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The Art of Wellbeing: Evaluating the Impact of the ManPAC Social Prescribing Creative Café and Arts Programs on Participant Wellbeing

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*“Really enjoyed it. Creative, fun & inspiring.”
Participant, Female, 30-49 years*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“This program has been an asset for building community wellbeing.”
Health practitioner/worker*

In 2022, the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre (ManPAC) worked with GPs, health and social organisations to create an arts-based, social prescribing program called the ‘Art of Wellbeing’. The term ‘social prescribing’ describes a method for referring patients/clients to social activities as a complement to more ‘conventional’ forms of medical treatment. The program ran for 26 weeks (i.e. 13 distinct, artist led, ‘Creative Café’ workshops plus specific, bespoke arts workshops developed at the request of participants). The ‘Art of Wellbeing’ program was funded by LotteryWest and aimed to support participant mental health and social wellbeing, while also assisting participants to develop their art skills and interests via artist led workshops.

As part of its commitment to providing a high-quality program, ManPAC commissioned The University of Western Australia (UWA) to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the program via feedback from both (1) participants, and (2) practitioners/family. The evaluation focused on the impact of the program on participant:

- a) mental wellbeing (e.g. happiness, improved mood, confidence, self-esteem),
- b) social wellbeing (e.g. reduced social isolation, new friendships), and
- c) the development of participant art skills and interest in the arts.

Consent to participate in the evaluation was obtained from each respondent prior to providing feedback. Permission to conduct this evaluation was granted by the UWA Human Research Ethics Committee (2022/ET000266).

Participant Survey

Participants completed a consent form and baseline survey prior to commencing the ‘Art of Wellbeing’ program. Overall, one in two participants had not previously taken part in an arts program or workshop before. ManPAC therefore provided many participants with the opportunity to engage in a novel experience. Before each (individual) workshop, participants completed a (voluntary) pre-workshop survey. At the end of each workshop, participants completed a (voluntary) post-workshop survey. The majority of participants provided evaluation feedback (n=46, 92% response, 78% female). Due to participation in one or more workshops, a total of 266 pre-post workshop surveys were completed as part of the evaluation ‘monitor’ survey.

Reason for Referral

The majority of participants were referred to the program to **create new interests**, for **social health** reasons (develop friendships, community networks, reduce social isolation, loneliness) and **mental health** reasons (improve confidence, self-esteem, mental wellbeing). The opportunity for **creative expression** and to **develop new skills** were also important reasons for referral.

Enjoyment

- The majority of participants **enjoyed** taking part in the ‘Art of Wellbeing’ program (97%).
- The workshops were something participants **looked forward to** each week (95%).
- The majority of participants indicated the **program should be continued** (99%).

Aim A: Participant Mental Wellbeing

- The majority of respondents indicated that the 'Art of Wellbeing' workshops helped them to feel **happier** (96%) and increased their **confidence and self-esteem** (87%).
- Significantly more participants felt happy after taking part in a workshop (**94% happy, p<0.001**) compared with baseline (42% happy), or immediately before each workshop (58% happy).

Aim B: Participant Social Wellbeing

- The majority of participants indicated that taking part in the program was an opportunity to **socialise and form friendships** (93%).

Aim C: Development of Art Skills and an Interest in the Arts

- As a result of the program, the majority of participants:
 - **learnt something new** (93%),
 - developed an **interest in the arts** (88%), and
 - **intended** to make art at home (72%).

Physical Health

Although not a direct aim of the 'Art of Wellbeing' program/evaluation, respondents indicated that engaging in this program helped them to be more physically active (61%).

“Lovely group of people. Warm and welcoming atmosphere. Looking forward to finding my niche, something to express my inner self and feelings.”

Participant, Female, 50-69 years

'Practitioner and Family' Survey

Caregivers, friends and family present at the 'Art of Wellbeing' workshops and GPs, health and social organisations that referred participants to the program were asked to provide evaluation feedback. Overall, 18 'practitioners/family' took part in this study (89% female; 22% Doctor/GP/Health Practitioner, 39% Carer/Family, 39% Community Practitioner, 0% Friends).

Enjoyment

- All practitioners/family thought that participants **enjoyed** the program (100%).
- All practitioners/family indicated the program should be **continued** (100%).
- The majority of respondents thought participants **looked forward to the workshops** (94%).

Aim A: Participant Mental Wellbeing

- All practitioners/family agreed that the 'Art of Wellbeing' program had a **positive impact on participant mental health** (e.g. reduced anxiety or depression, reduced boredom, stress reduction; increased happiness, confidence, self-esteem and/or resilience) (100%).
- The majority of practitioners/family indicated:
 - participants seemed **happier** after taking part in the program (88%)
 - the program increased participant **confidence/self-esteem** (94%)
 - The program helped participants 'realise their **potential**' (83%).

Aim B: Participant Social Wellbeing

- All practitioners/family agreed that the 'Art of Wellbeing' program had a **positive impact on participant social health** (e.g. friendships, community connection, reduced isolation and/or reduced loneliness) (100%).
- The majority of practitioners/family agreed the program was an opportunity to **socialise and form new friendships** (89%).

Aim C: Development of Art Skills and an Interest in the Arts

- All practitioners/family agreed that the 'Art of Wellbeing' program was:
 - an opportunity for participants to be **creative** (100%).
 - an opportunity to **develop/express ideas** (100%).
- The majority of practitioners/family agreed that the workshops:
 - taught participants new **art skills** (94%),
 - was an opportunity to develop an **interest** in the arts (94%), and
 - was an opportunity to **work productively** (78%).

Physical Health

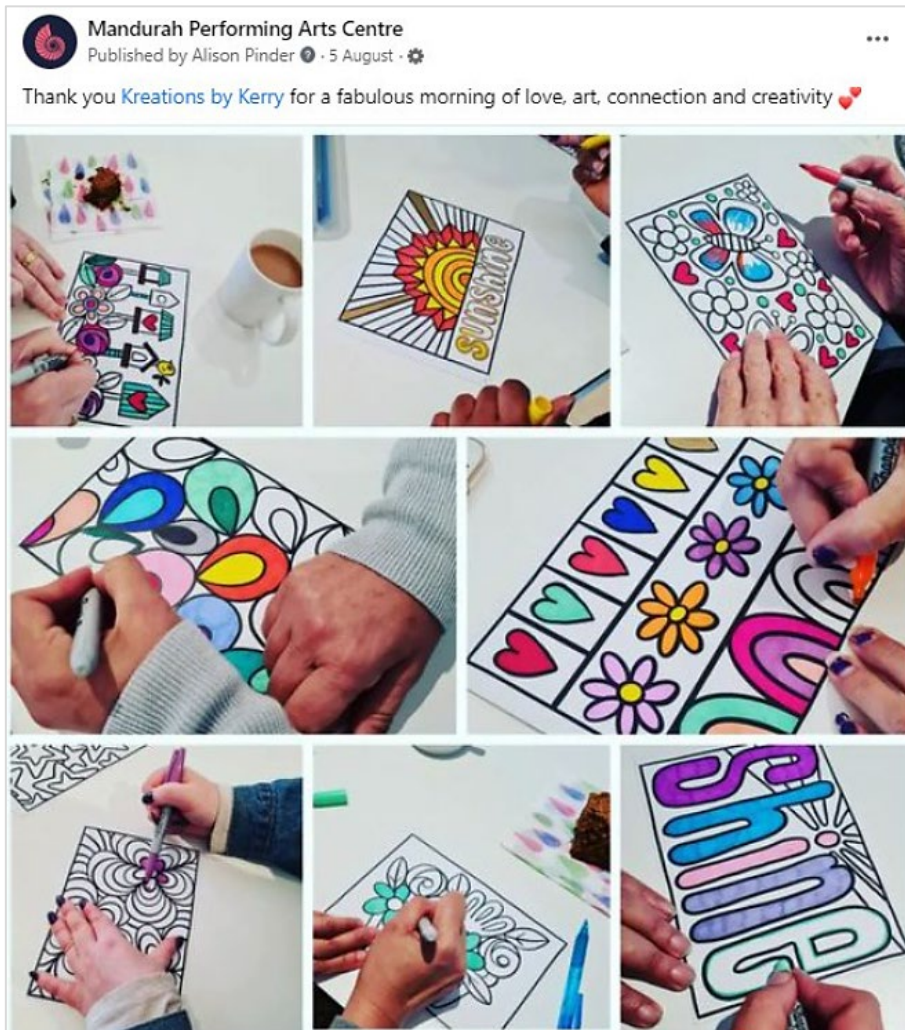
- Although not a direct aim of the 'Art of Wellbeing' program/evaluation, most practitioners/family agreed:
 - the program had a positive impact on participant physical health (e.g. physical activity, physical function and/or general health) (67%), and
 - was an opportunity for participants to be more physically active (56%).

“This not only improved Jack’s [name changed] well-being but also the well-being of his carer/parent. I’d love to see it continue as continuation is important for people who need routine. This program has made a big difference in his life.”
Carer/Family Member

Conclusion

The 'Art of Wellbeing' program successfully achieved its aim of supporting participant mental health and social wellbeing. Participants felt significantly happier after taking part in the workshops. In addition, the project was an enjoyable experience that expanded art skills, creativity and assisted participants to foster an interest in the arts. Overall, respondents involved in the evaluation (participants, practitioners, family) were overwhelmingly happy with the program. It is recommended that Funders continue to support and expand the 'Art of Wellbeing' program so as to actively engage participants in arts activities that support health and wellbeing.

ManPAC Facebook Posts – The Art of Wellbeing

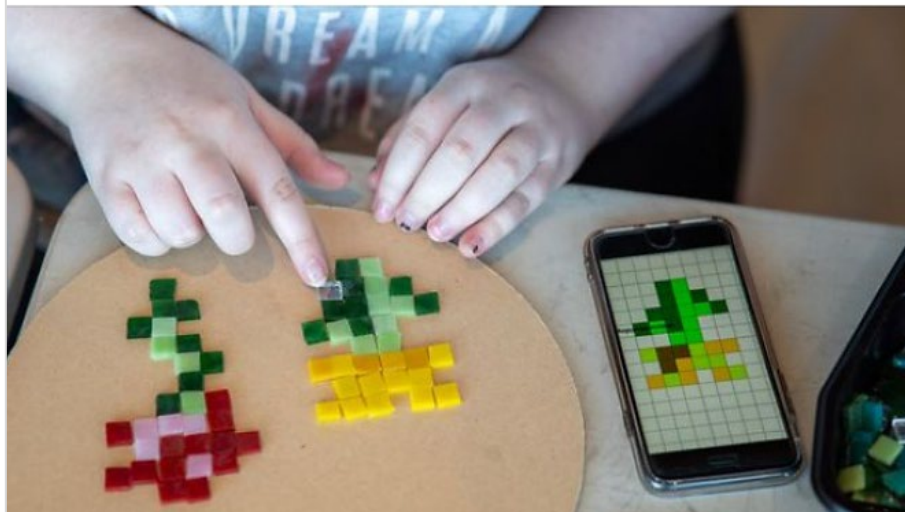


 Mandurah Performing Arts Centre is 😊 feeling grateful.
Published by Anthony Edwards · 19 September · 🌐

Here's a few photos for you from our recent 'Creative Cafe' sessions. Our creative crew have been trying their hand at all sorts of new things with Mosaics on the menu this week!

It's incredibly rewarding to see our participants making new connections and developing new skills. #ArtOfWellbeing

More photos can be found on our blog here: <https://www.manpac.com.au/blog/2022/>



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Arts and Wellbeing

Evidence of the benefits of arts engagement has been mounting since the 1990s.¹⁻⁴ 'Arts engagement' can be defined as active (e.g. making art) or receptive (e.g. attending, listening, viewing art) involvement in creative events or activities within a variety of art-forms (e.g. performing arts, visual arts, literature, electronic arts).^{5 6} Overall, there is **strong evidence that arts engagement impacts mental health**.¹ In the general population, arts participation has been linked with increased happiness, joy, enjoyment and life satisfaction,^{1 2 7-10} with **two hours per week of arts engagement being linked to better mental wellbeing** compared to none or lower levels of engagement.⁸ The arts also entail inclusive processes that expand social networks and act as a catalyst for bridging, bonding and linking social capital.^{1 11 12} Large-scale epidemiological studies conducted in the United Kingdom, America and Sweden have found that after controlling for covariates (e.g. age, sex, education, income, disease, smoking, exercise), that attending arts events was associated with reduced mortality risk and better self-reported general health.^{9 13-15} In addition, arts engagement has been linked with increased physical activity such as walking, standing and performance-based movement (e.g. warm ups, dancing, swaying to music).^{2 9}

1.2 Mandurah Performing Arts Centre (ManPAC)

The Mandurah Performing Arts Centre (ManPAC) is a hub for extraordinary, dynamic and creative ideas – a centre for the arts. ManPAC is a leader in the curation and presentation of quality arts and cultural experiences including music, theatre, circus, physical theatre, dance, festivals, film, visual arts, workshops, outreach, community engagement, youth and children's events. ManPAC is committed to presenting, commissioning and creating works that promote community resilience and wellbeing. ManPAC's purpose is to celebrate and share arts and cultural experiences, to unite community and make Mandurah a great place to live. The core of ManPAC's catchment area includes the City of Mandurah, City of Rockingham, Shires of Murray, Serpentine, Jarrahdale and Waroona.

1.3 'The Art of Wellbeing' Social Prescribing Program

In 2022, thanks to funding from LotteryWest, ManPAC worked with GPs, health and social organisations to create an arts-based, social prescribing program called the 'Art of Wellbeing'. The term 'social prescribing' is usually used in relation to primary care (general practice) and describes a method for referring patients/clients to social activities as a complement to more 'conventional' forms of medical treatment. A summary of the ManPAC's Art of Wellbeing program method is provided below:

- a) Program participants **referred** to ManPAC through a number of local GPs, health and social organisations e.g. Peel Community Mental Health Services, Peel Older Adult Mental Health Services, City of Mandurah, Ermentrude Community Care, Kern Allied Health, Headspace, Interchange WA, Neami National, Support Coordination WA, CamCan, Ruah, OVIS, Cancer Council WA (Dot's Place), Relationships Australia WA, MACS Mandurah (Mentoring, Advocacy, Counselling & Support), Peel Connect and Midway.



b) Once referred participants were contacted by a 'ManPAC link worker' and invited to attend a voluntary, '**Creative Café**' (see '1.4 Creative Café' and Table 1 below for more detail). The Creative Café was split into two age groups and ran on a fortnightly basis (Group 1, 18-49 years, attended the first week of each fortnight; Group 2, 50+ years, attended the second week of each fortnight). As suggested in the literature,⁸ each session ran for two hours per week (i.e. Wednesday morning, 10am-12noon). The Creative Café provided participants with tea, coffee, light refreshments, the opportunity to meet socially and importantly, to engage in a variety of health promoting arts activities.



c) During the Creative Café, participants were asked about their arts skills and if they would like to participate in other arts activities. If they said 'yes', the ManPAC link worker then (1) referred participants to **existing arts programs** in the Mandurah community (e.g. one participant joined a poetry group and one joined a seated dance group), or (2) created **bespoke arts activities** specifically for Creative Café participants. These bespoke arts activities included:

- **Keyboard/piano lessons:**

Creative Café participants who showed an interest in music were given the opportunity to undertake a series keyboard/piano lesson with a local music teacher. The lessons were group sessions and the participants learnt the basics of keyboard, how to read music, chords, scales and how to play a song of their choice.

- **Landscape/Plein Air painting:**

A local visual artist worked with Creative Café participants to create landscape/Plein Air paintings. The participants were taught how to apply paint using different mediums including palette knives, brushes, sponges etc. All participants received an art pack so they could continue painting at home (i.e. canvas, palette, paint, brushes, etc).

1.4 About the Creative Café

The Creative Café ran for 26 weeks (i.e. June to December 2022). The **program aim** was to increase participant mental health, social wellbeing and support participants to form new and productive relationships (friendships). As mentioned above, the Creative Café was split into two age groups and ran on a fortnightly basis. Each workshop was able to accommodate a maximum of 15 participants per week. As shown in **Table 1**, each fortnight/workshop had a particular focus.

1.5 Evaluation Aim

As part of its commitment to providing a high-quality program, ManPAC collaborated with The University of Western Australia to evaluate its 'Art of Wellbeing' program. As guided by the 'Healthy Arts Framework',² the overarching hypothesis of this evaluation was that the arts can be used as a non-pharmacological intervention to improve participant wellbeing. The specific aim of the study was to evaluate the impact of the ManPAC Creative Café and bespoke workshops via a 'monitor survey' that combined the results of participant evaluation surveys from each workshop. The program was evaluated in terms of its impact on participant:

- a) mental wellbeing (e.g. happiness, improved mood, confidence, self-esteem),
- b) social wellbeing (e.g. reduced social isolation, new friendships), and
- c) development of participant art skills and interest in the arts.




Table 1: Description of Art of Wellbeing activities

Week	Activity	Description	Participants
1&2	Sewing	Participants created mini felt hearts, stitching them together with blanket stitch and decorating them. Participants were encouraged to take the hearts home, to share with friends and family. The hearts that were left were placed into coats that were donated to a local homeless charity.	14 people (5,9)
3&4	Painting	Participants worked with a local artist to create a painting using acrylic paint. Participants were shown techniques to create a design of their own choice. All participants took home their canvas at the end of the session.	14 people (7,7)
5&6	Pottery, Ceramics	Participants visited a pottery studio to create ceramic art including vases and bowls through hand throwing/shaping. Participants decorated their pots with a selection of natural objects e.g. pinecones, dried flowers, leaves and twigs.	17 people (8,9)
7&8	Journaling	Participants worked with pouring paint, ink and alcohol to create pages that could be used in a journal. These artistic backgrounds were then printed, stamped and decorated with stickers to create a bespoke, unique page relating to the interested and individual style of each participant.	19 people (10,9)
9&10	Mandala	A local artist guided the group through the process of creating Mandala images. Participants used a variety of tools including art pens, protractors and compasses to mark out and draw a mandala. Each participant left with an art pack and instruction sheet so they could create their own mandala at home.	20 people (7,13)
11&12	Pottery Painting	Participants received the pot they created in week 5/6 back so they could be decorated. Using acrylic and water-based paints the participants finished their ceramic pots so they could be glazed, dried and taken home.	18 people (10,8)
13&14	Mosaics	Participants created a large and small mosaic (coaster, wall hanging) using coloured/mirrored tiles. Participants designed their layout with guidance from an artist who then grouted each piece so the mosaic could be taken home.	22 people (9,13)
15&16	Creative writing	A local, award winning writer led the group through a series of writing prompts to inspire participants to create poems and prose. Starting with very simple writing structures the group was able to produce two pieces of work.	19 people (7,12)
17&18	Polymer Clay	Participants used polymer clay to create designs and shapes (animals, flowers) to decorate a small jewellery/trinket box. Participants selected colours, rolled clay, cut, positioned and glued their designs onto the boxes.	20 people (8,12)
19&20	Collage	Using a selection of magazines participants designed their own creative collages. The artist offered guidance to allow the group to create impactful and meaningful collages that spoke to their own interests.	23 people (11,12)
21&22	Seated Dance	Participants took part in a seated dance class that encourage participants (even those with limited mobility) to move and express themselves physically. Participants sat in a circle and created movements that we're woven together to create a final (all group) dance piece.	15 people (6,9)
23&24	Botanical Pen & Ink	Participants used fine line/calligraphy pens to draw botanical inspired artwork (flowers and leaves). Participants started by mark making and developing their skills. All participants got to take home a full art pack, including a calligraphy set with ink and designs that they could continue at home.	15 people (6,9)
25&26	Christmas Wreaths	Participants created a Christmas wreath using strips of felt and recycled materials (old t-shirts etc.) that could be hung within their home. Each participant got to take their finished artwork home with them.	18 people (9,9)

2. EVALUATION METHOD

*“I have enjoyed something new, catching up with a friend and making new friends.”
Participant, Female, 50-69 years*






Before commencing the program and during the referral process, participants completed a consent form and baseline survey (i.e. demographics, reason for attendance, mood, previous arts experience). Immediately prior to each of the ‘Art of Wellbeing’ workshops, participants were given the opportunity to complete a voluntary pre-workshop survey (Figure 1). The workshop then commenced. At the end of each individual workshop participants completed a voluntary post-workshop survey (i.e. enjoyment, mood, attitudes, learning and comments, Figure 1). A pictorial measure of mental health was conducted at baseline and before/after each workshop to assess changes in affect by asking participants how they felt on a faces-scale that ranged from sad to happy.¹⁶ Each participant, pre-post workshop survey took approximately five minutes to complete.

The Art of Wellbeing   

Before you start....

Name: _____

1. How do you feel right now? (Cross "x" one face)






1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
    
 Very Sad Sad Neutral Happy Very Happy

Thank you. Please return the survey to Mark or Ali

OFFICE USE
 Date: _____ Art Project: _____

Before you go....

1. How do you feel right now? (Cross "x" one face)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
    
 Very Sad Sad Neutral Happy Very Happy

	Yes	No	Don't Know
2. Did you enjoy today's session?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
3. Taking part in today's session:			
Helped me to feel happier	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Was an opportunity to socialise and form friendships	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Help me to be more physically active.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Was an opportunity to develop an interest in art (e.g. as a hobby)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Taught me something new (e.g. new art skills)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Increased my confidence and self-esteem	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is something I look forward to each week.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
4. Should we continue to run this program?.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
5. As a result of this session, do you intend to make art at home?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
6. Do you have any comments about today's art session?			

Figure 1: Pre-Post Participant Workshop Survey

“Overall, the program was AMAZING! It was something for the ladies to look forward to, get out of the house and to socialise with others. There is really not much around for them to participate in and feel supported, particularly the cohort of participants that transitioned from Mental Health providers to NDIS. I really hope there is a positive outcome of this wonderful program and there is a continued program in the new year.” Health practitioner/worker

Caregivers/friends/family present at the ‘Art of Wellbeing’ workshops and GP/health/social organisations that referred participants to the program were also asked to provide feedback via a survey. The ‘practitioner/family’ survey contained seven post-program questions (i.e. demographics, participant outcomes, opinions about the project and comments) and took approximately five minutes to complete.

Consent to participate in the evaluation was obtained from each respondent prior to completing a survey. Permission to conduct this evaluation was granted by the UWA Human Research Ethics Committee (2022/ET000266). All completed surveys were entered into a database by ManPAC. ManPAC then provided UWA with a de-identified data file for analysis and reporting, as well as photographs and media/social media examples about the program.

3. RESULTS

3.1 PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Survey Response

Overall, 53 people were referred to the 'Art of Wellbeing' program and 50 provided consent to take part in the evaluation. Of these 50 people, **46 participants** provided evaluation feedback (response = 92%). Due to participation in one or more workshops, a total of **266 pre-post workshop surveys** (Figure 1) were completed as part of the evaluation 'monitor' survey.

*“Good to get out, meet people and take on something new.”
Participant, Male, 70+ years*

Demographics

The majority of respondents were female and spoke English as their preferred language. Respondents varied in age, with one in six participants requiring transport to attend the program. (Table 2 to 5)

*“Loved it! So fun! Easier to solve pain flare with distraction. Lovely teacher.
Feel great interacting with everyone.” Participant, Female, 30-49 years*

Table 2: Gender (No response=1)

	n	%
Female	35	77.8
Male	10	22.2
Non-binary	0	0.0
Total Respondents	45	100.0

Table 3: Age Group (No response=1)

	n	%
18-29 years	5	11.1
30-49 years	17	37.8
50-69 years	16	35.6
70 years and over	7	15.6
Total Respondents	45	100.0

Table 4: Participants preferred language (No response=1)

	n	%
English	44	97.8
Other	1	2.2
Total Respondents	45	100.0

Table 5: Does the participant require transport to attend the program? (No response=1)

	n	%
Yes	7	15.6
No	38	84.4
Total Respondents	45	100.0

Reason for Referral

The general health of most respondent's was rated as 'fair' or 'good'. The majority of respondents were referred to the program to create **new interests** (80%), for **social health** reasons (e.g. friendships 78%, community networks/connections 78%, reduced social isolation 64%, reduced loneliness 56%) and **mental health** reasons (e.g. improve confidence/self-esteem 73%, mental wellbeing 69%, reduce anxiety 56%, stress relief 51%). The 'opportunity for **creative expression**' (78%) and **new skills** (69%) were also important reasons for referral. (Table 6 and 7)

Table 6: How would you rate your general health?

	n	%
Very Poor	1	2.2
Poor	4	8.7
Fair	17	37.0
Good	13	28.3
Very Good	10	21.7
Excellent	1	2.2
Total Responses	46	100.0

Table 7: Reason for Referral (Multiple Response Question, n=45; No response=1)

	n	%
To create new interests (e.g. art as a hobby)	36	80.0
Increase friendship	35	77.8
Increase community network/connection	35	77.8
Opportunity for creative expression	35	77.8
Improve confidence, self-esteem	33	73.3
To improve mental wellbeing	31	68.9
To learn new skills	31	68.9
Reduce social isolation	29	64.4
Anxiety	25	55.6
Reduce loneliness	25	55.6
Stress relief	23	51.1
Reduce boredom	22	48.9
Cognitive stimulation	18	40.0
Depression	16	35.6
To increase physical activity	12	26.7
Chronic pain or health condition	10	22.2
Declining physical function	8	17.8
Declining overall wellbeing	7	15.6
Recent bereavement / manage loss	6	13.3
Mild cognitive impairment/dementia	3	6.7
Frail or pre-fail	2	4.4
Moderate dementia	1	2.2
To enrich patient-carer relationship	1	2.2
Fun	1	2.2

Previous Arts Experience

Although most respondents had an arts related hobby (76%), one in two respondents had not previously taken part in an arts program or workshop before (50%). (Table 8 and 9)

Table 8: Do you have any arts related hobbies?

	n	%
Yes	35	76.1
No	11	23.9
Total Respondents	46	100.0

Table 9: Have you taken part in an arts program or workshop before?

	n	%
Yes	23	50.0
No	23	50.0
Total Respondents	46	100.0

Enjoyment

The majority of participants enjoyed taking part in the 'Art of Wellbeing' program (97%). Survey respondents indicated that ManPAC should continue to run the program (99%) and that the workshops were something they looked forward to each week (95%). (Table 10 to 12)

"I enjoyed learning new painting techniques."
Participant, Male, 18-29 years

Table 10: Did you enjoy today's session?

	n	%
Yes	257	96.6
No	3	1.1
Don't know	6	2.3
Total Responses	266	100.0

Table 11: Taking part in today's session - is something I look forward to each week?

	n	%
Yes	253	95.1
No	2	.8
Don't know	11	4.1
Total Responses	266	100.0

Table 12: Should we continue to run this program?

	n	%
Yes	263	98.9
No	0	0.0
Don't know	3	1.1
Total Responses	266	100.0

Aim A: Participant Mental Wellbeing

The majority of respondents indicated that the ‘Art of Wellbeing’ workshops helped them to feel happier (96%) and increased their confidence and self-esteem (87%). (Table 13 and 14)

Table 13: Taking part in today’s session - helped me to feel happier?

	n	%
Yes	254	95.5
No	4	1.5
Don’t know	8	3.0
Total Responses	266	100.0

Table 14: Taking part in today’s session - Increased my confidence and self-esteem?

	n	%
Yes	232	87.2
No	12	4.5
Don’t know	22	8.3
Total Responses	266	100.0

“Struggling mentally at beginning of session but with a lot of support from staff I significantly improved.”

Participant, Female, 50-69 years

A pictorial measure of mental health was conducted when participants were referred to the program (i.e. baseline, before attending a workshop) and then before and after each individual ‘Art of Wellbeing’ workshop to assess changes in affect by asking participants how they felt on a faces-scale that ranged from very sad (1) to very happy (10). At baseline, 46% of participants indicated that they felt happy or very happy (Figure 2, average score=6.1). When compared to baseline, significantly more participants felt happy when they arrived at a ‘Art of Wellbeing’ workshop (58% happy, pre-workshop average score=6.7, $p<0.001$), and after taking part in a workshop (94% happy, post-workshop average score=8.5, $p<0.001$).

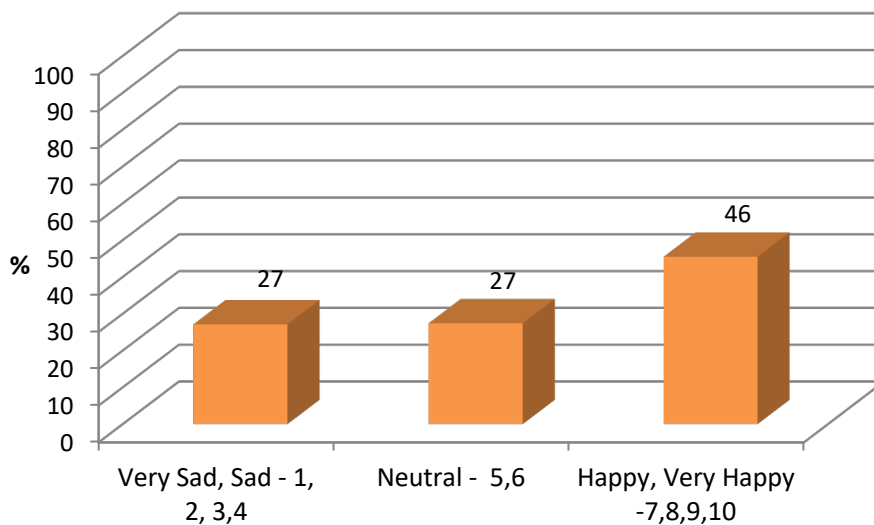


Figure 2: Baseline - How do you feel right now? (n=266 survey responses)

The pictorial measure of mental health (faces scale) was then compared immediately before and after each workshop to assess changes in affect. Significantly more participants felt happy after participating in a 'Art of Wellbeing' workshop than before (Figure 3, pre-workshop 58% happy, post-workshop 94% happy, $p < 0.001$).

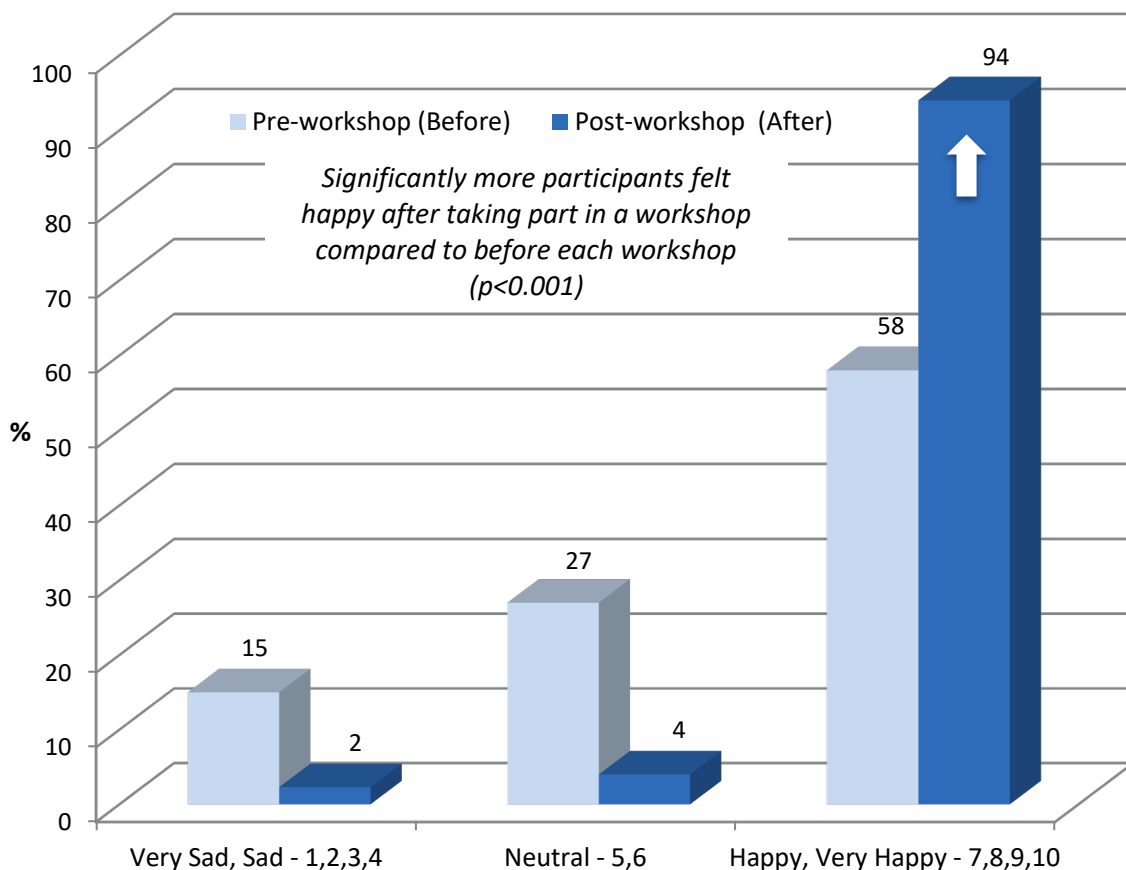


Figure 3: Pre-Post Workshop - How do you feel right now? (n=266 survey responses)

Aim B: Participant Social Wellbeing

The majority of participants indicated that taking part in the 'Art of Wellbeing' program was an opportunity to socialise and form friendships (93%). (Table 15)

Table 15: Taking part in today's session - was an opportunity to socialise and form friendships?

	n	%
Yes	246	92.5
No	8	3.0
Don't know	12	4.5
Total Responses	266	100.0

*"Best session connecting with new friends. I look forward to each session."
Participant, Female, 50-69 years*

Aim C: Development of Art Skills and an Interest in the Arts

The majority of participants indicated they learnt something new (93%), and that the workshops were an opportunity to develop an interest in the arts (88%). Most respondents indicated they intended to make art at home as a result of a 'Art of Wellbeing' workshop (72%). (Table 16 to 18)

"Loved it! So grateful for the gift bag. Will try it out today at home!"
Participant, Female, 30-49 years

Table 16: Taking part in today's session - taught me something new (e.g. new art skills)?

	n	%
Yes	246	92.5
No	14	5.3
Don't know	6	2.3
Total Responses	266	100.0

Table 17: Taking part in today's session - was an opportunity to develop an interest in art (e.g. as a hobby)?

	n	%
Yes	234	88.0
No	9	3.4
Don't know	23	8.6
Total Responses	266	100.0

Table 18: As a result of this session, do you intend to make art at home?

	n	%
Yes	192	72.2
No	29	10.9
Don't know	45	16.9
Total Responses	266	100.0

Physical Health

Although not a direct aim of the 'Art of Wellbeing' program/evaluation, respondents indicated that engaging in this program helped them to be more physically active (61%). (Table 19)

Table 19: Taking part in today's session - helped me to be more physically active?

	n	%
Yes	163	61.3
No	75	28.2
Don't know	28	10.5
Total Responses	266	100.0

"Loved it! Fantastic experience! Keen to do more dance!"
Participant, Female, 30-49 years

Comments

After each workshop, participants were asked if they had any comments about the 'Art of Wellbeing' session they had just attended. The following comments were made:

- *A wonderful activity.*
- *Absolutely loving the sessions.*
- *Absolutely wonderful. Thanks guys. I will miss these sessions next year.*
- *Ali made sure the coffee cup was o.k.*
- *Amazing.*
- *As always, a great time.*
- *Awesome art teacher guide.*
- *Awesome teacher, so patient.*
- *Awesome!!!*
- *Best day ever!!*
- *Best session connecting with new friends. I look forward to each session.*
- *Challenge creativity.*
- *Creative movements. Very good.*
- *Don't like public speaking.*
- *Fantastic. (x2)*
- *Fantastic day.*
- *Found it stressful.*
- *Good fun. (x4)*
- *Good guidance.*
- *Good to get out, meet people and take on something new.*
- *Good to give things a try.*
- *Good to try some different.*
- *Good to try something new.*
- *Good way to look back at life.*
- *Good, fun, nice teacher.*
- *Great.*
- *Great coffee.*
- *Great company.*
- *Great session and an opportunity to create my own style.*
- *Great stress relief.*
- *Great. Stimulating.*
- *Happy.*
- *Hard to focus minding kids.*
- *Helps me with concentration.*
- *I enjoyed it.*
- *I enjoyed learning new painting techniques.*
- *I enjoyed writing. I would like more writing sessions.*
- *I had good fun.*
- *I have enjoyed something new, catching up with a friend and making new friends.*
- *I have made enquiries about the class on a Monday.*
- *I liked the different patterns I made.*
- *I liked XXX as an instructor but dance isn't really my thing. The class was fun though.*
- *I love art.*

- *I relaxed doing artwork.*
- *I would have been happier if it weren't the last session.*
- *I'm gonna miss you all.*
- *Instructor good as always.*
- *It helped me stay focused.*
- *It was fantastic.*
- *It was good and the tea was great.*
- *Just very enjoyable.*
- *Learning something that I had tried before and failed.*
- *Lots of fun. (x2)*
- *Love it! (x2)*
- *Love the coffee.*
- *Loved it! Fantastic experience! Keen to do more dance!*
- *Loved it! Really fun and engaging! Ten out of ten.*
- *Loved it! So fun! Easier to solve pain flare with distraction. Lovely teacher. Feel great interacting with everyone.*
- *Loved it! So grateful for the gift bag. Will try it out today at home!*
- *Lovely group of people. Warm and welcoming atmosphere. Looking forward to finding my niche, something to express my inner self and feelings.*
- *Making mosaics was very meditative.*
- *Maybe provide snacks with less sugar.*
- *Most enjoyable.*
- *One hundred percent. Great pottery experts. Thank you loved it. First time doing pottery.*
- *Organisers are ALL very friendly and welcoming. Thank you.*
- *Perfect coffee cup!!*
- *Pottery was meditative & fun! You couldn't go wrong!*
- *Really challenging.*
- *Really enjoyed it. Creative, fun & inspiring.*
- *Really enjoyed it, thanks! Plan to do at home.*
- *So awesome!*
- *Still love you guys.*
- *Struggling mentally at beginning of session but with a lot of support from staff I significantly improved.*
- *Super fun!*
- *Teacher was patient, kind and helpful.*
- *Thank you.*
- *Thank you for the painting gift bag. The tutor, XXX was very positive and nice. Would love to do it again.*
- *Thank you XXX, wonderful workshop.*
- *Thank you. I appreciate the diversity of today.*
- *Thank you. I love this group.*
- *Thank you. I love this group.*
- *Thank you. Was very enjoyable & I met XXX.*
- *Thankyou. It was much fun. Be good to do at home.*
- *The coffee cups have a hole in them.*
- *Very appreciative of the supplies to take home. Might have been more fun to add colour or something.*
- *Very different.*
- *Very enjoyable session.*
- *Very friendly relaxed atmosphere.*

- *Very fun! Wish there was more time.*
- *Very helpful friendly and happy people.*
- *Very Interesting.*
- *Very interesting & creative.*
- *Very mindful.*
- *Was a good experience and very peaceful.*
- *Was good day.*
- *Was good fun.*
- *Was good fun, also a bit of exercise.*
- *Was nervous, but that went away doing hearts.*
- *Why are all facilitators so awesome?*
- *Why is everyone so friendly!?*
- *Why is everyone so nice?!*
- *Wonderful.*
- *Wonderful group very friendly and interactive.*
- *Would be good to have these sessions after 3pm so I can come after work/uni.*
- *Would have liked more instruction but I liked the craft day.*
- *Would use brighter colours.*
- *WOW!!*
- *XXX the teacher was really nice and talented.*
- *XXX was a lovely instructor/teacher. Thank you.*
- *XXX was a very good teacher. Thank you.*
- *XXX was very good teaching us Xmas Wreaths and how to put different materials, textures and colours together. It was a lot of fun.*
- *You guys are great!*



3.2 PRACTITIONER & FAMILY SURVEY

Survey response

Caregivers, friends and family present at the 'Art of Wellbeing' workshops and GPs, health/social organisations that referred participants to the program were also asked to provide feedback via a survey. Overall, 18 'practitioners/family' provided feedback about the 'Art of Wellbeing' program and completed an evaluation survey.

“Fantastic opportunity for our clients who wouldn't normally be able to access this type of program. Please re-fund!”
Community Practitioner

Demographics

The majority of respondents were female. The relationship to the participant varied e.g. carer/family member, community or health practitioner/worker. (Table 20 and 21)

“Would love to have this project ongoing.”
Community Practitioner

Table 20: Gender

	n	%
Male	2	11.1
Female	16	88.9
Non-binary	0	0.0
Total Respondents	18	100.0

Table 21: Relationship to the participant

	n	%
Doctor, GP, Health Practitioner/Worker	4	22.2
Carer/Family Member	7	38.9
Community Practitioner	7	38.9
Friend	0	0
Total Respondents	18	100.0

Enjoyment

All respondents thought that participants enjoyed taking part in the 'Art of Wellbeing' program (100%) and that the program should be continued (100%). The majority of respondents also thought the workshops were something participants looked forward to each week (94%). (Table 22 to 24)

“Our clients benefited greatly from this workshop and the feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive. Thank you.”
Community Practitioner

Table 22: The Art of Wellbeing program provided participants with - an enjoyable experience

	n	%
Agree	18	100.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't know	0	0.0
Total Respondents	18	100.0

Table 23: The Art of Wellbeing program provided participants with - something to look forward to each week

	n	%
Agree	17	94.4
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't know	1	5.6
Total Respondents	18	100.0

Table 24: Mandurah Performing Arts should continue to run this program

	n	%
Agree	18	100.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't know	0	0.0
Total Respondents	18	100.0

Aim A: Participant Mental Wellbeing

All respondents agreed that the 'Art of Wellbeing' program had a positive impact on participant mental health (e.g. reduced anxiety or depression, reduced boredom, stress reduction; increased happiness, confidence, self-esteem and/or resilience) (100%). The majority of respondents indicated that participants seemed happier after taking part in the program (88%). The majority of respondents also agreed that the program was an opportunity for participants to increase their confidence/self-esteem (94%) and realise their potential (83%). (Table 25 to 28)

“This program was amazing for Mum. Her confidence, self-esteem and social interaction were greatly improved.”
Carer/Family Member

Table 25: After taking part in the program, participants seemed happier (No response =1)

	n	%
Agree	15	88.2
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	2	11.8
Total Responses	17	100.0

Table 26: The program was an opportunity for participants to - increase their confidence and self-esteem

	n	%
Agree	17	94.4
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	1	5.6
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 27: The program was an opportunity for participants to - realise their potential

	n	%
Agree	15	83.3
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	3	16.7
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 28: Overall, the Art of Wellbeing Program - had a positive impact on participant mental health

	n	%
Agree	18	100.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
Total Responses	18	100.0

Aim B: Participant Social Wellbeing

All respondents agreed that the 'Art of Wellbeing' program had a positive impact on participant social health (e.g. friendships, community connection, reduced isolation and/or reduced loneliness) (100%). The majority of respondents also agreed the program was a positive opportunity for participants to socialise and form new friendships (89%). (Table 29 and 30)

“The program is an amazing opportunity for participants to socialise and be creative and meet new people.”
Community Practitioner

Table 29: The program was an opportunity for participants to - socialise and form new friendships

	n	%
Agree	16	88.9
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	2	11.1
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 30: Overall, the Art of Wellbeing Program - had a positive impact on participant social health

	n	%
Agree	18	100.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
Total Responses	18	100.0

Aim C: Development of Art Skills and an Interest in the Arts

All respondents agreed that the 'Art of Wellbeing' program was an opportunity for participants to be creative (100%) and develop/express ideas (100%). The majority of respondents also agreed that the workshops taught participants new art skills (94%), was an opportunity to develop an interest in the arts (94%) and work productively (78%). (Table 31 to 35)

“The program helped my daughter with her social anxiety & helped her realise her art has true potential. Thank you.”
Carer/Family Member

Table 31: Overall, the Art of Wellbeing Program - taught participants new art skills

	n	%
Agree	17	94.4
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	1	5.6
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 32: The program was an opportunity for participants to - be creative

	n	%
Agree	18	100.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 33: The program was an opportunity for participants to - develop an interest in art (e.g. as a hobby)

	n	%
Agree	17	94.4
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	1	5.6
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 34: The program was an opportunity for participants to - work productively

	n	%
Agree	14	77.8
Disagree	1	5.6
Don't Know	3	16.7
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 35: The program was an opportunity for participants to - develop and express ideas

	n	%
Agree	18	100.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
Total Responses	18	100.0

Physical Health

Although not a direct aim of the 'Art of Wellbeing' program/evaluation, most respondents agreed that the 'Art of Wellbeing' program had a positive impact on participant physical health (e.g. physical activity, physical function and/or general health) (67%) and was an opportunity for participants to be more physically active (56%). (Table 36 and 37)

Table 36: The program was an opportunity for participants to - be more physically active

	n	%
Agree	10	55.6
Disagree	3	16.7
Don't Know	5	27.8
Total Responses	18	100.0

Table 37: Overall, the Art of Wellbeing Program - had a positive impact on participant physical health

	n	%
Agree	12	66.7
Disagree	1	5.6
Don't Know	5	27.8
Total Responses	18	100.0

Comments

Respondents were asked if they had any comments about the 'Art of Wellbeing' program. The following comments were made:

- *Been an amazing experience.*
- *Fantastic opportunity for our clients who wouldn't normally be able to access this type of program. Please re-fund!!*
- *Our clients benefited greatly from this workshop and the feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive. Thank you.*
- *Overall, the program was AMAZING! It was something for the ladies to look forward to, get out of the house and to socialise with others. There is really not much around for them to participate in and feel supported, particularly the cohort of participants that transitioned from Mental Health providers to NDIS. I really hope there is a positive outcome of this wonderful program and there is a continued program in the new year.*
- *The program helped my daughter with her social anxiety & helped her realise her art has true potential. Thank you.*
- *The program is an amazing opportunity for participants to socialise and be creative and meet new people.*
- *This not only improved XXX well-being but also the well-being of his carer/parent. I'd love to see it continue as continuation is important for people who need routine. This program has made a big difference in his life.*
- *This program has been an asset for building community wellbeing.*
- *This program was amazing for Mum. Her confidence, self-esteem and social interaction were greatly improved.*
- *Would love to have this project ongoing.*

4. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Enjoyment

The 'Art of Wellbeing' program was consistently rated by both participants and 'practitioner/family' respondents as enjoyable. The program was something participants looked forward to each week and provided the opportunity to be guided by an expert artist, while trying a variety of different arts activities. For many participants, the 'Art of Wellbeing' workshops were a new and positive experience that they believed should be continued.



AIM 1: Participant Mental Wellbeing

The 'Art of Wellbeing' program and ManPAC achieved its aim of supporting participant mental wellbeing (e.g. happiness, mood, confidence, self-esteem etc). Engaging in the program resulted in a statistically significant and positive increase in participant's self-reported mental health. That is, the vast majority of participants reported feeling significantly happier after taking part in a 'Art of Wellbeing' workshop compared to (a) immediately before a workshop commenced, or (b) compared to 'baseline' (i.e. when referral forms were completed). All 'practitioner/family' respondents agreed that overall, the program had a positive impact on participant mental health (e.g. anxiety, depression, boredom, stress, and increased happiness, confidence and self-esteem). Results are consistent with the literature, for which there is strong evidence to support the relationship between engagement in the arts and mental health.¹

2 8 9 17-19

AIM 2: Participant Social Wellbeing

The 'Art of Wellbeing' program and ManPAC achieved its aim of supporting participant social wellbeing. Specifically, the vast majority of respondents indicated the program was an opportunity to socialise and form friendships. This finding is consistent with the literature, for which there is medium to strong evidence to support the relationship between engagement in the arts and social health.¹

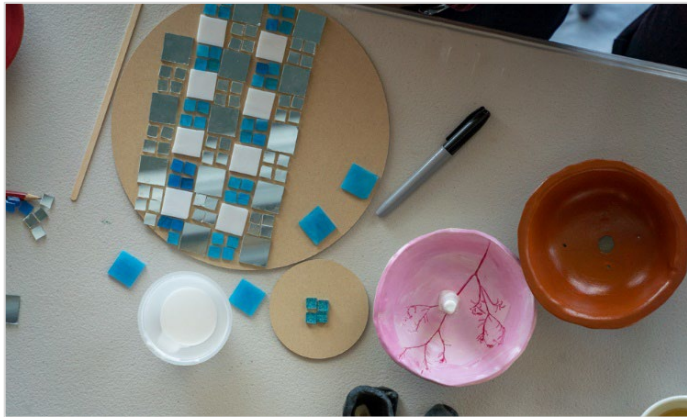
2 19



AIM 3: Development of Art Skills and an Interest in the Arts

The 'Art of Wellbeing' program and ManPAC achieved its aim of assisting

participants to develop their art skills and interest in the arts. Workshops were seen as an enjoyable opportunity to learn something new, to be creative, develop/express ideas and work productively. As a result of this successful program, most participants indicated that they intended to make art at home.



Physical Health

Although 'physical health' was not a primary aim of the 'Art of Wellbeing' program/evaluation, respondents indicated the program helped participants to be more physically active. At the start of the program the general health of most respondent's was rated as 'fair' or 'good'. Overall, most 'practitioner/family' respondents agreed the 'Art of Wellbeing' program had a positive impact on participant physical health (e.g. physical activity, physical function and/or general health). This finding is consistent with the literature, for which there is emerging evidence to support the relationship between engagement in the arts and physical health. ^{1 2 19}

Recommendations

Overall, evaluation respondents were overwhelmingly happy with the 'Art of Wellbeing' program. Participants and practitioners/family agreed that the **program should be continued**. They indicated that the program was effective and successfully achieved its aims of supporting participant mental health, social health and assisted participants in their skill development and interest in the arts. To actively engage participants in arts activities that support health and wellbeing, it is recommended that:

- Funders consider the continued support and funding of this effective program,
- Funders consider the expansion of this program, (a) to a larger number of participants in the Mandurah area, and (b) the possible expansion of the program into other local government areas,
- In consultation with participants, practitioners, and funders, that ManPAC consider the use of both the current, effective, visual arts activities, as well as a broader range of other artforms (e.g. performing arts, literary arts, electronic arts), and
- That future 'Art of Wellbeing' programs continue the practice of providing art packs at the end of an activity, so that participants can continue to engage in arts-based hobbies at home. This practice reduces financial and knowledge-based barriers and supports future engagement in the arts.



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