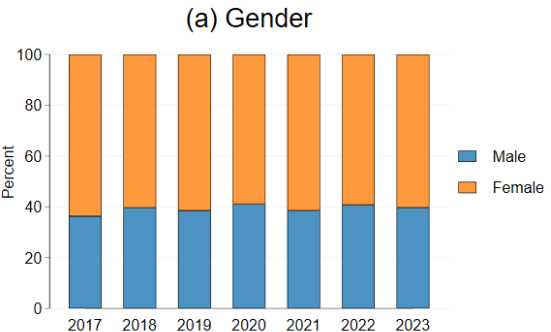
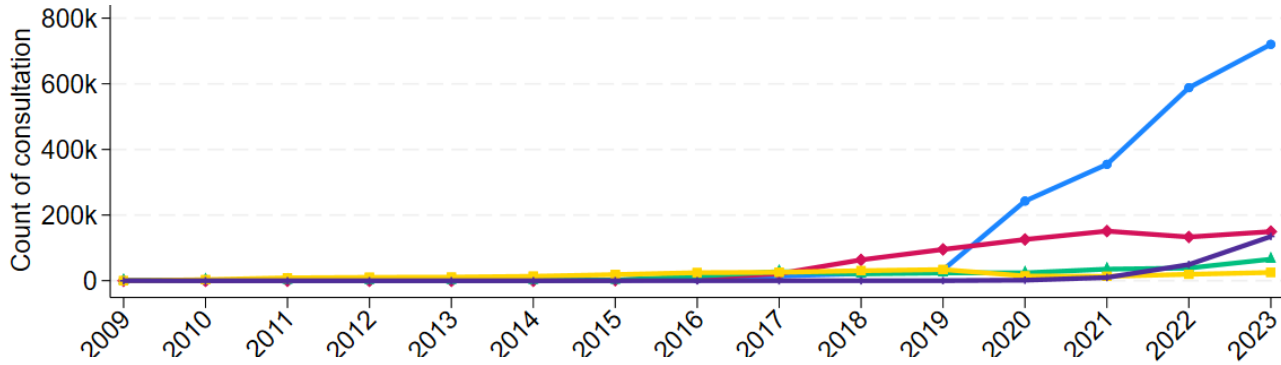
Social Prescribing Pathway



—●— Social prescribing
 —◆— Community navigator
 —▲— Health coach
—■— Health trainer
 —▼— Health & wellbeing



9.5m GP consultations
5.6m referrals | £143 million p.a.



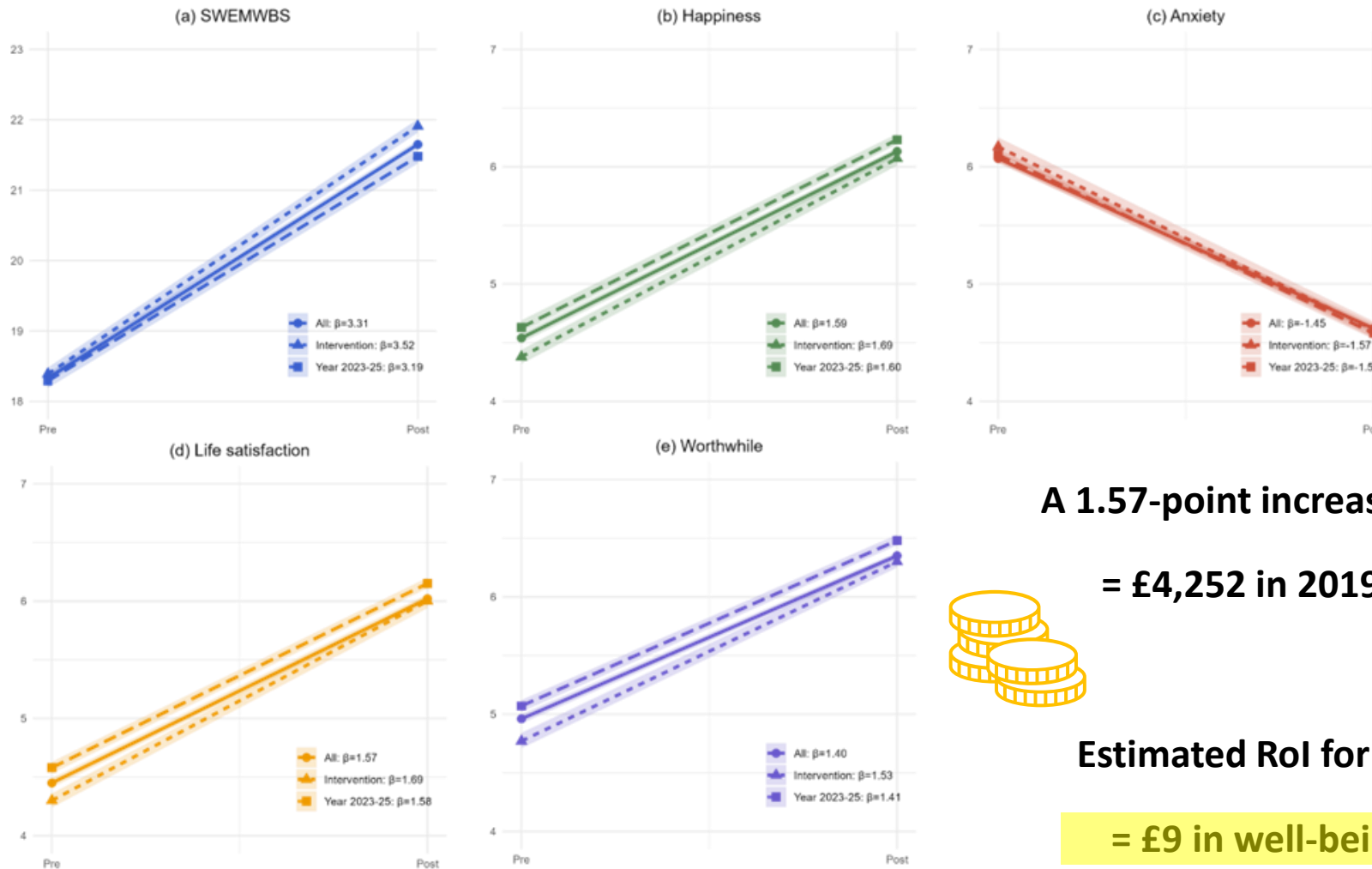
Elemental Social Prescribing



ELEMENTAL

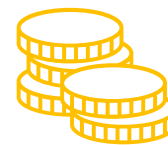
The social prescribing people

an access company



A 1.57-point increase in life satisfaction over c2.5 months

= £4,252 in 2019 prices (low: £3,271, high: £5,233)



Estimated RoI for SP is estimated to be £4,252 / £466

= £9 in well-being benefits [low = £7, high = £11]

Figure 1 Predicted average trajectories and their 95% highest density intervals (HDI) from unconditional Bayesian growth curve models

Savings for health service utilisation



The impact of social prescribing on health service use and costs

Examples of local evaluations in practice

November 2024

REPORT



Building the economic case for social prescribing

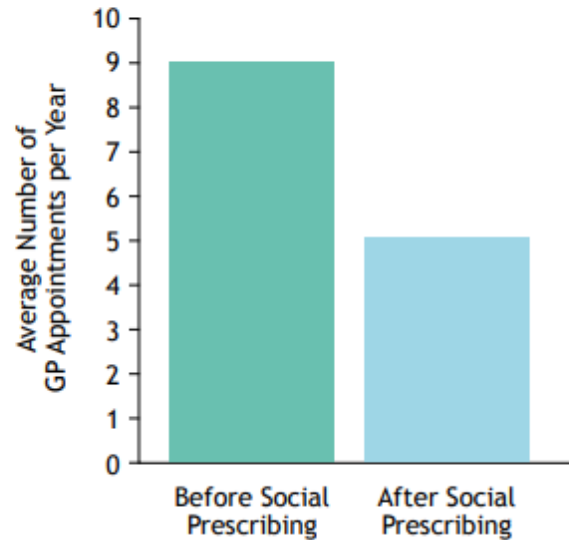
OCTOBER 2023

Dr Marie Polley, Dr Helen Seers, Olivia Toye, Todd Henkin, Dr Hannah Waterson, Dr Marcello Bertotti, Professor Helen Chatterjee

Authors
Dr Elaine O'Connell Francischetto (Le Evidence and Evaluation Team at the

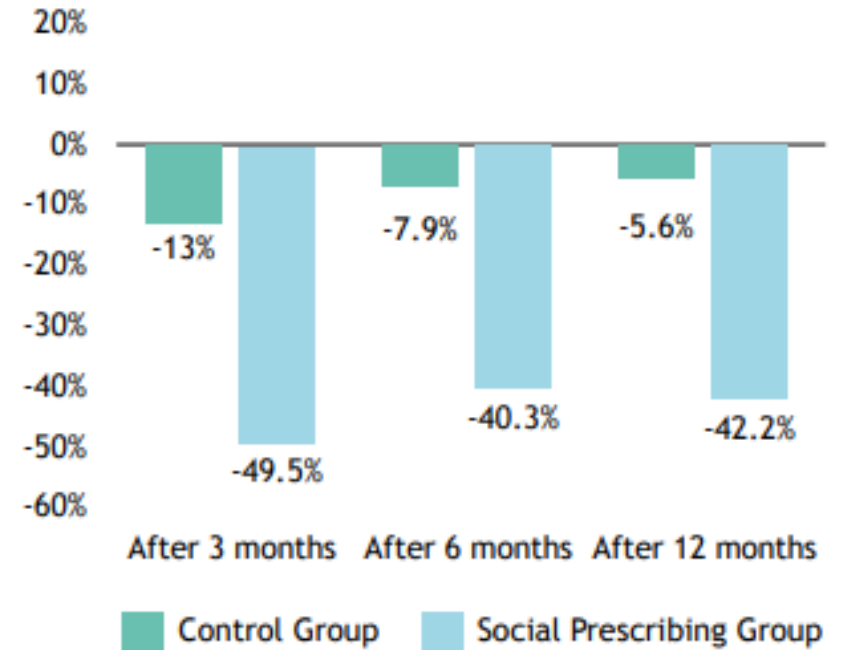


Evaluation of Service Use by Patients Accessing Social Prescribing in Calderdale (Year Before and Year After)



Impact of social prescribing in Tameside and Glossop

Reduction in GP Activity





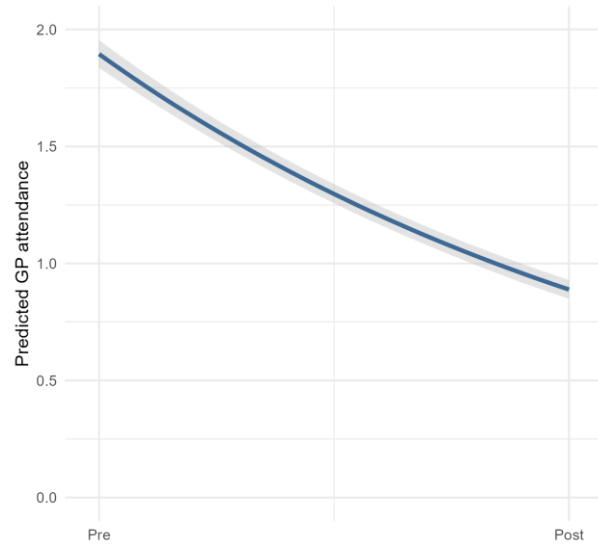
ELEMENTAL

The social prescribing people

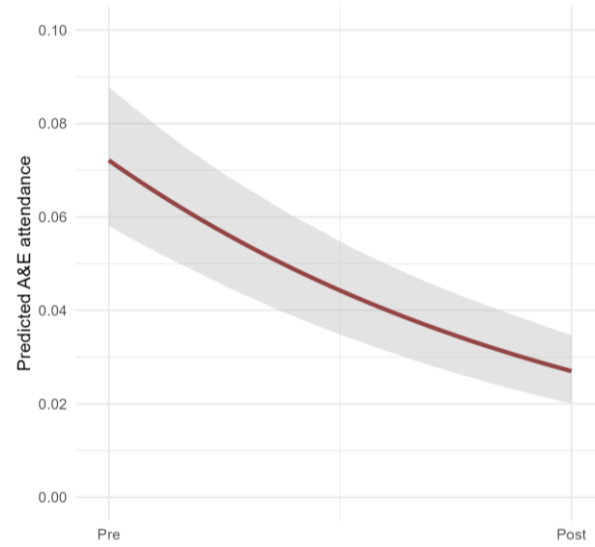
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Impacts on Health Service Utilisation

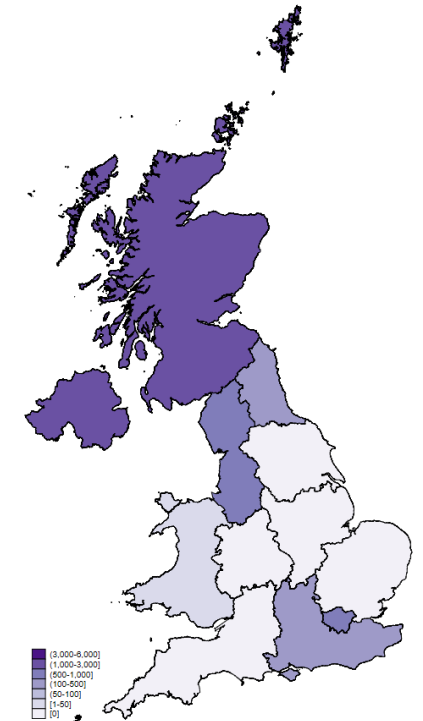
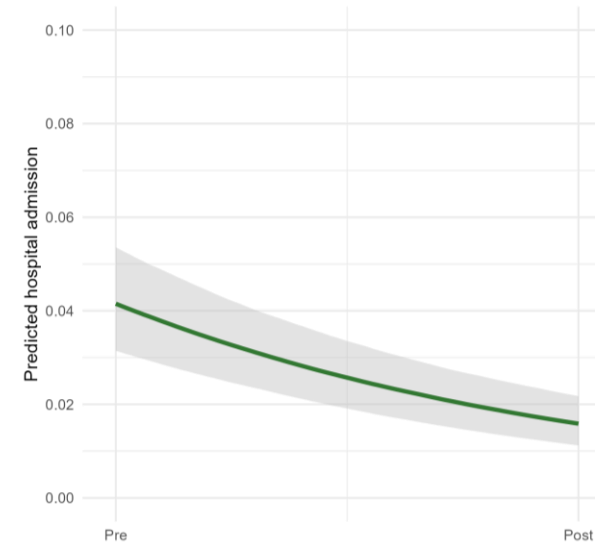
GP visits



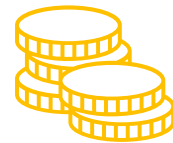
A&E attendances



Hospital admissions



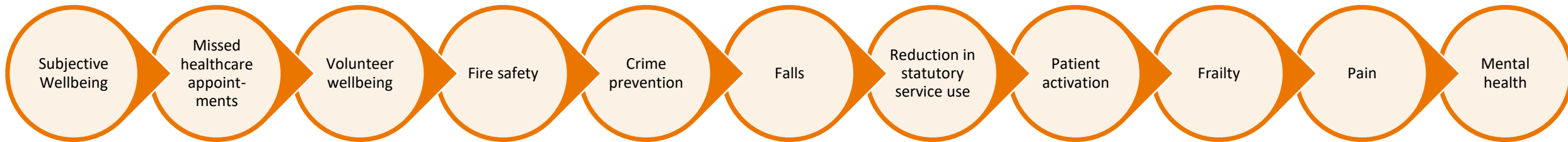
Wales scenario – 5% reduction in GP mental health visits



£17.5m cost savings annually

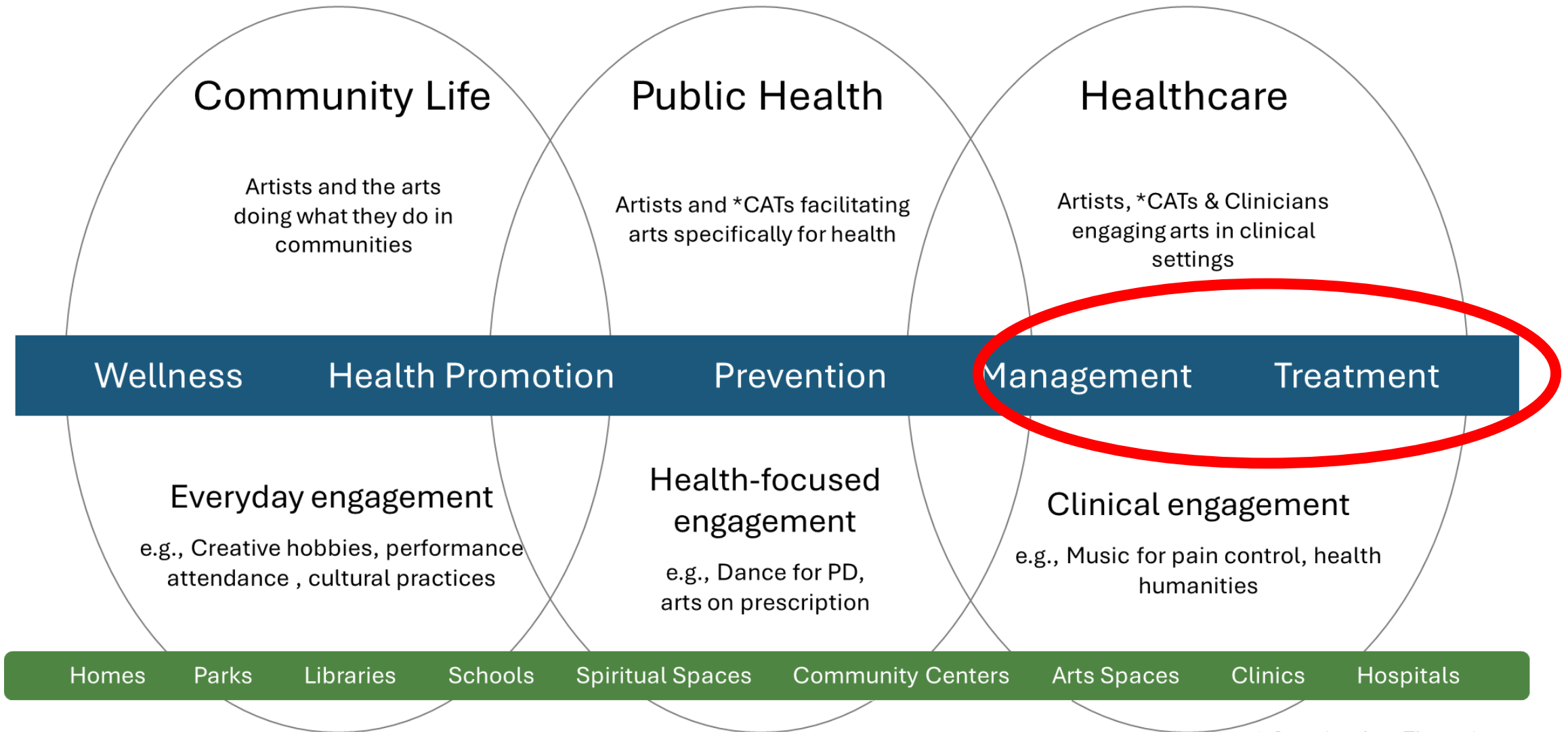
SROIs

Kimberlee R, Bertotti M, Dayson C, Asthana S, Polley M, Burns L, Tierney S, Husk K. [On behalf of the NASP Academic Partners Collaborative]. (2022). 'The economic impact of social prescribing'. London: National Academy for Social Prescribing



£1 → £2.30 - £8.56 ROI

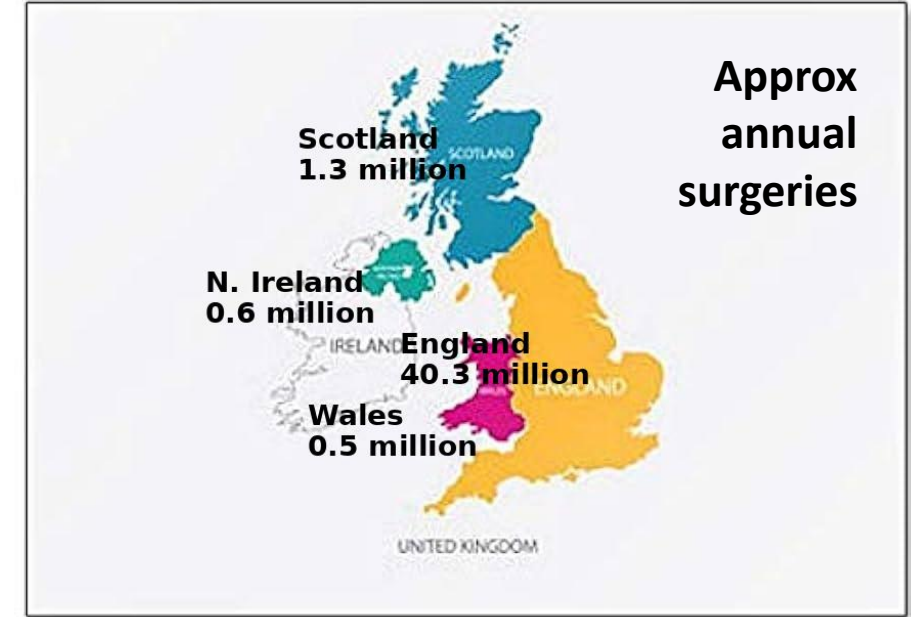
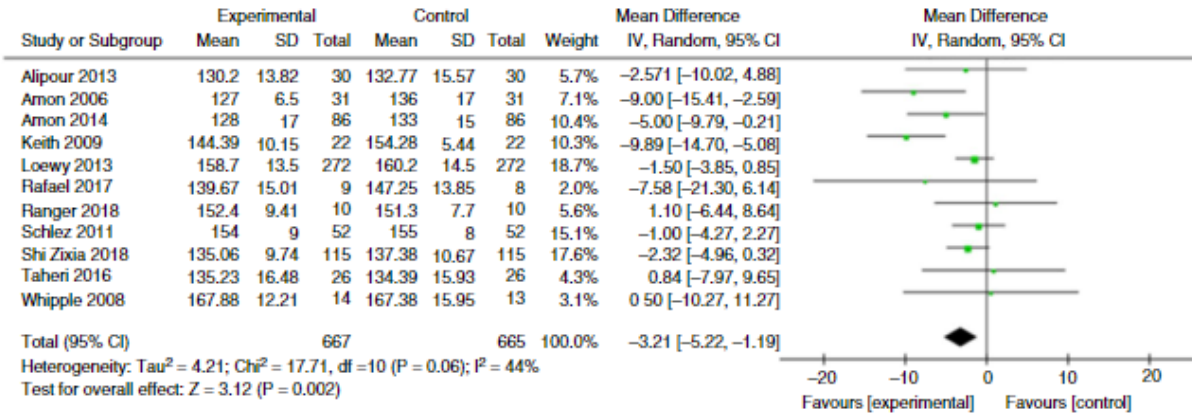
The Arts & Health Landscape



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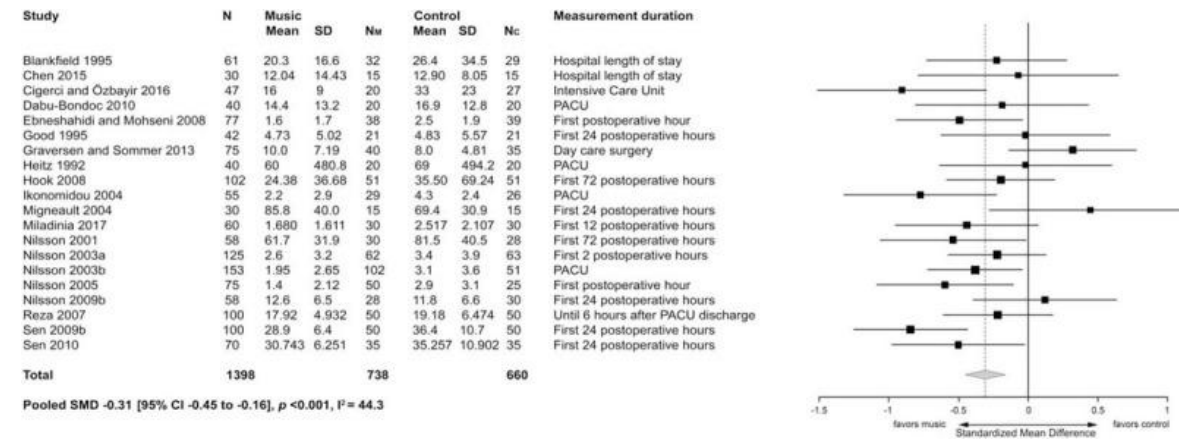
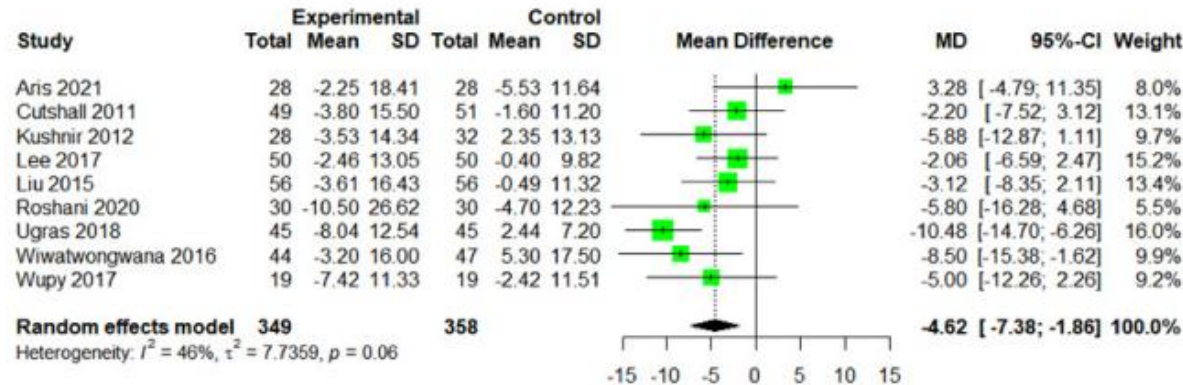
Music in hospitals

Heart rate in neonates in NICU



Opioid requirements in adult surgery

Blood pressure in adults undergoing surgery

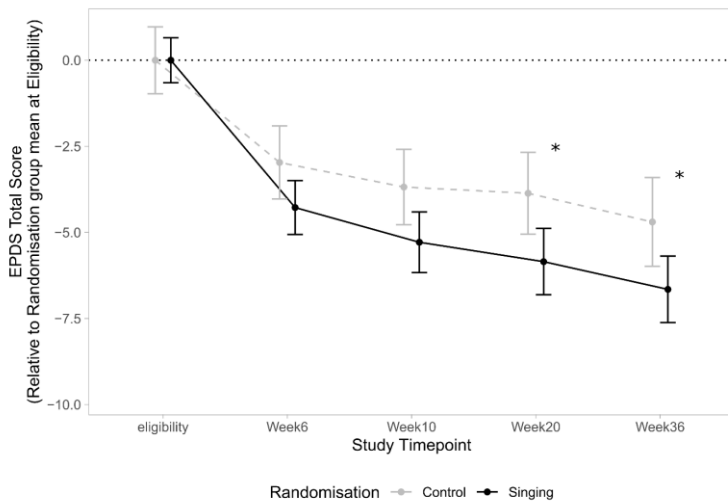
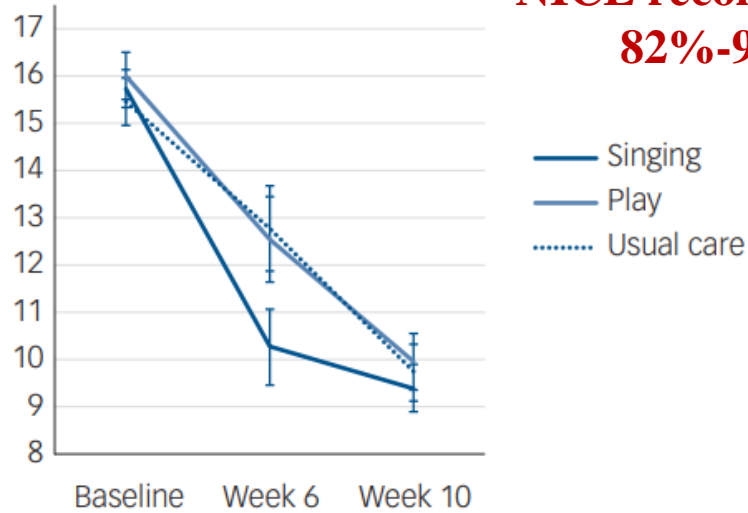


Singing prescribing for postnatal depression

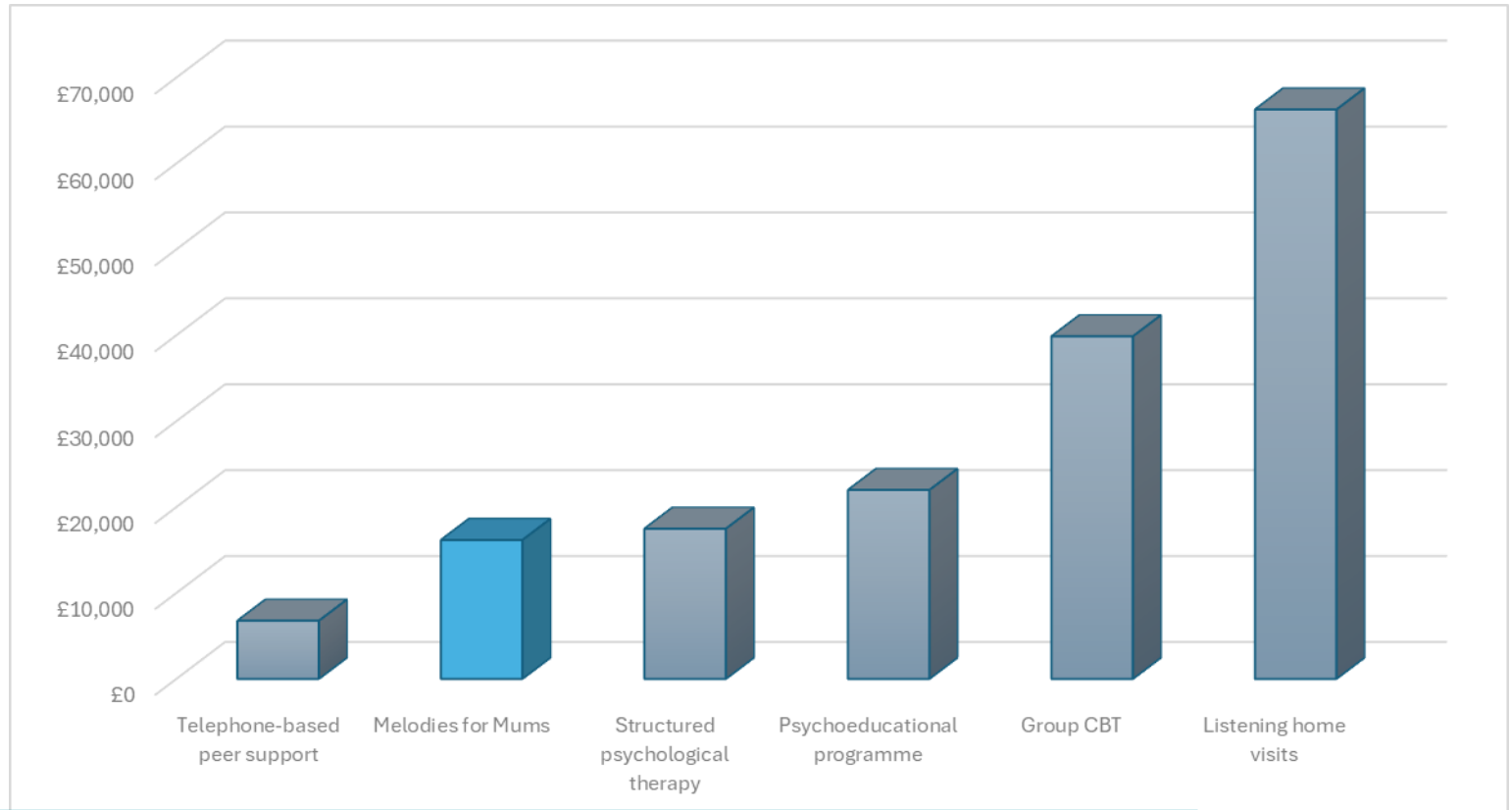
Total incremental cost per maternal QALY gained = £11,122-£21,215

NICE recommends £20,000 to £30,000 per QALY gain

82%-93% probability of being cost-effective



Comparisons of cost-per QALY for singing vs other PND treatments



Arts Therapies for QALYs In Cancer Care



Table 15 Annual estimated values per individual undergoing visual art therapy

	Per individual with breast cancer	Per individual with all other cancers
Individual impacts – Green Book	£2,550	£1,600
Individual impacts – HTA	£730	£450

Table 16 What-if scenarios – annual estimated values – Green Book QALY valuation

	Breast cancer		All other cancers	
	Individuals receiving visual art therapy	Benefit	Individuals receiving visual art therapy	Benefit
Individuals with new cancer diagnoses receiving visual art therapy				
5%	3,100	£7.97 million	17,900	£28.46 million
10%	6,200	£15.94 million	35,800	£56.91 million
20%	12,400	£31.89 million	71,500	£113.82 million

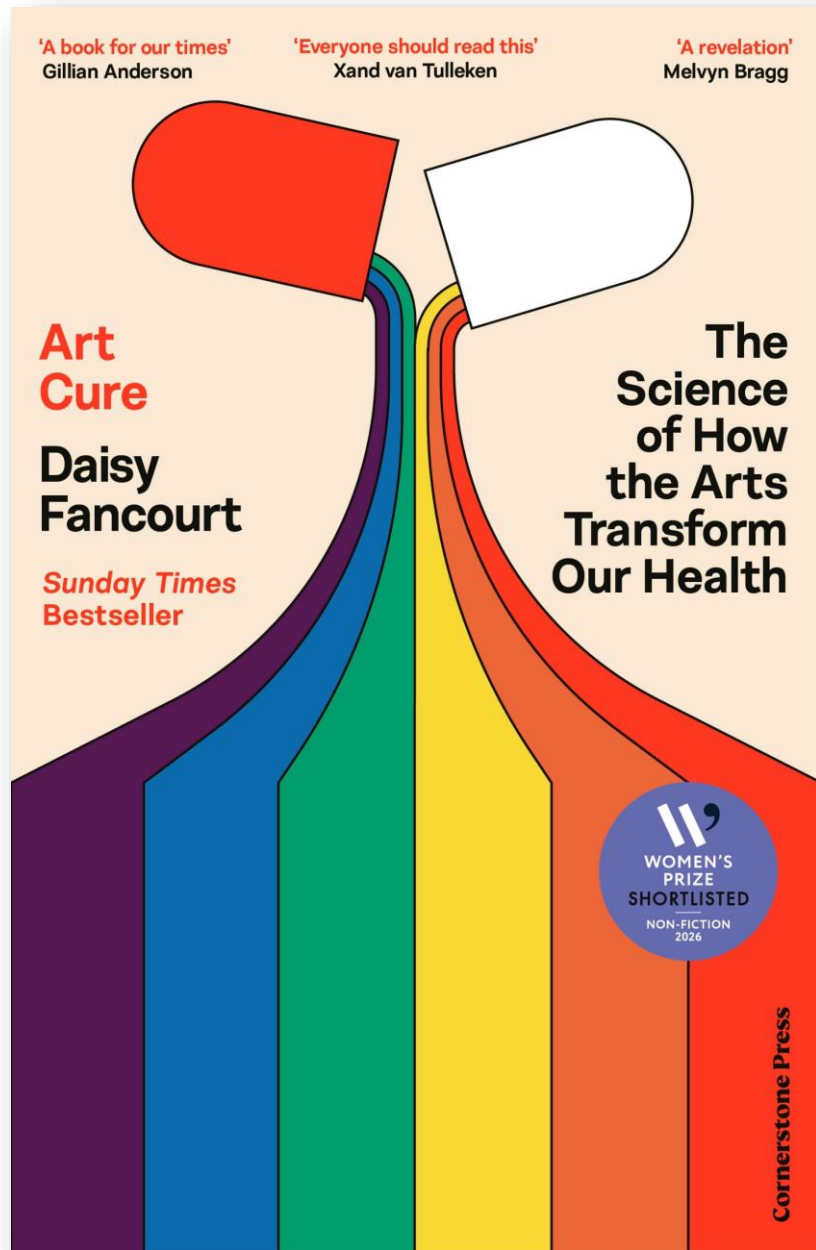
Source: Frontier Economics



Note: These figures are annual figures in 2024£s. 'All other cancers' exclude breast cancer. Individual impacts are reported using a Green Book QALY valuation (£70,000). Results with a HTA QALY valuation (£20,000) are available in Annex C

Takeaways

1. All analyses to date using any health economic approach show **promising “value for money” of arts investment**
2. **Specific estimates vary** depending on the costs included and outcomes valued
3. Most estimates are **likely an under-estimate**
4. The **evidence base is strengthening** for many areas of arts and health research (including health economics)
5. Major **high-level policy recommendations** on arts as a health behaviour coming from WHO
6. Public health and clinical arts programmes rely on **dual health-arts investment**
7. **Artistic quality matters** – training, safeguarding, tailoring
8. Guidelines on **best practice** are widespread





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RESEARCH Open Access



Arts and creativity interventions for improving health and wellbeing in older adults: a systematic literature review of economic evaluation studies

Grainne Crealey¹, Laura McQuade², Roger O'Sullivan² and Ciaran O'Neill^{3*}





International prospective register of systematic reviews

The economic impact of the arts on the health and wellbeing of children and young people: A systematic review protocol

Greg Flynn, Pui Sze Cheung, Daisy Fancourt, Vicky Karkou, Rhiannon Tudor Edwards

Citation

Greg Flynn, Pui Sze Cheung, Daisy Fancourt, Vicky Karkou, Rhiannon Tudor Edwards. The economic impact of the arts on the health and wellbeing of children and young people: A systematic review protocol. PROSPERO 2025 CRD420251056090. Available from <https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPERO/view/CRD420251056090>.



The impact of social prescribing on health service use and costs

Examples of local evaluations in practice

November 2024




Authors
 Dr Elaine O'Connell Francischetto (Lead author), Joelle Brady and Katy Knight - Evidence and Evaluation Team at the National Academy for Social Prescribing.

REPORT

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