

The many benefits of group drumming for mental health service users

Home > Impacts of arts and culture > Health and wellbeing impacts of arts and culture

This research was conducted by **Daisy Fancourt and five other researchers** at the **Royal College of Music** and **Imperial College London, UK**

Summary

The researchers note that while growing numbers of mental health organisations are developing community music-making interventions for service users, there has been little research into their efficacy. They carried out a study that demonstrates that group drumming in a community setting has a positive effect on reducing depression and anxiety, while enhancing social resilience and mental wellbeing. Participation was also seen to encourage an anti-inflammatory immune profile. This is significant as many mental health conditions are accompanied by underlying inflammatory immune responses.

Mental health service users attended a drumming session once a week for 10 weeks

Researchers recruited 30 participants to a 90-minute weekly drumming session over 10 weeks. They compared the psycho-social impact of this intervention with a control group who took part in other weekly, non-musical social activities. As well as testing the impact of the intervention at six and 10 weeks, they also followed up three months after the intervention to assess whether attending the drumming sessions had any lasting impact on participants – which it did.

Further study is needed on music interventions for mental health service users

The study demonstrates the therapeutic potential of music-based community interventions in mental health service provision. In particular, it shows the practicality and potential cost-effectiveness of drumming groups. Further study should be carried out into the benefits of other music-based psycho-social interventions for mental health service users.

This summary is by **Richard Mason, King's Knowledge Exchange Associate**

Keywords

music **drumming** **experiment** **UK** **anxiety** **wellbeing**

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