



Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation Arts in Health Program Information Paper

Arts in Health

The 'arts' reinforce recognition of the complexity of the human condition and human experiences, beyond the physical. It has a unique capacity to inspire and strengthen multidisciplinary approaches to health care; philosophical, environmental and human solutions to complement and contribute to existing and emerging technological, medicinal and surgical interventions.

Although an ancient concept, recognition of the capacity of the arts to improve people's health and wellbeing has been most strongly cultivated in the community arts sector, particularly in relation to mental health. As this recognition has evolved 'Arts in Health' Programs throughout the developed world have propagated.

In 2007, Adelaide Thinker in Residence Professor Ilona Kickbush recommended a 'health lens' be applied to the SA Strategic Plan as a "health in all policies" approach for the six areas; the economy, environment, communities, wellbeing, education and innovation, supported by the SA Department of Premier and Cabinet and SA Health.¹

In May 2008, SA Health and Arts SA drafted a partnership commitment, recognising the positive impact of the arts, including good design, on physical, psychological and spiritual health and wellbeing, and the potential of the arts to improve the quality of healthcare.

Increasing academic and policy discourse acknowledges that the arts and good design can make the difference between environments and buildings that work and those that excel, and investment in the arts and good design can have a range of social, environmental and economic benefits. The South Australian Government's Department for Health (SA Health) is committed to improving the health and well-being of all South Australians through the development of environments and programs that encourage healthy living and contribute to prevention, intervention and recovery.

WCH Foundation Arts in Health Program

Inspired by a shared intent to improve the physical and human environment of the Women's & Children's Hospital (WCH), the Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation (WCH Foundation) and the Children, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS) partnered to establish an Arts in Health (AIH) Program in August 2008.

The mission of the AIH Program is to *integrate arts into the life of the WCH to improve people's health and well-being*. The program consists of five integrated areas which aim to deliver a range of activities over an extensive period of five years:

- Visual and performing arts
- Public art
- Integrated design
- Literature
- Therapeutic arts – art, dance and music

It is interesting to note that the connection between the Women's & Children's Hospital and the Arts dates back to the establishment of the Hospital in 1876, with Dr Allen Campbell, who was instrumental in the creation of the Hospital, also being a member of the Society of the Arts and Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Public Library, Art Gallery & Museum. Dr Campbell's

vision for the establishment of the Hospital also makes a strong connection to the role of community support that can occur through charity foundations. "He did not envisage such a hospital being founded in any princely way, but by the voluntary and united efforts of a large number of the citizens of Adelaide and South Australia generally."²

Governance

The WCH Foundation established an Arts in Health Committee in Sept 2008 bringing together interested parties including representation from CYWHS (education, communications, facilities and clinical) and the arts, with representation from Carclew Youth Arts, Community Arts Network, Flinders Medical Centre (Arts in Health staff) and a recognised performing artist.

The terms of reference of the committee included:

- providing strategic advice and direction regarding the programs and projects;
- identifying and facilitating opportunities to enhance the program;
- establishing and managing the necessary governance;
- informing policy development.

The committee developed a strategic plan articulating the intent and ambition of the program.

University South Australia Alliance

A fundamental aspect of the WCH Foundation Arts in Health Program, in strengthening the arts/health interface, is the development of formal organisational partnerships and the subsequent undertaking of collaborative, rigorous research evidence.³

In December 2009, the WCHF established a formal Alliance partnership with the University of South Australia's School of Art, Architecture & Design (AAD), in recognition of the South Australian Government's agenda in this area and to strengthen and develop new opportunities for Arts in Health at the Women's & Children's Hospital.

The Alliance brings together three sectors: the tertiary education sector represented by the University of South Australia's School of Art, Architecture and Design, the health sector represented by the Children, Youth and Women's Health Service and the not for profit sector represented by the Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation.

The intent of the Alliance is to:

- foster innovative avenues for engagement between the health, arts and design sectors to improve the human and physical environment of the hospital;
- introduce art, architecture and design students to the health sector;
- attract interest from young and emerging artists, designers and architects to consider and cultivate professional development opportunities in the health sector (increasingly important in the context of an ageing health workforce);
- meet the University's intent of creating genuine learning experiences for students through the Student Engagement Program (STEP) 2010;
- demonstrate and improve the quality of Arts in Health projects through evaluation and contribute to the body of knowledge in Arts in Health through research;
- communicate Arts in Health achievements and outcomes to the health, arts and broader community.

Representation from the University of SA School of Art, Architecture and Design was included into the Arts in Health committee in February 2010.

Arts in Health Program activities

▪ **Visual and performing arts**

The WCH Foundation has developed three Gallery spaces within the WCH. The gallery spaces bring together the Women's & Children's Hospital community; its staff, children, women, their families and visitors, starting the conversation about the Arts in Health program. For each visitor, the visual experience will meet a need; to support, distract, encourage or inspire.

The three gallery spaces are:

- Gallery (a) Good Friday Corridor Ground Floor ;
- Gallery (b) Queen Victoria Corridor Level Two;
- Gallery (c) Gilbert to Samuel Way Corridor, Level One.

The key objective of the Gallery & Exhibition Spaces is to improve the human environment and evoke authentic sensory experiences and explore, through the arts, health and wellbeing.

▪ **Public art**

The WCH Foundation AIH Program in partnership with the Blind Sporting Council is commissioning an artwork or series of artworks specifically for children with visual impairment. The artwork will explore concepts of identity and perception and offer an experience primarily through perception such as touch, hearing, smell, balance and motion. The final work will be displayed within the Women's & Children's Hospital.

The AIH Program is currently working with the Uni SA School of Art, Architecture & Design for the development of concepts ideas for potential sculpture gallery/public art viewing spaces to improve the two lightwell spaces on Level 1, Rieger Building.

The AIH Program is assisting in the redesign of the small courtyard space that will be created with the closure of the King William Road entrance into the hospital. The entrance area will still need to serve as an emergency egress point in the event of an evacuation but could offer a small retreat space for families and visitors. Concept ideas for the space are being created in collaboration with Uni SA School of Art, Architecture & Design.

▪ **Integrated design**

'Designed by me' is a project that allows children to 'design their own space' in a hospital ward environment. Children are offered the opportunity to decorate specific identified spaces within the ward areas using easily removable adhesive artwork images. The project is being piloted with the 4th Floor Medical Unit in collaboration with the Play Therapists and Ward Clerk.

The Alliance with Uni SA has seen the development of three current projects:

- Industrial Design Project Stage One - Industrial Design students have been developing concepts for the redesign of a tented paediatric cot. This project has introduced the Industrial designers into the health sector as part of their coursework for Uni SA with the aim of providing genuine curriculum learning experiences. Stage Two of this project will see selected CYWHS staff nominating non-electrical equipment for students design investigation.

- Info-Graphics Project - Masters Graphic Design student Belinda Paulovich has been working with Chief Medical Scientist, Dr David Parsons to interpret and communicate complex scientific information.
- Graphic Design Research Projects – A number of graphic design students have been exploring topics in health for their major research project. Students have examined areas such as hand hygiene, hearing loss through music use, male postnatal depression, teen body issues and diabetes prevention through healthy lifestyle.

▪ Literature

The Arts in Health Program is currently examining the opportunity to collaborate with a number of literature partners for the presentation of book readings, development of specific health related children's books and donation of books for the Hospital.

▪ Therapeutic arts – art, dance and music

Art & Music Therapy is a form of expressive therapy that uses art and music as tools to combine traditional psychotherapeutic theories and techniques with an understanding of the psychological aspects of the creative process. The WCHF is currently working with CYWHS in the development of two part-time positions for an Arts Therapist and Music Therapist to be employed at the Hospital.

The WCH Foundation Arts in Health Program has provided partnership support to the Acorn Group an initiative of the Children, Youth & Women's Health Service. The Acorn Group is an outreach program of the Women's & Children's Hospital that supports mothers with mental health issues (which can range from severe and chronic mental illness, to post natal depression and borderline personality disorder) and who have identified a concern about their infant's attachment. The partnership support has enabled dance artist, Sally Chance to join the Acorn Team. Sally is pioneering the community cultural development and art form development possibilities of dance with and for babies and very young children in Australia.

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