

*Expert meeting on noncommunicable disease prevention and control: learning from the arts.* World Health Organization (WHO). Regional Office for Europe

Opera House Budapest, Hungary  
15-16 Diciembre 2022

Muchos factores que afectan nuestra salud y bienestar son sociales, culturales, políticos, psicológicos o económicos. En las últimas dos décadas, ha habido un gran aumento en la investigación sobre el efecto de las artes en la salud y el bienestar. La evidencia indica que las intervenciones artísticas desempeñan un papel importante en la prevención, la promoción de la salud y el tratamiento de las enfermedades no transmisibles a lo largo de la vida. Estas evidencias fueron recogidas por la Organización Mundial de la Salud, en su informe, *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review*, publicado en diciembre del 2019, y que sin duda representó un avance y respaldo para todos aquellos que venimos trabajando desde años en este ámbito del arte y la salud. Tres años después de la publicación de este informe, de nuevo la Organización Mundial de la Salud, en concreto la *WHO European Office for Prevention and Control of NCDs* y el programa europeo de la *WHO, Behavioural and cultural insights* convocan esta reunión de expertos, entendiendo este encuentro como una plataforma multidisciplinar para compartir experiencias a nivel regional y nacional, estudios de casos concretos, buenas prácticas y políticas cross-sectoriales que tienen un especial potencial para el desarrollo de las artes como estrategia y herramienta válida para la salud.



Figura 1. Imagen del encuentro “Art&NCDs”

### Programa

Kremlin Wickramasinghe, responsable de la *WHO European Office for Prevention and Control of NCDs*, *WHO Regional Office for Europe* y Nils Fietje, responsable de la Oficina Técnica *WHO Behavioural and Cultural Insights en Europa*, abrieron este encuentro, presentando las líneas generales y estratégicas de la Organización Mundial de la Salud para integrar las artes en la salud.

A continuación, el actor Christopher Bailey, colaborador de la *WHO Arts and Health Lead*, presentó la performance, *Carry that Weight: obesity, perception and well-being*, que continuó en la siguiente jornada con la presentación *Cancer and the imagination*, unos inspiradores monólogos en los que el actor recorre desde un discurso poético, personal y emotivo la relación de la salud, la vida y el arte.

Con esta apertura se dio paso al primer panel del encuentro, donde académicos e investigadores, presentaron el estado de las artes y la salud en el contexto académico y de investigación. Jill K Sonke, de la Universidad de Florida, presentó *A brief history of Arts in Health and how to integrate arts into the wider health system*, una revisión del estado de la cuestión en Estados Unidos. Vicki-Ann Ware, Deakin University de Australia, presentó el potencial del trabajo comunitario en este ámbito; Michael Pratt, de la Universidad de California San Diego, presentó *Physical activity as a bridge between the arts and NCDs*, una visión desde la actividad física en relación con los comportamientos saludables. Las intervenciones pre-grabadas de Katey Warran, del WHO Collaborating Centre for Arts & Health, University College of London, y Susan Magsamen, de la Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine no pudieron ser proyectadas por problemas de tiempo en la agenda del evento, pero quedarán recogidas en el reporte posterior. Finalmente, desde la Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Noemí Avila, tuvo la oportunidad de presentar *Art, Health and Prevention: an intersectoral and creative dialogue*, un ejemplo de cómo la universidad es capaz de establecer un intercambio interdisciplinar y cross-sectorial con los agentes en salud, además de ser clave en la formación de jóvenes investigadores en arte y salud, y futuros profesionales en el ámbito. Como ejemplo, presentamos la colaboración que venimos desarrollando desde el año 2011 con el organismo autónomo Madrid Salud, del Ayuntamiento de Madrid (<https://www.ucm.es/artesaludproyectos/>).

En el segundo panel, se presentaron algunos casos de estudio y buenas prácticas en otros países. Entre ellos, destacar la propuesta de Raymond MacDonald de Escocia, presentó *The relationship between music, health and wellbeing* y Rarita Zbranca, presentó el proyecto *Music and motherhood: implementing an arts and health intervention in Romania*, replicando un proyecto con madres y sus bebés en UK. Algunas de las intervenciones, como la de Anita Jensen, de Suecia, sobre *Arts & Health: working strategically across different sectors and disciplines*, no pudieron ser presentadas pero quedarán recogidas en el informe posterior.

Finalmente, destacar en esta primera jornada, la intervención de Kornelia Kiss, *Culture Action Europe*, presentando el recién publicado informe “*CultureForHealth Report. Scoping review of culture, well-being, and health interventions and their evidence, impacts, challenges and policy recommendations for Europe*”, un análisis completo de la situación del arte y la salud en Europa, con recomendaciones y acciones concretas para abordar el desarrollo de una Europa creativa y saludable.



Figura 2. Key Speakers del encuentro

La segunda jornada del encuentro de expertos, se orientó hacia el trabajo en grupo a partir de una serie de dinámicas dialogadas, entre ellas un World Café que se articuló a través de cuestiones clave: *¿Qué oportunidades y dificultades ve en su país para desarrollar intervenciones de arte y salud?*, *¿Cómo se puede compartir de manera efectiva la creciente base de evidencia a nivel nacional y entre las partes interesadas?* o *¿Cómo puede la OMS ayudar a los países y partes interesadas a implementar estos programas?*

Szabolcs Szigeti, responsable de la *WHO Country Office for Hungary*, coordinó las *Art Interventions* del encuentro, haciendo posible participar de las artes a través de música en vivo y danza, con la presencia de artistas y colectivos húngaros, como *Aphasia choir*, con la Dr Zsófia Fekete, o la *Fool Moon acapella band*.



Figura 3. Participantes en el encuentro

Como conclusión de este encuentro de expertos, podemos afirmar que integrar las artes en las prácticas del sector de la salud y crear oportunidades para extender estas intervenciones artísticas en todos los estados miembros de la Región Europea de la OMS es, primordial. Las evidencias y las recomendaciones son claras, y por tanto es necesario articular políticas y acciones concretas.

Desde la universidad, tenemos la oportunidad y responsabilidad de formar y acompañar a jóvenes estudiantes e investigadores que exploren y amplifiquen este maravilloso campo de investigación para las artes, así como generar proyectos de investigación interdisciplinar y cross-sectorial que faciliten un diálogo real y significativo entre la salud y el arte.

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## Referencias

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## Scope and purpose

Many factors that affect our health and well-being are social, cultural, political, psychological or economic. Over the past two decades, there has been a major increase in research on the effect of the arts on health and well-being. Evidence indicates that art interventions can play a significant role in the prevention of ill health, promotion of health, and management and treatment of NCDs across the lifespan. Additionally, the arts can be an effective vehicle to deliver health messages; particularly for those who are the most difficult to reach. This evidence was compiled in the report *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review*, that was published in 2019

The WHO Regional Office for Europe is, therefore, convened an expert meeting to understand the state of play and the potential role of the arts in NCD prevention and treatment both within the Region and globally. The meeting enabled a multidisciplinary platform for sharing existing country experience and best practice case studies which have the potential to influence NCDs. It was explored this topic further through the lens of behavioural and cultural insights – a flagship initiative of the WHO European Programme of Work, 2020–2025.

## Program

Kremlin Wickramasinghe, head of the WHO European Office for the Prevention and Control of NCDs, WHO Regional Office for Europe, and Nils Fietje, WHO Behavioral and Cultural Insights Technical Office in Europe, opened this meeting, introducing the general ideas of the World Health Organization to integrate the arts in health. Both considered this meeting as an opportunity to share and learn together (stakeholders from the arts, cultural institutions, health-care practitioners, academics, policy-makers and behavioural insight and digital health experts).

Christopher Bailey, WHO Arts and Health Lead, presented the performance, *Carry that Weight: obesity, perception and well-being*, which continued on the following day with the presentation *Cancer and the imagination*, an inspiring monologues in which the actor covered from a poetic, personal and emotional discourse the relationship between health, life and art.

In the first panel of the meeting, academics and researchers presented the state of the arts and health in the academic and research context. Jill K Sonke, from University of Florida, presented *A brief history of Arts in Health and how to integrate arts into the wider health system*, a review of the state of the art in the United States. Vicki-Ann Ware, from Deakin University in Australia, presented the potential of community work in this area; Michael Pratt, from the University of California San Diego, presented *Physical activity as a bridge between the arts and NCDs*, a vision from physical activity in relation to healthy behaviors. The pre-recorded speeches by Katey Warran, from the WHO Collaborating Center for Arts & Health, University College of London, and Susan Magsamen, from *Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine*, could not be screened due to time constraints on the event's agenda, but it will be included in the post meeting report. Finally, from the Complutense University of Madrid, Noemí Ávila had the opportunity to present *Art, Health and Prevention: an intersectoral and creative dialogue*, an example of how the university established an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral exchange with health, through training early career researchers in art and health, and future professionals in the field. As an example, we presented the collaboration that we have been developing since 2011 with Madrid Salud, of the Madrid City Council (<https://www.ucm.es/arteyasaludproyectos/>)

In the second panel, some case studies and good practices in countries were presented. Among them, highlighting the proposal by Raymond MacDonald from Scotland, presented *The relationship between music, health and well-being* and Rarita Zbranca, presented the project *Music and motherhood: implementation of an art and health intervention in Romania*, replicating a project with mothers and their babies in UK. Some of the pre-recorded presentations, such as the one by Anita Jensen, from Sweden, on *Arts & Health: working strategically in different sectors and disciplines*, cannot be showed but they will be included in the post-meeting report that is being compiled.

Finally, highlighting the intervention of Kornelia Kiss, coordinator of Projects & Operations Culture Action Europe, presenting the recently published report *CultureForHealth Report. Scoping review of culture, well-being, and health connections and its Evidence, Impacts, Challenges and Policy Recommendations for Europe*, which includes a detailed analysis of the state of art and health in Europe and recommendations to address the development of a healthy Europe.

More interactive workshop will followed on day two, including a World Café that was articulated through the following questions: *How can the growing evidence base for the role of the arts in improving health and well-being be shared effectively on country levels and among stakeholders?; How can WHO NCD Office support countries and stakeholders to implement art activities to prevent and manage NCDs?; Who (what stakeholder) is/are needed to solve identified challenges and improve uptake?; How can we effectively raise awareness of arts interventions on the national level?; How can we ensure sustainability in projects?*

Szabolcs Sziget (WHO Country Office for Hungary) coordinated the *Art Interventions* during the meeting, making it possible to participate and enjoy the arts through live music and dance, with the presence of artists and collectives Hungarians, such as the *Aphasia Choir*, with Dr Zsófia Fekete, or the acapella band *Fool Moon*.

As a conclusion of this expert meeting, integrating arts into the practices of the health and creating opportunities to spread these artistic explosions in all the member states of the WHO European Region is paramount. The evidence and recommendations are clear, it is time to enable policies and concrete actions.

University has the opportunity and the responsibility to train and accompany students and researchers who explore and amplify this area of expertise, as well as generate interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral projects that facilitate a meaningful dialogue between Arts and Health.

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