



The Art of being
Healthy & Well

NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
SIOMPÓISIAM NÁISIÚNTA

22nd June 2022



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme
2017–2022



NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM SIOMPÓISIAM NÁISIÚNTA

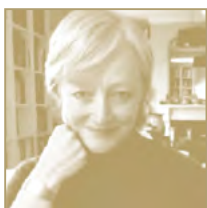
The all-of-government Creative Ireland Programme, Healthy Ireland, the Health Service Executive and the Arts Council co-hosted a national symposium on the positive benefits of creativity and the arts to health and wellbeing at the Royal College of Physicians in Dublin. At the symposium, policy-makers and practitioners from the health, arts and culture sectors considered how best to harness the powerful contribution creative engagement can make to our health and wellbeing. Catherine Martin TD, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and Stephen Donnelly TD, Minister for Health both addressed the audience and jointly affirmed their recognition of the health and wellbeing benefits of creativity and arts. Three expert panel discussions were led by journalist Olivia O'Leary and two short videos showcased creativity in action in both an acute and a community hospital setting.



To download video click here



HOST AND PANELLISTS



Alexandra Coulter



Tom James



Tania Banotti



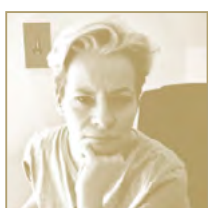
Prof. Rose Anne Kenny



Dr Mike O'Connor



Eilish Hardiman



Nathalie Weadick



Maureen Kennelly



Yvonne O'Neill



Justine Foster

Olivia O'Leary (Host) is a journalist, writer and current affairs presenter.

Alexandra Coulter: Director of the UK National Centre for Creative Health which launched in March 2021.

Tom James: Head of the Health and Wellbeing Programme and Healthy Ireland in the Department of Health. The Healthy Ireland team has policy responsibility for physical activity, nutrition, obesity, sexual health, place based wellbeing (healthy clubs, campuses, workplaces) and addressing health inequalities.

Tania Banotti: Director of the Creative Ireland Programme since 2018. This is an all of government programme with creativity and its connection to wellbeing at its core. Previous roles include as Chief Executive of the Institute for Advertising Practitioners in Ireland and Chief Executive of Theatre Forum Ireland.

Professor Rose Anne Kenny MD, FRCPI, FRCP FRCPE, FTCD, FESC, MRIA : Chair of Medical Gerontology and Head of Medical Gerontology at Trinity College Dublin. She is director of a clinical-research institute for ageing at St James Hospital-MISA, and founding Principal Investigator of Ireland's largest adult population study on the experience of ageing in Ireland – TILDA – The Irish Longitudinal study on Ageing, now in its 12th year of data collection.

Dr. Mike O' Connor : National Clinical Advisor and group Lead for Acute Operations in the HSE. This role involves providing clinical advice and guidance to all aspects of acute hospital care including serious incident management, Quality and Safety and Process Improvement. He leads on 16 clinical programmes whose remit is to design models of care and patient pathways that are evidence-based, quality assured, feasible and pragmatic and to support their implementation within an effective governance arrangement.

Eilish Hardiman: Chief Executive of Children's Health Ireland (previously the Children's Hospital Group). Children's Health Ireland (CHI) is the body legally established in January 2019 to govern and manage children's healthcare services in its four service locations in Dublin at Crumlin, Temple Street, Tallaght and Connolly Hospital, as a single entity in partnership with multiple academic institutions to provide integrated paediatric healthcare services, education, research and innovation.

Nathalie Weadick: Curator of architecture and spatial practice based in Dublin. She has been the Director of the Irish Architecture Foundation since 2007. Under her directorship, the IAF initiated the development of a national program of community led design projects called Reimagine, established the National Architects in Schools Initiative and produced Open House Dublin, Ireland's largest architecture festival engaging thousands annually.

Maureen Kennelly: Director of the Arts Council. She was director of Poetry Ireland from 2013 until April 2020. She was previously director of Kilkenny Arts Festival, artistic director of the Mermaid Arts Centre, general manager with Fishamble Theatre Company, and she also worked with Druid Theatre Company, the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival, The Arts Council and the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland

Yvonne O'Neill: National Director of Community Operations in the HSE, she has responsibility and accountability for the delegated delivery of consistent and safe community based health and social care services nationally led with her national community operations team and the nine Chief Officers.

Justine Foster: Programme Manager at Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, where she works to create opportunity for artists to work and the public engage in the Arts. Justine is a member of Arts and Health Coordinators Ireland.

OPENING MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

The symposium opened with a performance of 'O Sole Mio' sung by tenor Anthony Kearns and accompanied by Vincent Lynch on keyboards and Gerald Peregrine on cello. The trio have performed in the 'Covid Care Concerts' series, devised by Peregrine as a rapid response to challenges created by the pandemic of social isolation among older people living in healthcare settings. Since 2020, the project delivered over 1,200 free, live concerts in residential care homes and hospitals in 21 counties across Ireland, north and south of the border, with over 100 professional musicians performing.

OPENING ADDRESS BY CATHERINE MARTIN TD, MINISTER FOR TOURISM, CULTURE, ARTS, GAELTACHT, SPORT AND MEDIA



"Coming from a landscape - dotted as it is with islands of excellence from an arts and health perspective - it would seem important for the sectors to develop a shared vision and sense of common purpose."

PANEL 1

Alexandra Coulter; Tom James; Tania Banotti

Discussion theme:

The evidence base, how it can underpin policy, and emerging trends nationally and internationally



The panel discussed the broad scope of the substantial evidence base that has been gathered internationally, including that relating to the healthcare areas of prevention, promotion, treatment, and end-of-life care and cited the seminal WHO synthesis report in 2019. **They emphasised that now was the time to move to implementation and operationalisation - moving from proving the benefits to improving the way we integrate this work and collaborate across sectors.**

The panel noted the need for a cultural change to established ways of doing things in healthcare settings and to try to break down silos that exist. This takes time but innovation is key to achieving this, and through the tailoring of initiatives at local level. A number of collaborative initiatives between Healthy Ireland, the HSE and local authorities are demonstrating this way of working, with up to fifty full-time health and wellbeing staff embedded in local authorities, working also with local authority creative teams and local communities.

Social prescribing is being increasingly recognised in Ireland (included in the HSE Framework 2021) and the UK as an important tool in promoting community health and wellbeing, whereby patients are connected

to social initiatives in the community through dedicated link workers. **There are benefits and opportunities associated with social prescribing, but there can be challenges in determining the mechanisms through which this service is funded and delivered,**

Community health work is typically complex and the panel acknowledged a **need to get beyond sole champions for the role of arts and creativity in healthcare and to integrate arts and creativity into delivery structures and practice.**

The panel discussed the connections between socio-economic inequality, health inequality and arts participation. **It is clear from the research that people from lower socio-economic areas have poorer health outcomes and life expectancies. This mirrors disparities in participation in artistic or creative activity between lower and higher socio-economic cohorts. There is a need to look at the wider determinants of health and wellbeing and adopt a cross spectrum approach. The panel acknowledged the challenge of parallel structures of the State trying to achieve this.**

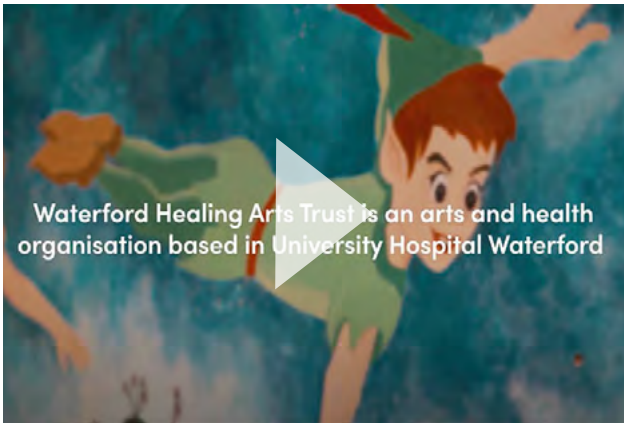
“It is important to build awareness and understanding at senior level to ensure that health and wellbeing policies embed arts and creativity, rather than just relying on local champions to promote and deliver at local level.”

Tania Banotti

PANEL 2

Professor Rose Anne Kenny; Dr Michael O'Connor; Nathalie Weadick; Eilísh Hardiman

Discussion Theme: the experience, challenges, and potential benefits of arts-creativity from an acute hospital setting perspective



Video - Storytelling in University Hospital Waterford



Professor Kenny provided an overview of the Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing (MISA) at St James's Hospital, a facility for integrated clinical services and a hub for research in ageing. One of the pillars of the Institute is the Creative Life Programme which works in delivering arts, health and wellbeing processes that connect people within the hospital and on a national level. This occurs through arts participatory workshops, supports and discussions on how creativity may contribute to healthy ageing. The Institute has worked with Trinity College Dublin to embed questions about creativity in the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) study. The interior of the MISA building incorporates artistic interventions in the design. As well as benefitting clients and staff, this also provides opportunity for the surrounding area community who walk through the building as they travel across the hospital campus.

Eilísh Hardiman described how arts practice and play therapy is integral to the Children's Hospital Group. An arts programme is being incorporated into the development of the new children's hospital with art commissions, exhibition and performance spaces designed for the new building.

A discussion on what can be done to hospital settings to deliver and promote creativity and wellness noted that hospital design was traditionally focussed on the delivery of healthcare and workflows. Nathalie Weadick gave a review of the history of hospital design that summarised how the architecture of hospitals reflects the healthcare cultures pertaining at the time of their building. Dr O'Connor noted that the scale of throughput and the requirements of clinical procedures in our acute hospitals largely governs their design. The COVID pandemic brought attention to this as people entered buildings wondering whether the building literally might make them sick, through cramped, poorly ventilated spaces contributing to the spread of the virus. The panel noted that it is timely to give consideration to the potential for either positive or negative effects on patient wellness of the hospital environment.

The discussion turned to messaging, language and the acceptance of the role of creativity in healthcare. A key means is to communicate the evidence basis for the benefits of artistic and creative practice in delivering positive health and wellbeing outcomes. A basic message



is that creative practices can save money by reducing length of stays, boosting workforce productivity and providing alternatives to admission to acute services.

It was suggested that artists can act as a bridge to medics by delivering this message through engagement. It should be said that many clinicians are creative or artistic in their own right. The ability to listen is crucial to successfully embedding arts and creative practices in healthcare settings.

The panel discussed how arts and creative practices can promote and celebrate diversity in hospitals, providing a pathway for connectivity. **An increasingly ethnically diverse workforce can be a challenge for cultural**

engagement in hospital settings and the arts can help overcome this, with resultant enhanced workplace satisfaction and productivity.

A different form of cultural integration is that between the three Dublin children's hospitals which will come together in the new children's hospital at St James's. The storied histories of each of these hospitals is being marked and celebrated through the creative projects such as *Treasure Chest*.

“Hospitals are typically designed for procedural outcomes, without due consideration of the patient experience. Good architecture should be seen as central to healthcare and healthcare shouldn't be just about illness but should be about wellness also.”

Dr Michael O'Connor

**ADDRESS BY
STEPHEN DONNELLY TD,
MINISTER FOR HEALTH**



“The holistic nature of these types of artistic and cultural activities fits perfectly with our vision for health and wellbeing. Health is not just about the absence of disease, it is about recognising the importance and interconnectedness of physical, mental and social wellbeing.”

PANEL 3

Maureen Kennelly, Justine Foster, Yvonne O'Neill

Discussion Theme: Arts and creativity as a strategy for community wellbeing



Video - Making Music in St Camillus Hospital, Limerick

The discussion opened with an acknowledgement that the arts are often an empathetic means to tell stories and communicate. **Through the arts, healthcare staff have an opportunity to listen to, and engage with users differently and in new and innovative ways. This can also demonstrate the creative wealth in the community healthcare staff themselves.** The use, for example, of drama can provide insight into service users' lived experiences, particularly socially excluded groups.

While work in healthcare settings, acute and community, can provide an important source of income for artists, as well as providing creative inspiration, it can be a challenging work environment. **Artists need tailored supports and training to work in healthcare environments, be they community or acute settings,**



as well as needing the space to develop their own arts practice. The panel discussed skillsets that artists working in healthcare settings needed, such as their own sense of arts practice, responsiveness to users and health workers, peer learning and administration.

Justine Foster described how Uillinn/West Cork Arts Centre had established itself as a local infrastructure for promoting community wellbeing through creative practices, championed initially by the local HSE healthcare promotion worker. Uillinn was able to respond when day-care centres had been closed down during COVID, partnering with the local healthcare providers to deliver programming for otherwise isolated elderly clients. This could happen **due to the networks, infrastructure and trust that had been established between the local healthcare partners, the local authority, education providers and the Arts Centre.**

The challenge of sporadic funding and lack of continuity of programming was discussed. This is a challenge for the artist, the service provider, and the clients. Artist residency schemes, for example, need to be seen as a core part of a service delivery. In discussing the complexity and holistic nature of community healthcare, with a myriad of different environments and professionals involved in delivery, Yvonne O'Neill noted that artists working in healthcare need to be valued as part of the core team.

"The challenge of recruiting nurses can provide opportunities to look at other ways of supporting a quality service through creative programming, in a safe manner, with backing from the research evidence base."

Yvonne O'Neill

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