

Study update, January 2021

The cultural sector, older people, well-being and social prescribing

Welcome to our January 2021 update. This document is to inform our project partners, public contributors and other interested parties about our progress on the research we are currently developing.



Cultural institutions as social prescribing venues to improve older people's wellbeing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic: What works, for whom, in what circumstances and why?

This is the question our [research](#) seeks to answer. The study is funded by the [Arts and Humanities Research Council](#) (AHRC).

For this research we will conduct a "[realist review](#)". This work will involve us reviewing the existing evidence on the research topic and drawing out relevant pieces of information that collectively allow us to develop a "[programme theory](#)".

A programme theory is a proposition (often in the form of a model or diagram) of how an intervention (in this case the cultural sector through social prescribing pathways) is thought to work, under what conditions and for whom (we are particularly interested in older people). This will be followed by a "realist evaluation", whereby we collect data from key stakeholders (cultural sector staff, older people and link workers) to further refine and develop our programme theory.

What does our realist review entail, and how will it contribute to the programme theory?

- We have completed screening items from our initial literature searches of several databases. Our inclusion criteria resulted in thirty-three relevant items that we will be including in our review
- We conducted a shorter review of the grey literature (not published in an academic journal), from which nine relevant reports have been identified
- We are currently analysing the selected articles and reports. Our objective is 1) to refine our initial programme theory, and 2) delineate areas requiring further investigation through the interviews and survey that we will conduct in March and April.

What's next?

Ethics application

We sent an ethics application to the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) at the University of Oxford for review in December 2020. This application covers the interviews we will conduct with older adults and staff members of the cultural sector, and the survey we will send to link workers. We expect to receive ethics approval before the end of February 2021.

Research progress meetings, 24 – 25 February, 2021

Who are these meetings for?

These meetings are for stakeholders who a) work in the cultural sector, or b) work in social prescribing, or c) are an older person with an interest in our research.

Meeting content

We will provide an update on the progress of the project and findings of the realist review. This meeting will be an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on these findings and the programme theory. This feedback will inform what we ask in interviews with older adults and staff members of the cultural sector, and the survey sent to link workers.

Welcoming two new members on the project

Sebastien Libert



Sebastien Libert is an Anthropologist, specialised in research on health and later life, and a researcher for our AHRC project.

[Find out more](#)

Jordan Gorenberg



Jordan Gorenberg is undertaking a DPhil in Anthropology, here at the University of Oxford, and has a background in bioethics and medical anthropology. He is also a researcher for the AHRC project.

[Find out more](#)

Stay in touch

If you would like any more information about this project, please see our [project page](#) or do not hesitate to contact:

- Dr. Stephanie Tierney stephanie.tierney@phc.ox.ac.uk
- Prof. Kamal R. Mahtani kamal.mahtani@phc.ox.ac.uk

Acknowledgements: This research is funded by UKRI/AHRC (AH/V008781/1).

