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Heritage, health and well-being: assessing the impact of a heritage focused intervention on health and well-being

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Abstract

Do museums and other heritage organisations have something to offer the healthcare sector? Do they have a role in improving health and well-being? Increasingly both heritage and healthcare organisations think they do. A broader definition of health including well-being and an emphasis on preventative medicine and multi-agency approaches to care within the UK's National Health Service has facilitated the work of museums and galleries in this area. However, there are still few specific heritage programmes in healthcare organisations and very little evaluation of these. Here we present key findings from a qualitative evaluation of a heritage focused intervention carried out in a range of healthcare settings. The aim of the research project was to assess the impact on well-being of taking museum objects into hospitals and healthcare contexts.

Keywords: health, well-being, object handling, heritage intervention, hospitals, care homes



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9. Quotations are directly from participants, although anonymised with their research sample number/a pseudonym; in all quotations the italicised text is from the facilitator and the normal text is the participant.

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