

ARTS & HEALTH HUB

COVID-19 Artist Impact Report For Artists Working in Arts & Health



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**ARTS COUNCIL
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We Support Artists

Introduction

The Arts & Health Hub is a network for artists and cultural producers (curators etc) interested or working in the field of arts and health.

Our 3 principles are to **connect** with one another, **learn** from one another and **share** with one another. When members sign up they commit to working collaboratively and collectively to lift one another up. The Hub is artist led and primarily for artists, although we welcome people from other backgrounds.

We support artists through online and in-person events that range from peer-to-peer support groups to professional development workshops and social events. We also host an online community using Slack, where artists across the UK (and globally) can join to access our network and the resources that we share.

We are inclusive. Our network is open to artists from all backgrounds, communities, experiences and qualifications. No one is better than the other.

Released: 27th July 2020

About this Report

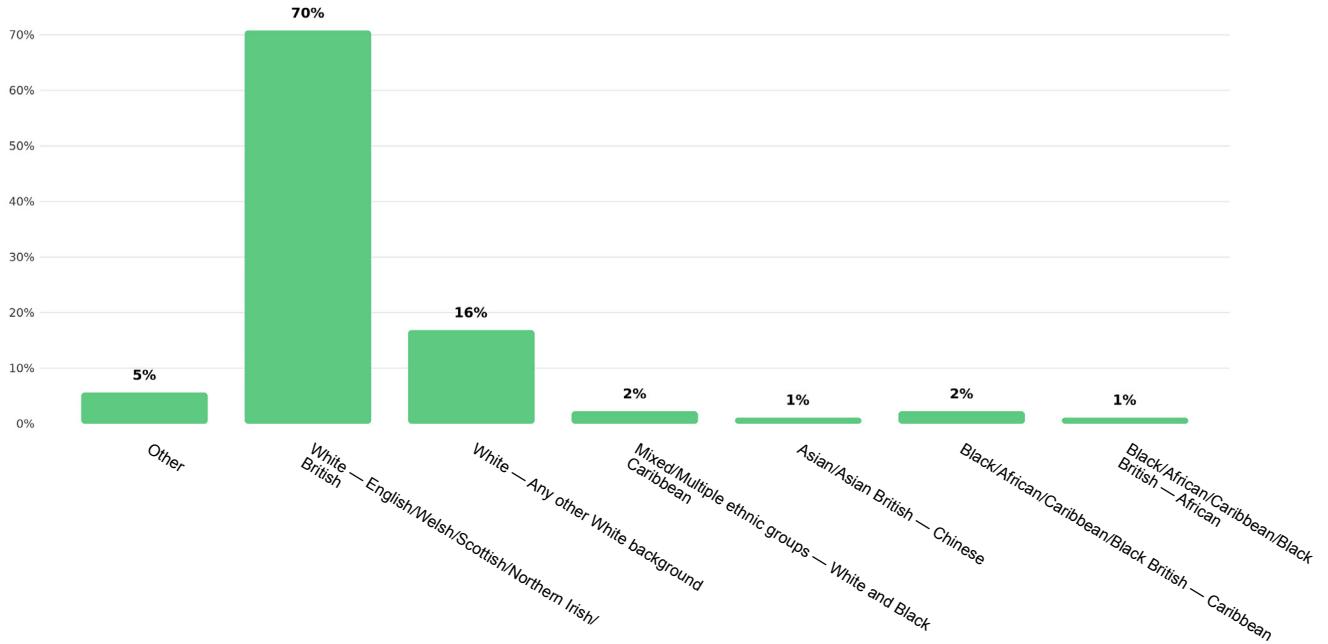
It is no surprise that during the coronavirus pandemic a number of artists were instantly affected by a change in circumstances. Many of the artists in our network are freelancers and self-employed, working on a project basis. Some of the artists in the network have part time roles working across arts and health, supplementing their freelance contracts.

In the first few weeks of the UK lockdown we held weekly check-ins for artists. These open sessions were unstructured and exploratory, giving the chance for individuals to talk about how they had been impacted, both personally and professionally. From a complete loss of work to grappling with new ways of working and technologies, the sessions highlighted a number of anxieties, but also provided space for peer-to-peer support and understanding.

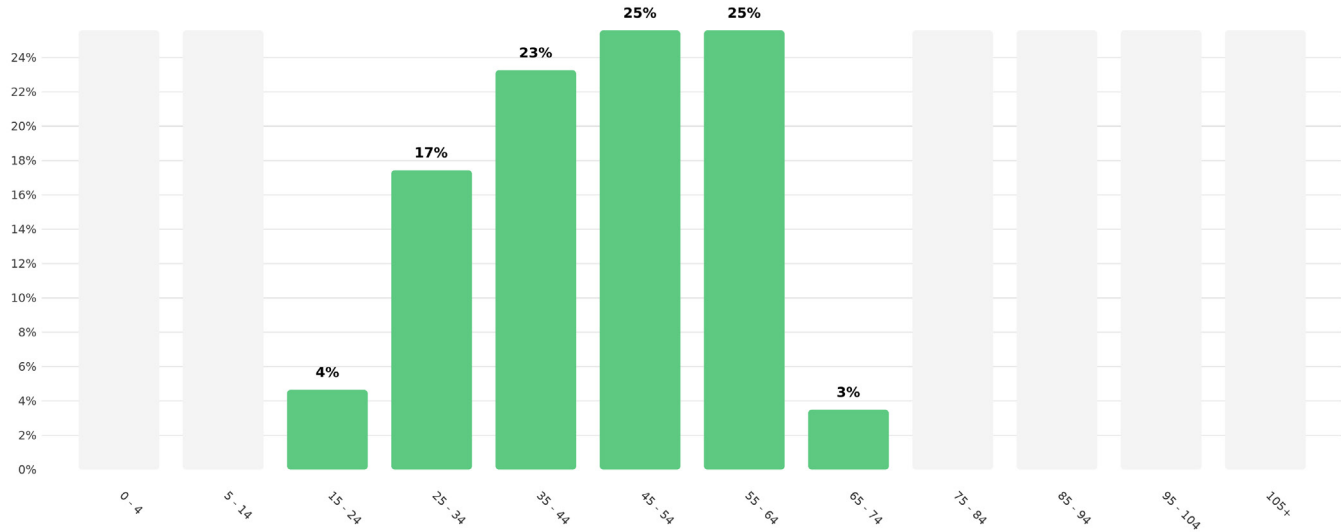
There are approximately 500 members in the network as of July 2020. 91 members of the network responded to our short survey which asked questions about how artists who specifically work in arts and health had been impacted by the pandemic. We also asked what arts and health practitioners would like to see from the sector. The following pages are the results.

General Information

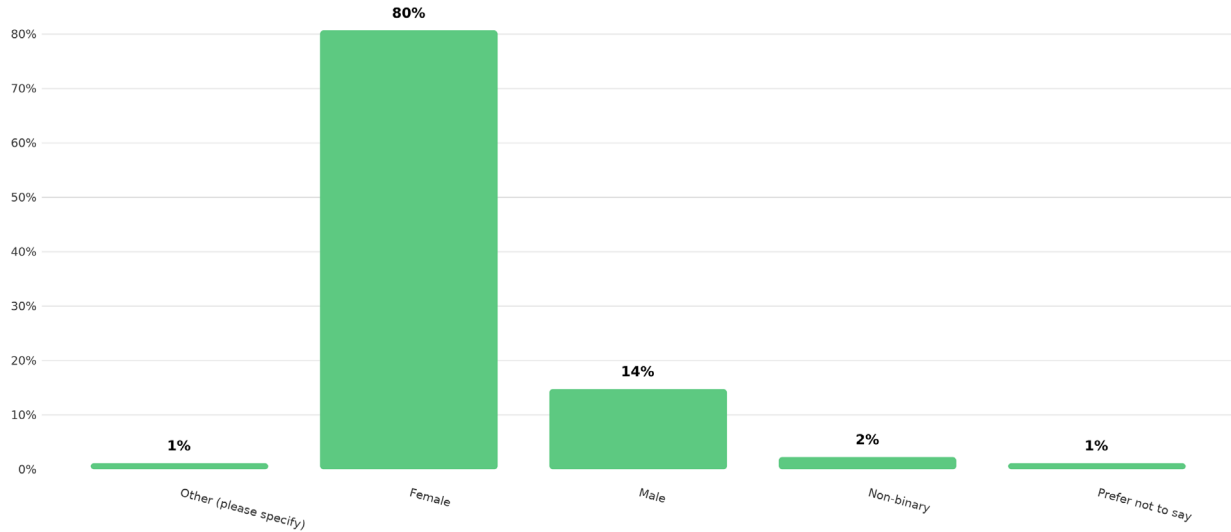
Demographics: What is your ethnicity?



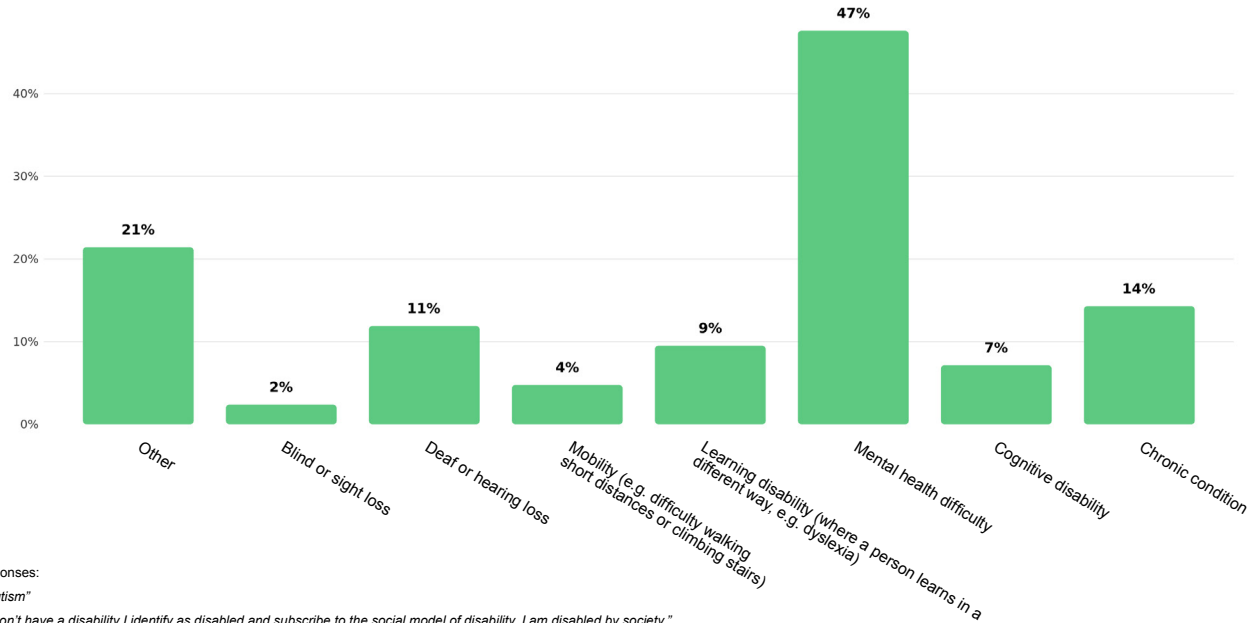
Demographics: What is your age?



Demographics: How would you describe your gender?



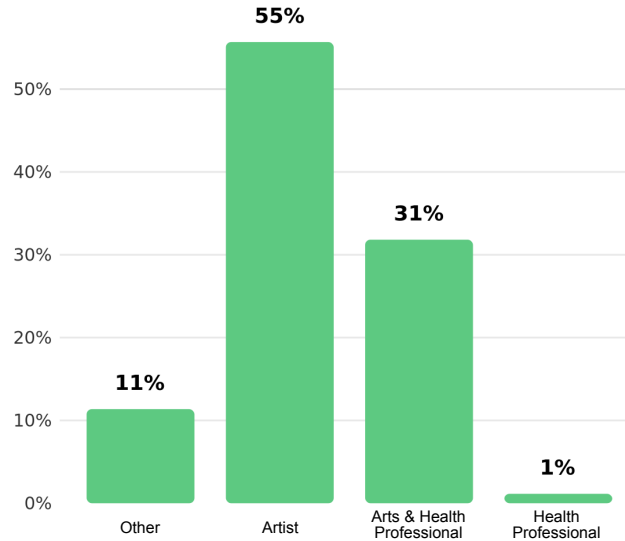
Demographics: Do you self identify as having a disability?



Other Responses:

- "Autism"
- "I don't have a disability I identify as disabled and subscribe to the social model of disability. I am disabled by society."
- "BPD"
- "Epilepsy"
- "Autoimmune"

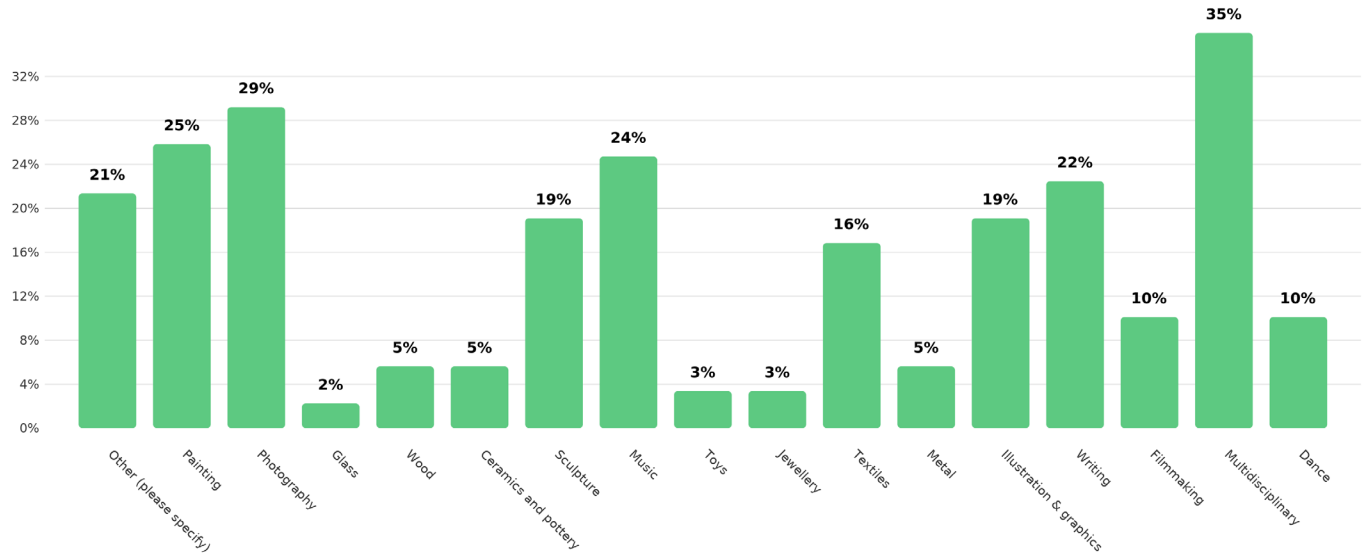
Demographics: How would you describe your profession?



Other Responses:

- *"Creative arts Ambassador / Events Manager / Fashion Designer"*
- *"Arts and Health facilitator/Coach/artist/clinician"*
- *"Musician" / "Community Musician"*
- *"Freelance art teacher and artist"*
- *"Administration"*
- *"Art Therapist"*
- *"Arts worker and Entertainer in a variety of settings Hospitals, Cruise Ships, Theatres etc"*
- *"Pianist, composer, poet, community animateur in many arts and crafts"*

Demographics: How would you describe your artistic medium?

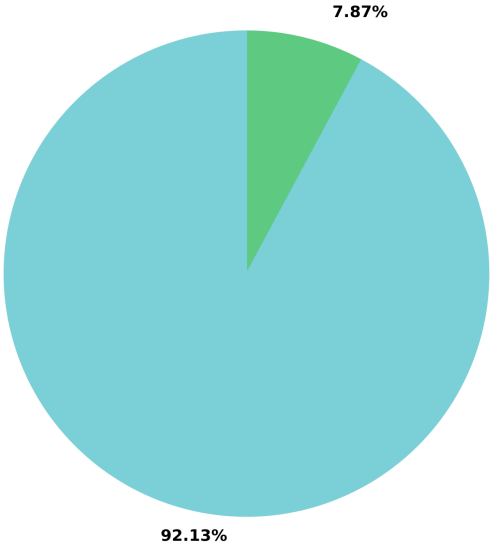


Other Responses:

- Animation
- Comedy, clowning, magic
- Crochet and collage
- Drama
- Drawing + 3D
- Installation
- Performing arts
- Mixture of above including arts and crafts with those living with dementia and their carers.
- Mixed Media
- Model making
- Mosaic
- Mural painter
- Museum collections
- Theatre
- Theatre design
- Printmaking

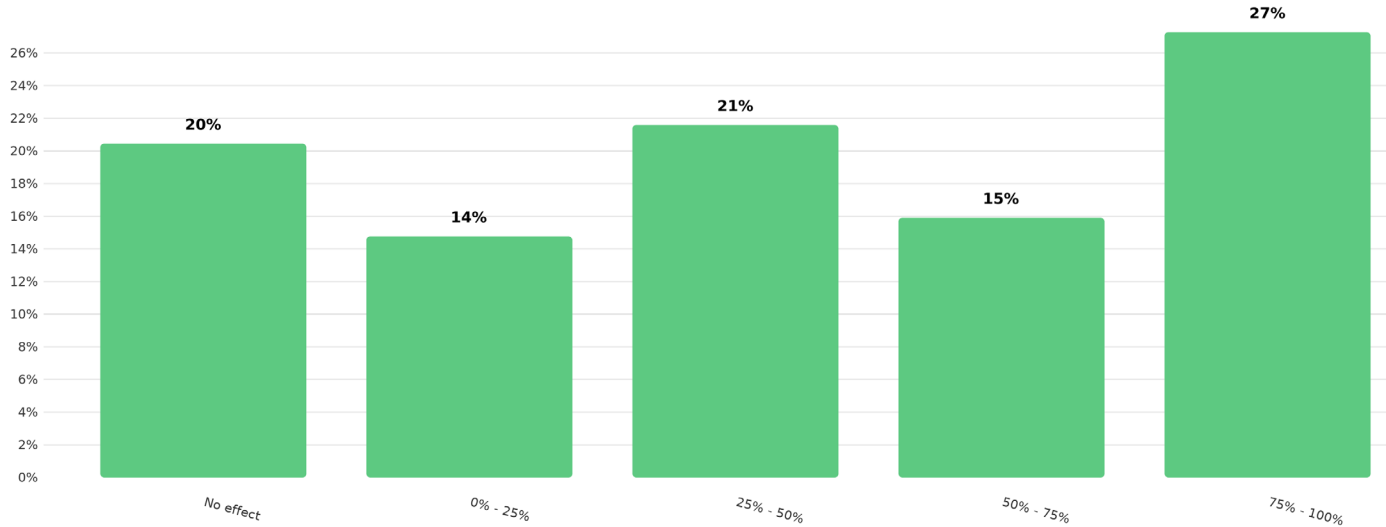
Would you consider yourself to have a socially engaged practice?

No
Yes

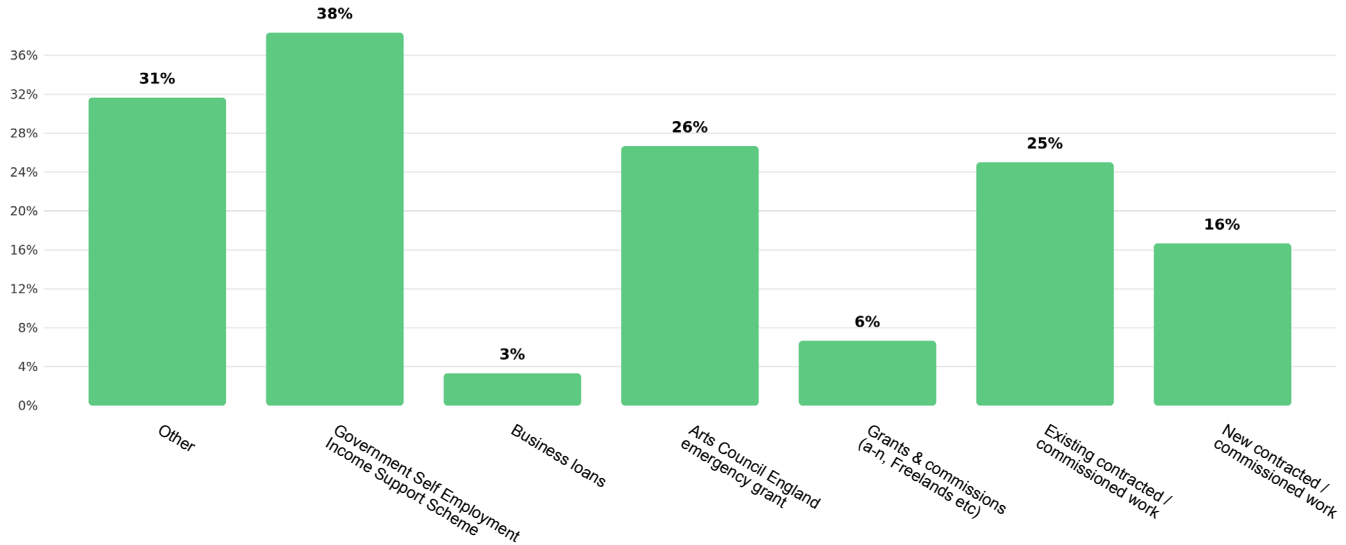


**How have artists in arts and health
been affected by the pandemic?**

How much income have you lost because of the pandemic?



Have you accessed any financial support for your arts practice?



Other Responses:

- "I've applied to different organisations but non has come to my aid , I also run the annual KOPALA Fashion Week which is aimed at promoting artists and this year's edition is likely not to take place because of lack of funds."
- "Friends commissioned me to put together a small photographic book for them."
- "I haven't claimed anything."
- "Discounted rent by studio landlord."
- "Universal Credit"
- "I've chosen not to as others are in greater need than me and I have resources at present."
- "No. Savings make ineligible for financial support."
- "I work full time for NHS and do my arts health in my spare time."
- "Borrow money from family."
- "No just part time 80% furlough from ACE funded org."
- "Unemployment Benefits from Stimulus Package"
- "I haven't been eligible for any support!"

How has your income been affected during the pandemic?

"Due to the depreciation of our local currency, everything has tremendously gone up, most clients are broke and almost everything has gone up affecting the workflow and business operations."

"Working on a freelance basis means it's hard to determine what the loss of income is later on this year, as work was not confirmed that far ahead back before lockdown. Therefore, the financial effects are likely to affect freelance artists even more for the next six months at least."

"100% loss of freelance income in Q1, just starting to now get things booked for Q2 and 3. Relying on part time PAYE income."

"As I work with music and singing I have no future prospect of running physical sessions where live music making with groups is possible at this time and going forward, especially for my singing for lung health groups. The participants I work with are vulnerable and most are shielding. I am now having to rethink my practice to online but this makes my job harder, therapeutically and musically."

"Income of for projects has been affected in that we have had to spend funds differently but still achieve our outcomes."

"No long term security. Short term contracts which may or may not be continued makes it difficult to plan long term."

"The main factor has been the freezing of projects in mid flow and the cancelling of others. This is particularly difficult as 60% of my projects are in the USA and these are unable to complete until travel restrictions are lifted."

"Self employed for under a year. I lost all the students I had in after school art clubs. I don't feel confident teaching over zoom. I was offered a loan but can't afford to get in debt. So zero income. No business. No venues to teach from. Galleries all closed."

"I have lost my jobs as I used to work in schools as a freelance art in Health practitioner."

"With the fact everything has been taken online I have ended up with more work to ensure this happens."

"A lot of people has lost their jobs around me and this has an impact on my feelings of job security etc."

"It's hard to gauge lost income -- but have definitely lost opportunities for potential income."

"Difficulties as Freelance workshop facilitator."

"Concern about the length of time it will take to build up income once again to an appreciable standard of living."

"I have continued delivering services and this has increased with new models of delivery."

"From the end of this term I may have lost all my work."

"All worked completely stopped. Now it's opening up again, but it's become nearly impossible to afford to film."

How has your income been affected during the pandemic?

"Despite volunteering to honour payments for contracted sessions in March and April, the NHS later required alternative phone based work to be done to the value of the sessions, or free sessions to compensate when work restarts. No negotiation nor recognition that in my case I'm having to take care of my elderly mother which prevents me from working from home."

"I do not do my arts and health as my main income, I work in the NHS so the pandemic has not affected my income, but it has made my own arts health practice more involved, to deal with my own anxieties about the state of the world and coming to work and infecting other people if I get infected myself."

"I think the answer may be in finding more ways for Intersectionality as a means for artists to get paid helping with mental health of the community."

"I work with hospital arts programmes so have had to completely stop all live workshops for the time being."

"As I'm generally working in hospitals, hospices, care homes or headlining on ships none of this work is available."

"I have no work booked ahead and all exhibitons have been cancelled. I was fortunate to have received an Arts Council Emergency Grant so I can continue making work but very unsure of my future."

"Not much to say - my clients are affected in the same way so we are all in the same position."

"All support group colleges shut down."

"I'm more worried about the long term impact on my work/career/ opportunities/possibilities/income than currently how we can restart music and health programmes while social distancing."

"I am a freelancer, my income will be affected well into 2021."

"Had to move out of London due to being in shared and therefore riskier accommodation."

"In order to keep participant support on the road, my own creative practice has taken a back seat."

"I have fallen between the gap because I am fairly new to freelancing and have done both freelance and PAYE employed work but through an NHS agency, so don't reach the threshold for the Govt support to self employed."

"As much of my freelance income has been lost, I have refocused my work around research for the time being. I am lucky to be able to do this."

"Projects were cancelled and I have no idea if they will run in the future."

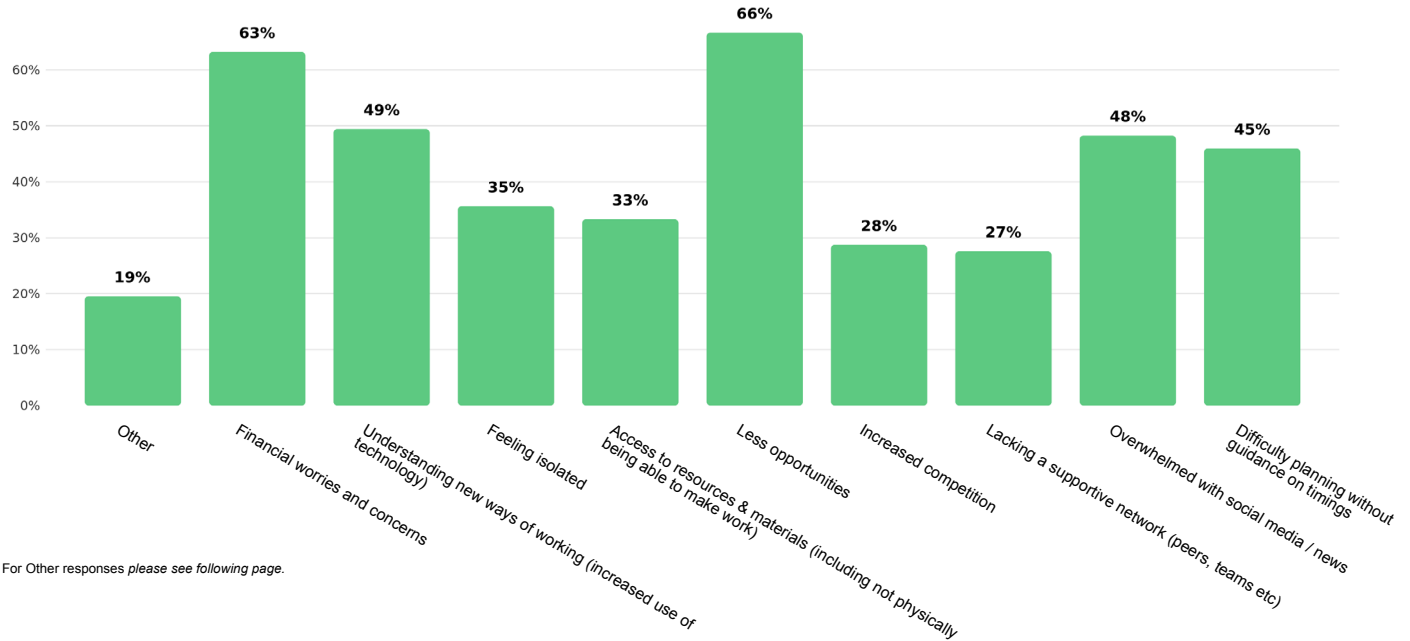
"It's difficult to quantify loss of exhibitions and sales."

How has your income been affected during the pandemic?

"I have had virtually no income since the pandemic started as the Arts on Prescription work I still have has taken a long time to get off the ground because of new working systems etc. So by the time I do get paid for the little work I have it will be August, so I won't have had an income for 4 months."

"The loss of income would be far more significant if it weren't for the Self-Employed Grant scheme administered through HMRC. The impact, purely in terms of professional sources of income, has been much more significant."

What are your main concerns relating to your practice?



For Other responses please see following page.

What are your main concerns relating to your practice?

"Adapting to a new normal era of almost doing everything virtually. As most of the activities I'm engaged with are properly done through physical."

"Dance is particularly complex when it comes to social distancing and no specific guidance has been given on this. It is needed urgently in order for arts and health dance artists to make an informed plan."

"Concerns for peers. Concerns for safety and wellbeing of participants in groups in which I work. Concerns for Black people to access additional support during very traumatic time."

"As I am growing older lack of opportunities."

"Whether the healthcare charity that I am employed by will be able to sustain enough income to continue their art service."

"Impact on the people we usually engage with and their declining physical and mental health."

"The situation has greatly impacted my mental and physical health thereby it's become challenging to get myself be creative at this time. However, creativity has given me such amazing comfort and joy too during all of this."

"Travel restrictions are a big factor for me. A large project in France has been postponed, possibly cancelled and a number of USA projects are stuck or cancelled."

"Though the virus has not effected my salary as of yet, the difficulties in applying for funding and fundraising this year make me concerned for further down the line for the whole programme. I would prefer to lose my job though than risk one of the programmes running out of funds - I really hope we make it through this intact."

"I'm trying to access networks to engage with other isolated artists on twitter mostly. And through NSEAD and ACCESSART."

"My work is needed more than ever yet so am unable to reach the people who need my service."

"Leadership not understanding the full emotional, social, spiritual, psychological impacts of COVID-19."

"Funding streams not coming back on board for several years; a general malaise regarding appreciation of the arts and their wellbeing value generally; long term negativity and lack of opportunities being created over the next few year so."

"Lack of being able to take part in dance sessions or being in a dance suitable space - body conditioning."

"Concerns are for the future and how we can take forward safe meeting spaces for the people I work with. Also would like to continue to find funds for the new blended model of delivery that's been developed over this time and delivered which is more time consuming to prepare for and therefore more costly."

What are your main concerns relating to your practice?

"Fear of losing internet."

"Seems to me a coalition of artist reaching out to essential businesses/ non profits right now to see how we could be of use. Finding methods of connection and intersectionality. For instance blue mountain action council could perhaps use an artist on board to help with so many things. Seeing artists as essential instead of separate. Creative minds are essential for finding solutions outside the box."

"The hospital arts programmes I worked with in the SW area provided up to 50% of my income. Funding has now been withdrawn for any future projects. We have proposed new approaches for working remotely (videos, art packs, etc) and a phased return for safe distancing but without funding we can't plan anything."

"My future financially and mentally. My age is a factor I have not really ever had to consider but my worry now is I could be unemployable."

"It felt like I was finally picking up steam and my career was starting to take off. The pandemic completely stopped everything and now I worry it won't ever pick up again for me as a new artist."

"Although I qualified for the SEISS scheme the amount received was next to nothing as due to health issues my income was reduced over past 3 years."

"The government killing the poor."

"Government have been useless at supporting the Arts. They have left us high and dry. The rest of Europe is allowing concerts in some capacity to resume. The UK is not. I have had to move in with my parents as my finances are unlikely to improve until 2021 earliest in the UK."

"Such progress made in working in and with hospitals- how to maintain and build on that in altered hospital environment rather than the opposite."

"Working with vulnerable groups means the likelihood of being able to start up again and run live sessions in the foreseeable future is unlikely."

"Covid has brought out the best in some, & introduced rapidly some long overdue ways of working, but some people are not coping so well & the impact on those around them has been significant. Worry to about those participants not seeking medical support when perhaps they should - we will be missing serious illness."

"Excluded as a taxpayer (2nd class taxpayer) from rescue packages and information. Lots of media about how to rescue 'early career' artists but hardly any mention of rescue packages for 'mid career' artists. Being asked to work for free or volunteer, salaries being lowered due to competition."

"Not knowing when things will get back to relative normality. And hearing that the arts and museum sector are struggling financially and some maybe laying off staff, such as those in learning?"

What are your main concerns relating to your practice?

"I do group work and I'm worried about when this will be allowed to happen again and if participants are too worried to attend the groups."

"The uncertainty of how to earn a living now, not quite knowing what direction to take with so much unknown."

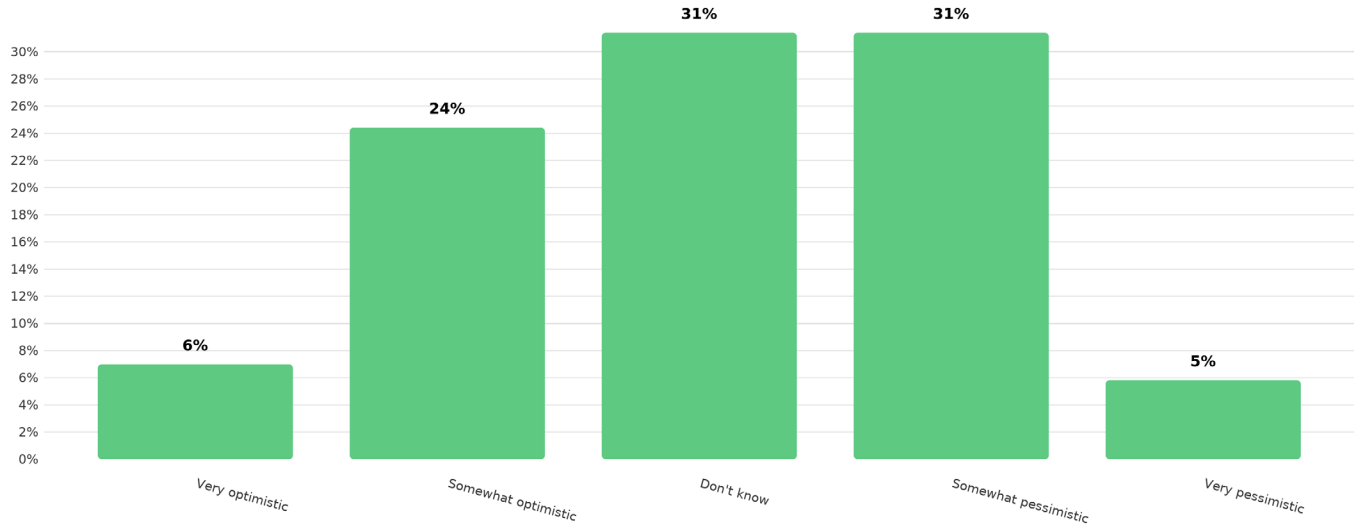
"If social distancing measures are going to remain in place for the majority of 2020, especially for those who are more vulnerable, how are we going to develop sustainable models for continuing our work that don't rely on face-to-face interaction?"

"Other priorities e.g. volunteering locally to support vulnerable residents & refugee families."

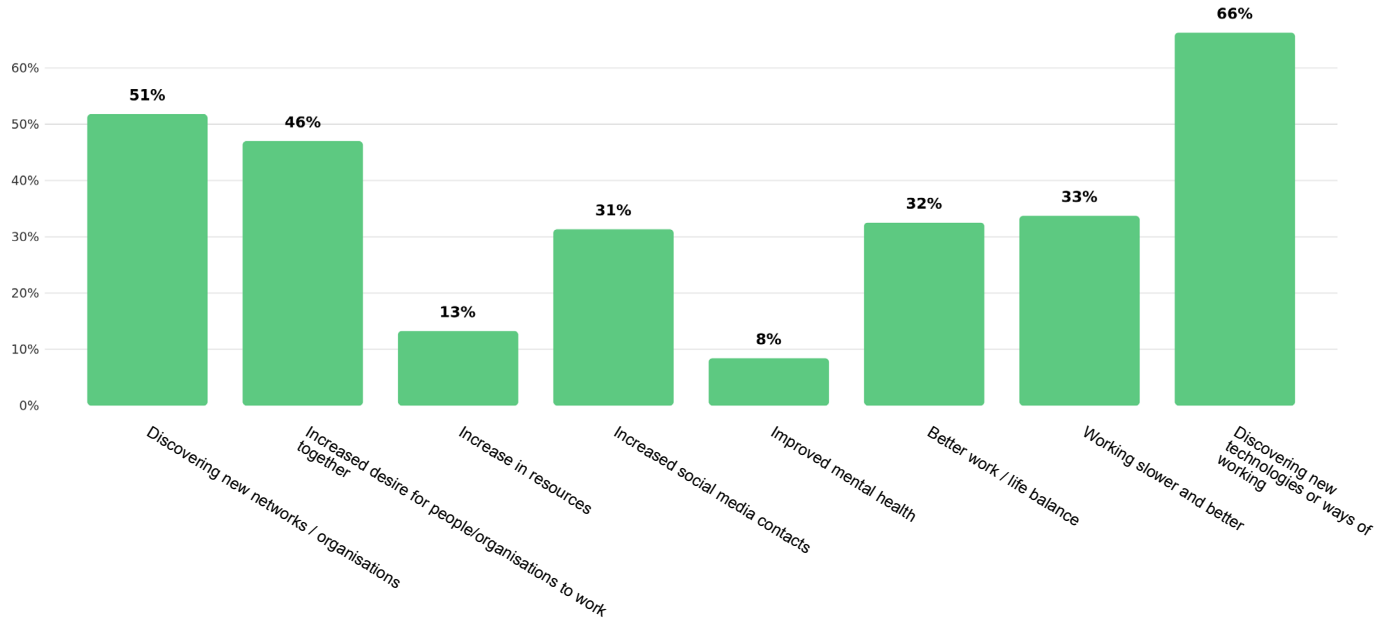
"Lack of it capability and difficulty understanding without physical meet ups."

"On the up-side, there has been more time reflect and I have been overwhelmed by a number of people's kindness. I have given 3 pupils who have not been able to pay for lessons free tuition but they have now been buying and delivering all my food which has allowed me to isolate much more effectively than I would have done otherwise."

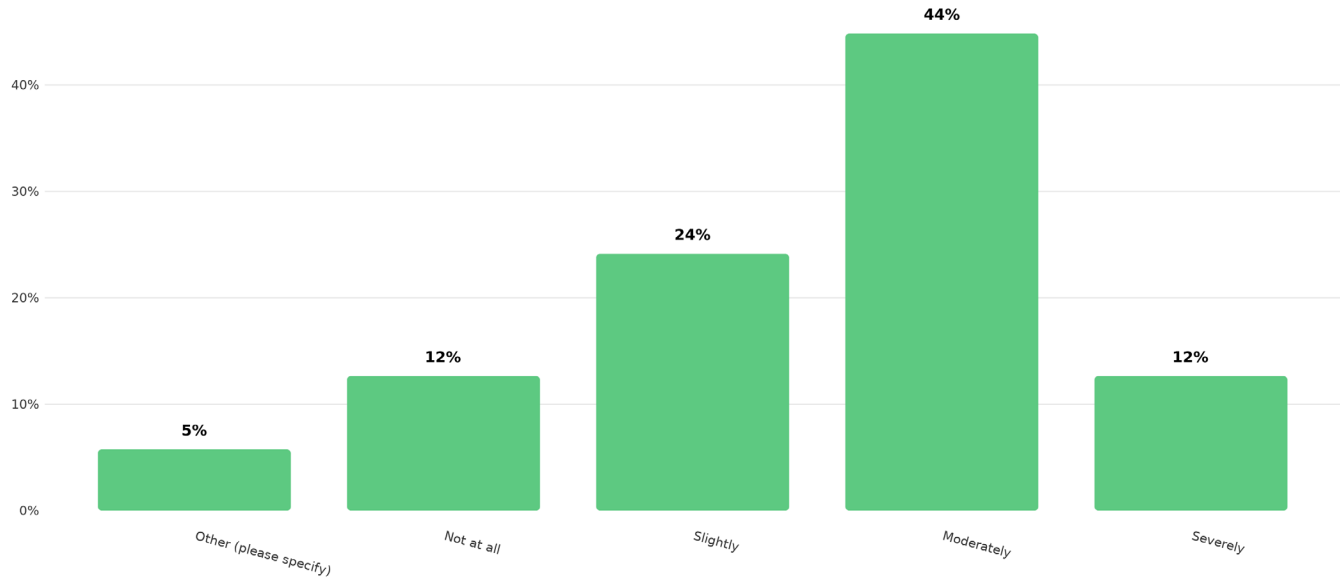
How optimistic are you feeling about the arts & health sector?



Have you seen any positive changes to your practice?



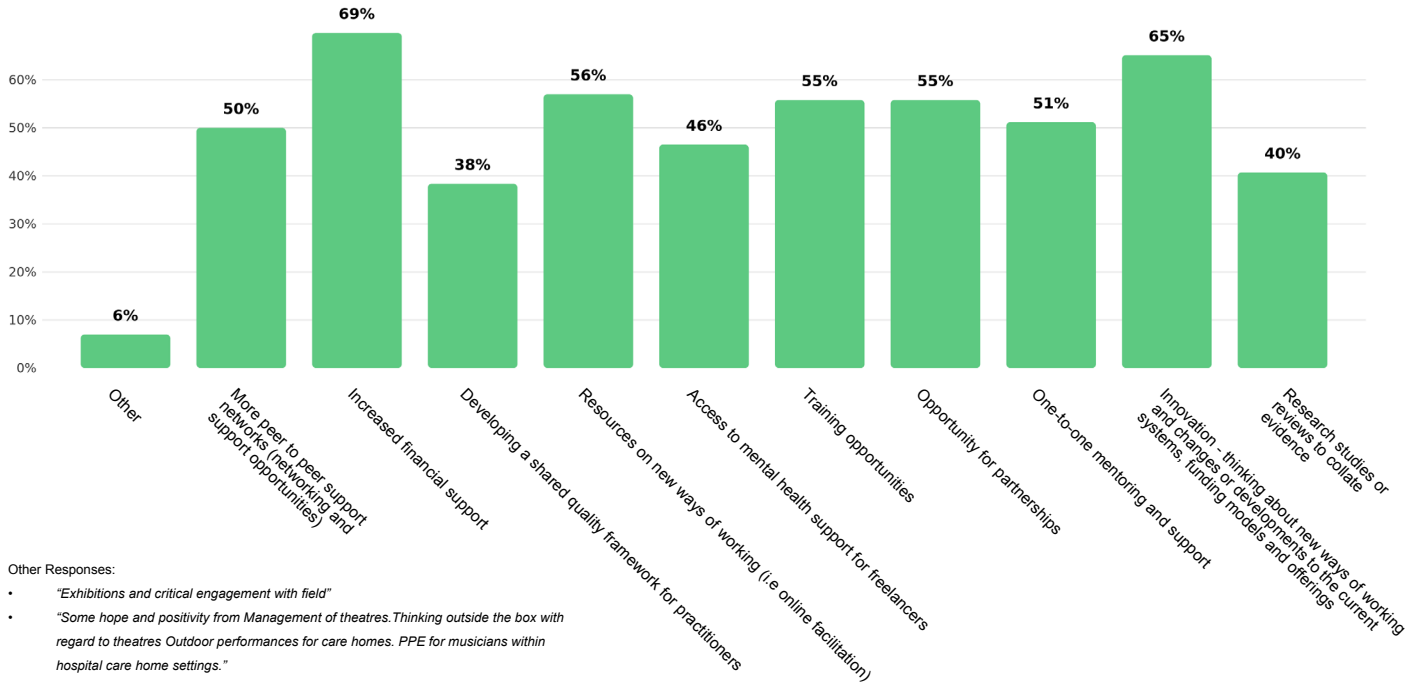
How has the pandemic affected your mental health?



Other Responses:

- *"It was a really challenging time. I want to believe I navigated better than I think but I had many up and downs. On the same day I could be fine and half way through the day I will be extremely anxious. Proper roller coaster."*
- *"It's hard to tell. It's had positive and negative consequences. I've had a lot more free time which I have enjoyed. But along with free time comes a tendency dwell on sadder personal issues."*
- *"Both extremes - slower pace and listening to birds=Good. Loss of income and inability to show sculpture=BAD."*
- *"Between moderately and severely depending in the day."*
- *"Difficult to tell when in isolation."*

What support would you like to see in the future from the sector?



Other Responses:

- "Exhibitions and critical engagement with field"
- "Some hope and positivity from Management of theatres. Thinking outside the box with regard to theatres Outdoor performances for care homes. PPE for musicians within hospital care home settings."
- "Society has glimpsed and experienced isolation and loneliness the very things I seek to address working in a hospital setting and we need to maintain the momentum of this understanding of well-being to ensure work in hospital continues."
- "Access to free or affordable space."

What support would you like to see in the future from the sector?

"Artists need more exposure to broaden their capacity and portfolios."

"Guidance on running workshops."

"Support from the wider arts sector in terms of recognition of how valuable this work is and how it could feed directly into the work of larger organisations, particularly theatres and venues that are now unfortunately struggling. I feel that socially engaged community work has been even more essential in this time and many large venues/orgs are only just realising how much value this work adds - if we could link the sector up more, reducing hierarchies etc, we might be able to prevent the closure of much loved large organisations as well as ensure the arts and health work gets the recognition it deserves."

"We need the Government to expressly commit to securing and funding the arts as part of the recovery model. People have been extolling virtues of social prescribing for aaaaaages, but there has been little talk of how that agenda fits with any kind of recovery or restoration of the sector. There is an absence of care across the board - we are all in survival mode."

"If large long established organisations offered their services for what one can pay rather than asking extortionate amounts of money (ie Magnum)."

"Continued advocacy to commissions at a high level for the benefits of arts and health practice and that artists should be paid appropriately for this."

"It's a long and complicated solution but the culture of arts and health needs to be re asserted as important and vital to human life."

"More publicity about the benefits of arts in health."

"Qualification / accreditation."

"Free mentoring."

"Partnerships with mental health charities who would offer free or partly funded art therapy training programmes for children in schools."

"Examples of how people have changed their practise- what is working."

"Actually providing more online educational opportunities would be great, so that if I am not able to attend in person I still have the opportunity to learn from voices in the field."

"I am hoping after Covid19 more organisations and funding will get involved / interested in the arts and health sector."

"Further research and understanding of the role of arts and health practitioners plus strong marketing of skills and resources. Further taxes on high incomes to feed directly to the arts and in to education."

"Training to support safe arts and health practice."

What support would you like to see in the future from the sector?

"Outreach!"

"I feel the pandemic has highlighted the perception of arts in health as being an 'extra'. Despite research and evidence on the benefits, it remains a very underfunded area. There are some exceptions; larger Trusts where the arts is more embedded, but for many smaller arts programmes the future looks uncertain. If a long term commitment to the arts isn't coming from the top of an organisation (trustees and at executive level), then it's hard to see a way forward."

"More grass roots opportunities. Increased networking, with genuine job opportunities."

"An understanding by government that making a profit is not necessarily our goal - sometimes it's enough to cover costs but that is held against you when reviewed for potential support."

"Financial help is a difficult one. I lost a lot of income and will struggle as I have used savings to live and have not been eligible for extra support so the financial help available supports some who haven't saved, but for me it doesn't help, so more practical help and opportunities and support are preferred."

"Decent pay; longer projects."

"We need to continue the connection with social prescribing but do need to be paid."

"We need a new funding model in the UK. It was breaking even before the virus, this pandemic just highlighted its fragility and how backwards it is compared to other European countries such as Germany. I hope this era heralds huge and lasting financial change for the Arts in the UK."

"Toolkit/guidance for NHS commissioners adopted nationally."

"More mainstream discussion about how freelancers, artists working in arts and health, and those with mental health conditions are affected by changes to lifestyle and society."

"The loss of space has had the biggest impact on my work and practice. Studio rents were at an all time high pre-Covid, now they aren't accessible. Even cheaper public spaces are off limits, including libraries. Reduced income affects artists potential to rent studio, which in turn affects ability to create."

"In an ideal world our strategic alliances (CHWA etc) could get guarantees from the government on ways forward to support the whole ecosystem."

"Ways for artists to make work together and provide support for each other by doing that, not just talking and networking."

"Longer term security with freelance contracts and projects, more statutory funding for this kind of work."

What support would you like to see in the future from the sector?

"Sharing resources, ideas and skills. Opportunities for working in partnership or collaboratively with time for more creative approaches to be developed built into Arts and Health programmes. Maybe time /money for artists to develop their own skills which would feed into the work."

"We need confidence that our work, much of which we may have been involved with for many years, will continue or return into the future. At the moment it feels like we may have to start again from scratch and, given how long it takes to build up arts and health programmes, this is a worrying proposition."

"Local groups as I don't live in London."

"Outdoor opportunities for exhibitions in outdoor public spaces."

"A better understanding of how art benefits people from an artistic point of view, that it provides an in-depth experience. Also the effect that art has on the practitioner, that we hold a reservoir of experiences, sometimes very painful, that we share with the same intensity that front-line workers have more recently expressed in their response to their patients."

"Finding an agreement on safe practice that satisfies all parties."

"Exhibitions and critical engagement with field."

"Some hope and positivity from Management of theatres. Thinking outside the box with regard to theatres Outdoor performances for care homes. PPE for musicians within hospital care home settings."

"Society has glimpsed and experienced isolation and loneliness the very things I seek to address working in a hospital setting and we need to maintain the momentum of this understanding of well-being to ensure work in hospital continues."

"Access to free or affordable space."

Notes

This report was produced by Daniel Regan (founder of Arts & Health Hub), with data collected using Culture Counts software. Thank you to all those that responded to the survey and the support provided by the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance and London Arts in Health.

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