

24 August 2018

Strategy for an Ageing Population
Office for Seniors
PO Box 1556
WELLINGTON 6140

By email: ageing_population@msd.govt.nz

Tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: Office of Seniors: Development of an Ageing Population Strategy
From the: Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)

1. Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this important mahi. We have a strong belief in the power of arts, culture and creativity to support the good health and well-being of senior New Zealanders.
2. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission is:
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Key points

3. We read your discussion document with interest but we struggled to find acknowledgement of essential role that arts, culture and creativity play in supporting better health and well-being outcomes for senior New Zealanders.
4. Given their powerful impact on health and well-being, **we recommend that arts, culture and creativity take an integral role in the new Ageing Population Strategy.**
5. The depth of evidence and supporting practice around seniors' participation in arts programmes point to the need for it to take a much more prominent role in how we support seniors. Support through Vote Social Development would greatly assist this and help ensure that seniors stay connected and valued as they age.

Submission

6. There's a growing body of research relating to the contribution of the arts to both the mental and physical well-being of individuals, and to the social cohesion of communities. This includes

ensuring that older people are respected and valued, helping older people to stay connected, and maintaining physical and mental fitness and dexterity.

7. We highlight some of this evidence in this submission and have collated more evidence in our Advocacy Toolkit, available at: www.creativenz.govt.nz/development-and-resources/advocacy-toolkit/the-evidence-for-advocacy

UK All-Party Parliamentary Group

8. In 2017, the United Kingdom the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing released its inquiry report; a comprehensive review of the evidence for the benefits of the arts to health and well-being.

9. The inquiry's key messages were that:

- *the arts can help keep us well, aid our recovery and support longer lives better lived*
- *the arts can help meet major challenges facing social care: ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health*
- *the arts can help save money in the health service and social care.*

10. The report noted that:

A growing body of evidence and practical experience shows that engagement in the arts should be considered an integral part of healthy ageing. Social isolation and loneliness affect people of all ages. In older adults, social participation is more beneficial for health than giving up smoking.

11. The Group also reported that participatory arts sessions can reduce depression.

Sense of meaning and purpose in life can diminish with age. An estimated 40 percent of older people living in care homes are affected by depression, compared with 20 percent of older people living in the community. People with depression have a 50 percent higher risk of early death than their contemporaries without, which is comparable with smoking. Participatory arts sessions in care homes yield improvements in residents' wellbeing and the quality of care being provided by staff.

12. Additionally, physically activity through dance can be more effective than fall prevention programmes.

Falls are a major factor in older people entering residential care. One hour of dancing per week for six months by healthy older people has been shown to improve cognitive, tactile and motor performance while proving more engaging and popular than many fall prevention programmes.

13. The report also noted that arts engagement helps to delay the onset of dementia.

Evidence is emerging that arts engagement helps to delay the onset of dementia. Musical training can enhance the plasticity of the brain and visual art can improve cognitive functioning. Engagement in creative and cultural activities can improve the quality of life for people with dementia and their carers.

14. The short-form report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group is available at:

[www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry/Publications/Creative Health The Short Report.pdf](http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry/Publications/Creative_Health_The_Short_Report.pdf)

Arts and Health in Wales

15. The Arts Council of Wales was asked by the Welsh Government to explore how a more strategic approach to arts and health might be developed. As a result, the Arts Council of Wales produced a research report that was a representative audit of the principal arts and health activities taking place in Wales. The rationale was to look in more detail at the ways that the arts can make a greater contribution to the health and well-being of people in Wales. The report, *Arts and Health in Wales – A Mapping study of current activity*, is available at: www.arts.wales/140333

16. A case study in the report recorded the benefits of dance for people living with Parkinson's disease.

Dance for Parkinson's invites people with Parkinson's and their carers/family to take part in a high quality dance source three terms a year that is creatively driven by the repertoire of National Dance Company Wales and English National Ballet. Since the project began, participants have not only gained a deeper understanding of dance and of the work of National Dance Company Wales, they have greatly improved their confidence and reduced feeling of isolation. This happens alongside the main benefit of an involvement in physical activity that helps participants cope with their symptoms and learn to understand the level of ability their bodies are still able to achieve.

Australia – Healthy and Active Ageing

17. In New South Wales, the State Government has a strong Arts and Health strategic framework and funds an Arts on Prescription programme. Arts on Prescription uses a participatory arts programme alongside traditional health care to help older people improve their physical and mental well-being.
18. Research on the New South Wales programme shows that engaging with the arts improves the well-being of older people by: assisting older people to overcome social isolation; improving mental well-being, confidence and self-esteem; helping people through periods of loss and bereavement; and improvements in measures of physical health, such as functional ability, joint mobility and cardiovascular fitness, allowing older people to undertake increase level of general daily activity.
19. More information on the New South Wales approach is available at: www.hammond.com.au/services/arts-on-prescription-sector-guide

New Zealand

20. New Zealand research also points to the benefits the arts can bring to seniors. As an example, *Te Puāwaitanga O Ngā Tapuwae Kia Ora Tonu/Life and Living in Advanced Age, a Cohort Study in New Zealand* (otherwise known as LiLACS NZ) is a longitudinal cohort study of New Zealanders living in advanced age. In the study's report on dementia, it noted:
Older Māori have substantial roles involving advanced cognitive activities and, along with kapa haka, cultural activities may provide greater cognitive stimulation and thus preservation of cognition with advanced age of Māori.
21. The report is available at: www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/assets/fmhs/faculty/lilacs/research/docs/Dementia-Supplement-Research-Report.pdf

22. **Given the above, we encourage you to ensure the arts, culture and creativity play an integral role in the Ageing Population Strategy, and that arts programmes for seniors which deliver to positive health and well-being outcomes be actively supported through Vote Social Development.**

Background on Creative New Zealand and how we currently support arts participation by seniors

23. Creative New Zealand is the arts development agency of Aotearoa, responsible for delivering government support for the arts. We're an autonomous Crown entity continued under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014.
24. Our legislative purpose is to encourage, promote, and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders. In achieving this purpose, we recognise and uphold the principles of **participation** and **access**. Participation is achieved by supporting initiatives that encourage participation in the arts. Access is achieved by supporting the availability of projects of merit to communities or sections of the population that would not otherwise have access to them.
25. Creative New Zealand's Statement of Intent 2016–2021 identifies the outcomes we're seeking to achieve on behalf of all New Zealanders.
- Stronger arts communities, artists and organisations as shown by:
 - high-quality New Zealand art is developed
 - New Zealand arts gain international success
 - Greater public engagement with the arts as shown by:
 - New Zealanders participate in the arts
 - New Zealanders experience high-quality arts.
26. We contribute to achieving these outcomes by delivering programmes in the following areas:
- funding for artists, arts practitioners and arts organisations
 - capability building for artists, arts practitioners and arts organisations
 - advocacy for the arts.
27. Creative New Zealand receives funding through Vote: Arts, Culture and Heritage and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board. In 2017/18, we invested **\$42.897 million** into the New Zealand arts sector.
28. We currently fund a limited number of programmes for seniors through our project funding. Several of our clients that are on multi-year funding also provide arts participation programmes for seniors. The funding is directed towards supporting Creative New Zealand's outcome of 'New Zealanders participate in the arts'. However, with the evidence presented, arts participation programmes can have many other outcomes which relate to supporting better health and well-being for senior New Zealanders.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss this submission further.

Ngā mihi rārau ki a koutou katoa

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Pannett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nā David Pannett
Senior Manager, Planning, Performance & Advocacy Services