

**Arts and Health Cross Party Group Meeting 20 March 2019
12.30, Conference Room B, Ty Hywel,
National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay.**



Present

David Melding AM (**Chair**)
Maddie Rees, AM Support Staff
Sian Tomos, Arts Council of Wales
Sally Lewis, Arts Council of Wales
Callum Hughes, Welsh NHS
Confederation
Angela Rogers, WAHWN
Sarah Goodey, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Prue Thimbleby, ABMUHB
Rhian Webber, Cwm Taf UHB
Simon Joslyn, Cardiff & Vale UHB
Amy Lewis, Cwm Taf UHB
Andrea Davies, BCUHB
Lleucu Siencyn, Literature Wales

Claire Jordan, Ffrind i Mi, ABUHB
Claire O'Shea, Campaign to End
Loneliness
Helen Williams, Arts Council of Wales
(minuting)

Apologies

Jayne Bryant, AM
Elizabeth Aylett, Freelance
Nesta Lloyd-Jones, Welsh NHS
Confederation
Phil George, Chair, Arts Council of
Wales
Gemma Brown, Hywel Dda UHB

Welcome and introductions from Chair, David Melding (DM) AM

David Melding (DM) Chair, welcomed all to the meeting and explained that he had been asked to step in as Chair for Jayne Bryant (JB) who was attending the opening of a new cancer centre in Newport. DM expressed his support for the Arts & Health agenda, having previously worked across various portfolios including Culture and Sport as well as Housing, and having previously chaired the Assembly's Health Committee.

DM explained that the meeting would explore the impact of the arts on loneliness and isolation.

The meeting began with a short film of Span Art's *Remote Choir* in Pembrokeshire. This was part of a series of 4 short films commissioned by the Arts Council of Wales in conjunction with WAHWN to highlight best practice examples of how the arts are increasing wellbeing and reducing isolation. The film demonstrated how Span Arts had used singing to bring together a group of isolated older adults – both those living at home (but rurally isolated) as well as those in residential care home settings. The group agreed that the film effectively captured the power of the arts to help prevent isolation and loneliness and DM noted that it chimed with some Fusion (WG's flagship Anti-Poverty Programme) projects that were working to address the same issue.

Minutes of the last meeting 26 September 2019

The Group agreed that the minutes of the last meeting were a true record. Sally Lewis (SL) reminded members that (in order to maximise CPG discussion time and achieve greater focus) it had been agreed at the last meeting that partners would provide short written update reports rather than present lengthy verbal updates at the meeting. This approach had been trialled for this meeting with partners each highlighting 3 headline developments in their areas on one side of A4. SL thanked partners for their reports and reassured the Group that there would be more time to

submit updates prior to the next meeting. Maddie Rees (MR) kindly agreed to circulate the reports following the meeting.

Action Point: MR to circulate partners' updates to the Group.

Campaign to End Loneliness: Claire O'Shea, Campaign Manager, Wales

Claire O'Shea (COS) talked about the work of the Campaign to End Loneliness and stressed how critical the issue of isolation has become across Wales, particularly in relation to rural areas. Key risk factors for loneliness include low income, poor physical and mental health, rural communities, poor service provision and living alone. The problem is heightened amongst black and ethnic minority and LGBT groups and loneliness was particularly prevalent amongst older people. The Campaign is working with partners within health, local authorities, charities and business to ensure that everyone knows what they can do to tackle loneliness and to create a network to help breakdown stigma and talk about loneliness. A detailed piece of research has been undertaken and the final report will be published before the Summer recess. COS noted that there hadn't been any specific questions raised in relation to the arts / culture in the report to date (which could hopefully be rectified). COS agreed to share the report and its findings with the Group.

Action Point: COS to share the report with the Group.

Reading Friends: Lleucu Siencyn, Chief Executive Officer, Literature Wales

Lleucu Siencyn (LIS) thanked WAHWN and the Arts Council for commissioning Literature Wales to produce the Reading Friends film and presented it to the Group. LIS explained that the Project was part of a wider UK programme and was halfway through its 3 year pilot. Literature Wales has worked with specific communities in Conwy and Swansea (with University Students befriending and reading to patients at Singleton Hospital). The project was volunteer- led and had the potential to be scalable as the concept was simple and resource- efficient. The Group congratulated Literature Wales and WAHWN on the film and its message.

Ffrind i mi: Claire Jordan, Lead Nurse, Patient Experience & Education ABUHB

Claire Jordan (CJ) talked about the Ffrind i mi project, a befriending and intergenerational initiative that brings together people in care homes and hospital settings and also involves school children who benefit from the experience. The initiative is wide and varied: it encourages singing in hospitals; teaches older people to use technology around the arts (Digital Companions) and has also encouraged greater use of walking frames through a fun 'Pimp My Zimmer' project. CJ noted that they are looking to work collaboratively with local Scouts groups and to link up with Newport Council in the future. CJ underlined that 'It's the Little things' that often matter when tackling loneliness.

DM thanked all presenters for their inspiring presentations and reflected on how the arts can make a real difference in combating isolation and loneliness. DM opened the discussion for comments:

Andrea Davies (AD) felt it was important to include groups with learning disabilities in the work of the Campaign to End Loneliness as they are particularly at risk from isolation.

SL enquired about the sustainability of the Reading Friends initiative? LIS noted that they aim to maintain the networks if possible and are exploring ways to do this. She felt this was a scalable project.

Raising Awareness coordinating our approach to communication on the impact of this work

SL thanked WAHWN for facilitating the creation of short films on the theme of Loneliness and Isolation and proposed that the films deserved a wider airing on social media to help raise awareness of the excellent work underway in this area. The Group discussed the use of a consistent hashtag so that everyone could share, retweet and augment the message. Following a discussion, it was agreed that, in liaison with the Arts Council's Comms Team, the films would be shared over a series of weeks to highlight the impact of the arts in relation to loneliness. Group members were asked to share their twitter handles so that they could be tagged into the messages.

Action Point: SL to liaise with the Arts Council's Communications Team and share the 4 short films via Twitter and Facebook. All CPG members to share their twitter and Facebook addresses and to re-tweet / share the postings to heighten the profile. (Please note –following the meeting the dates for releasing the films on Social Media are 14 and 20th April 2019)

Wales NHS Confederation Briefing

Callum Hughes (CH) introduced and shared hard copies of the Welsh NHS Confederation's briefing on Loneliness, Isolation and the Arts. Everyone agreed that this was a very useful addition to resources and MR agreed to share with the Group.

Action Point: MR to share the Welsh NHS Confederation's briefing with the Group.

AOB

WAHWN

AR reminded the Group that WAHWN had launched their website at a recent Bangor University Research Network event and encouraged partners to sign up to the network via the website. 90 practitioners in Wales would soon have completed the intensive Arts and Health Evaluation Training 'Creative & Credible' which was a significant step forward.

MR agreed to circulate the links to the other films on loneliness that ACW / WAHWN had commissioned following the meeting.

Action Point: MR to circulate the links to the films not shown at today's meeting.

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg UHB

Prue Thimbleby that they will be presenting a project, Caring for Carers at the WMC on Monday 29th April 2019 - all welcome. In addition, ABM's International Storytelling for Health Conference will take place between 27-29th June in Swansea.

Themes of next two meetings: 3 July: Dance, Health & Wellbeing - with a particular focus on Dance to Health (falls prevention) and Dance for Parkinson's
25 Sept: AGM and the Arts and Creativity within Social Care and Care Home Settings

Date of next meetings: 3rd July 2019 and 25th September (AGM).

With DM having left the meeting to attend a plenary session, SL thanked everybody for attending and to MR for hosting the meeting.

The meeting ended at 13:55.