

# Josie Aston: Arts and Health Consultancy

## *Arts: The Final Frontier*

### An arts for health audit and strategy for South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust, February – April 2005

Josie Aston and Claire Pope carried out an audit of the many varied arts activities – including everything from live music to woodcarving - being carried out by occupational therapists and others at this large mental health and community trust. Their report, 'Arts: The Final Frontier' detailed an arts strategy for the Trust, showing ways in which the arts project could be developed, funded, researched and evaluated.

The report also included the results of a staff questionnaire and a consultation event attended by 30 staff from the Trust and its health and social care partners. The report was presented to the Trust Assurance Board in April 2005 and the Trust has adopted the recommendations. Josie later worked with the Trust to create an Arts Co-ordinator post to take the project forwards and raised funding of £60k from Arts Council England West Midlands and the health trust in order to do this.



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#### Comments about the South Staffordshire Healthcare research project:

“The work was undertaken to meet all deadlines, interim and final reports were of an extremely high and professional standard as were all flyers and communications with our stakeholders. I have received feedback from many of the stakeholders about the quality of the products produced by the consultancy and also about the manner in which the work was undertaken which engaged our stakeholders.” *Debbie Moores, Professional Lead for Occupational Therapy, South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust*



“Very inspiring; clarified what arts for health is all about and the types of projects that could be developed. A very useful balance between activities.” *Jane Clark, Occupational Therapist, South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust* [consultation event]

Images: (top) Occupational therapy woodworking studio

(left) Mental health service users with mosaics made for the Route to Health walk on Cannock Chase

For further details of this project, please contact **Debbie Moores, Allied Health Professions Lead, South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**, on telephone 01785 221328 or e-mail [Debbie.Moores@sssft.nhs.uk](mailto:Debbie.Moores@sssft.nhs.uk).

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## *Feeling better?*

### **An arts in hospital strategy for Queen's Hospital, Burton-upon-Trent, April – November 2005**

Josie Aston researched and wrote an arts in hospital strategy for Queen's Hospital in Burton, with assistance from Claire Pope. The strategy analysed the impact and effectiveness of the arts activities which the hospital had carried out in partnership with the local authority and community groups and made recommendations for further developments. The strategy also advised on the national and regional policy context and on fundraising, communications, commissioning of artwork, collections management and recruitment and training of artists and performers.

During the project the consultants organised an Arts Day for the hospital, including live music for elderly patients, craft activities on the children's ward and a variety of activities for staff, ranging from creative writing to silk painting and digital photography.

The aim of the Arts Day was to demonstrate the benefits of the arts in healthcare to patients, staff and visitors to the hospital and to bring the strategic work to life. The day also gave an opportunity to publicise the arts consultancy in the Burton Mail and on BBC Radio Derby.

#### **Comments about the Arts Day:**

"Thank you. My daughter really enjoyed it. We were meant to go home this morning but she wanted to stay and have a go."  
*(parent of child taking part)*



"Thought it was brilliant and like doing the sunny one. Like using ink, liked doing pictures on the canvas." *Tabitha (patient), 5 years old*



"it was a nice surprise to find it actually going on at all...I enjoyed it and the chance to expand my creative mind while at work." *Kate (member of staff)*

"the patients really enjoyed it [the concert] and I am definitely interested in doing further events perhaps at Xmas?"  
*Alison (member of staff)*

Images: (above) Young patient taking part in silk painting workshop  
(left) Clients from Burton Day Service with an artwork they helped to create.

"I have already found the [strategy] document very useful in passing on to staff members who are interested in developing projects to give them guidance and a context for their work, as well as support in internal fundraising." *Michele Clerc, Lead Community Arts Officer, East Staffordshire Borough Council*

**For further details of this project, please contact Michele Clerc on telephone 01283 508329 or e-mail [michele.clerc@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:michele.clerc@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk).**

# Josie Aston: Arts and Health Consultancy

## *New Horizons: Expanding the Arts for Health Project to Shropshire*

A report for South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust by Josie Aston, arts and health consultant, October 2007 - January 2008

During 2006-7 there was a development that had not been foreseen at the time of the 2005 arts consultancy report: the Trust, now a Foundation Trust, integrated mental health and learning disability services across South Staffordshire and Shropshire, a large-scale project involving transferring 1200 staff plus £43m of fixed assets. It was clearly not possible for the part-time Arts for Health Co-ordinator to deliver a quality service across such a hugely increased geographical area.



The new brief was to audit any existing arts and creative therapy projects within the areas of Shropshire the Trust was now responsible for; to hold a half day event to inform and consult staff in Shropshire about the potential to use the arts in their services and to create a strategy for presentation to the Trust Board and the Arts Council, which the Trust could use to develop a programme of arts and health work in Shropshire.



Claire Pope and Niki Holmes helped complete the consultancy, which was done over an intensive timescale as the Trust needed to make decisions quickly. A Creative Consultation day held at Shelton Hospital just before Christmas 2007 was over-subscribed, showing the enthusiasm of care staff for this new development.

### Comments about the second consultancy:

““Thanks for organising the day, I found it very informative and inspiring.” *Bren Hutchison, Occupational Therapist*

“We enjoyed the day...it is always interesting to meet other people within the field.” *Gabi Hampson, Development Worker, The Project Group*

Images: (top right) Logo produced at a Learning at Work arts drop-in day

(above) Discussion group at the Creative Consultation

For further details of this project, please contact **Debbie Moores, Allied Health Professions Lead, South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**, on telephone 01785 221328 or e-mail [Debbie.Moores@sssft.nhs.uk](mailto:Debbie.Moores@sssft.nhs.uk).