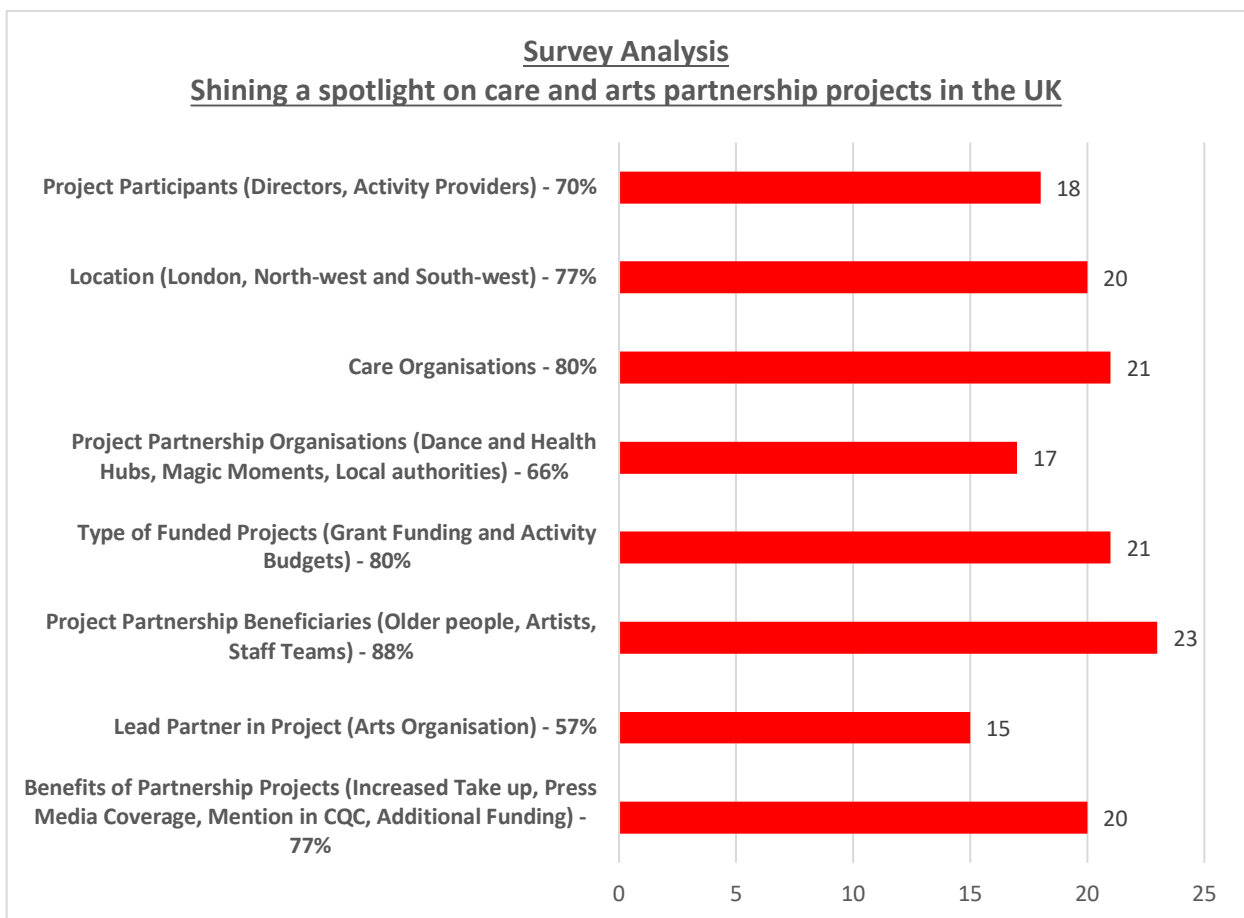


Survey Analysis

Shining a spotlight on care and arts partnership projects in the UK

This survey was launched by NAPA, Care England and The National Care Forum in 2023. Art is a very powerful tool for connecting people and creating space for individuals to focus on their physical and mental health. The survey conducted is an effort to shed light in that regard and to showcase how organisations and care homes can come together in illuminating as well as tackle the challenges to deliver high quality arts and culture programmes suitable for people with all capabilities and enhance the overall well-being of the care individuals.



Respondent Profile:

In total 26 care organisations took part in it. These organisations have been working on different projects in partnership with various organisations such as Dance and Health Hubs, Magic Moments, Housing Associations Local Authorities etc. Geographically, the respondents were mainly from London, North-east and South-west regions. Together they made up 77% of the total sample. Senior management mostly Directors (43%) followed by Activity Coordinators (30%) took part in the

survey. This will have a major significance on the results and future work as well because the survey participants are the key decision makers as far as project initiation and their implementation is concerned in the care sector specifically. The partnerships projects that the organisations have undertaken, involve primarily older people and staff teams and the artists who have been working in the care facilities and helping in delivering the activities. Grant funding and Activity budget are the predominant modes for acquiring project funding. Together they comprised approximately 80% of the total survey responses. If the projects were funded through grants the biggest chunk of funds (57%) came from the Arts Partner. One of the reasons for that could be that most of the respondents of the survey were either part of or filled it on behalf of the Arts Organisations (57%). This was followed by Care Settings which comprised of 22% of the total responses.

Major Findings:

The aim of these partnership projects is primarily to provide meaningful engagement for the people residing in care homes to enhance wellbeing and tackle the causes of loneliness. Care and arts partnership projects are generally designed to consider physical and mental wellbeing. In that regards intergenerational interaction through music and various art forms and activities tends to play a very important role. It helps in improving and strengthening their relationships and provide a sense of purpose even in the final years of their life. The partnership projects also enhance the overall standards and quality of provision of care in the health and social care sector. The funding helps in sharing the financial responsibilities which otherwise can be burdening on a single organisation.

Fortunately, the actual outcomes of these project partnerships also turned out to be quite fruitful and were able to meet almost all the expectations for which the projects were initiated. The outcomes were extremely positive as inferred from the survey as well. The partnerships helped immensely in combatting loneliness and enhancing the element of mindfulness which positively impact the individuals' health, physical and mental wellbeing. There was an improved level of communication that was seen and a boost in the level of engagement by residents in the care homes. It also became a unique way for breaking down barriers to accessing art and culture and motivated the care homes individuals to increase and develop their know in the field of art and culture.

These partnerships led to an enhanced recognition for individual care settings that took part in it and there is a heightened level of interest (75%) that is seen in terms of taking-up activities or services related to arts and culture. There are additional partnerships happening and immense media and press coverage has also been seen in the recent years. There has been a 38% increase in that regard. One very optimistic outlook in this instance is that it has caught the eyes and attention of the regulatory authorities as well. There has been a 19% increase of such efforts being mentioned and included in the CQC reports with a hope and promise (31% increase) of further funding for these projects. This kind of funding eventually helps in

developing and training staff and further enhancing their skill levels. Lack of resources has always been a big factor that hampers staff training and high-quality participatory arts practices. These funded projects and grants can be a big way to resolve the issue. Potential barriers to the development of arts is lack of funding as a major factor. There has also been low awareness levels of staff in activity provider roles and there is also an issue of bad financial management. There are ageist attitudes deeply rooted that prevents people living in care homes to access high quality arts experiences and care homes are not seen as creative spaces. A high turnover rate also hampers a consistent progress of a creative environment in care settings. In order to inculcate an element of trust in collaborations, not only awareness but also increased support from governing bodies like CQC and Care England is needed.

Recommendations:

The project partnerships are a great way to overall improve the standards and quality of care provision in the health and social care sector. They build and increase shared understanding and mitigate the potential challenges in the area of activity provision for older and vulnerable people. They should be promoted because they will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of service for the care users. The budgetary constraints for individual organisations can be met in a very cost efficient and efficacious way. The overall engagement and communication levels will also improve and can be great way to channel and implement person-centred care.

Conclusion:

Arts and culture project partnerships are a brilliant way to develop and improve the services in the health and social care sector. It projects a share understanding of the mutual benefit to both parties. There is a foundation that is created where both parties not only learn from each other but also act as an aide to further develop them in the field. Thus, creating an equal footing and not just seen from a 'deficit' perspective or as a CSR project. It is a win-win opportunity for both parties, whereby working in partnership they are gaining and reaping financial, developmental and intellectual benefits. It is an investment where the long-term benefits will be secured by the partners as well as the care community in general as well.

