Arts in Health: Fact Sheet

CASE-MAKING STATS

84% of Canadians believe that art is essential to a healthy society.[1]

72% of Canadians believe that arts and culture are important to mental well-being.[2]

65% of physicians believe community social service integration improves care.[3]

64% of Canadians believe that arts and culture play some or a large role in personal health.[4]



Riz Herbosa de Guzman, 2016.

The benefits of integrating arts into healthcare and public health is increasingly gaining recognition in Canada. From regulated healthcare facilities and therapeutic arts practices to community-based wellness programs, arts are being used in a variety of contexts to enhance Canadians' well-being. Emerging programs in arts-based health education highlight the role of arts in medical education and health research. Additionally, artists-in-residence programs at healthcare facilities and organizations support artists while providing arts-based care, further illustrating the expanding role of arts in health.

Beyond cultural enrichment, arts in health generate notable economic benefits. Investments in social prescribing, for example, yield significant returns by improving health outcomes and reducing strain on the healthcare system. As the field grows, demand for creative professionals in healthcare settings is rising, presenting new career opportunities for artists. Ultimately, integrating arts into health strategies strengthens civic life, fostering resilient and connected communities.

MORE FROM THE RESEARCH CATALOGUE

→ Improving Health Outcomes

A ***Hill Strategies* report** for the Canada Council for the Arts found that across 15 different arts, culture, and heritage activities, participants are more likely to report better health than non-participants.[5]

→ Arts Interventions

In a review of evidence surrounding arts impact on health and well-being, the ***World Health Organization*** found that some arts interventions in health showed equivalent or greater cost–effectiveness to possible health interventions.[6]

→ Social Prescribing

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health found social prescribing tools like portable art carts offer a valuable way to cope and express emotions, even outside of hospital settings.[7]

→ Participation Matters

A ***CanadaHelps*** poll (Ipsos) states that Canadians participating in arts and culture activities weekly (42%) or two to three times a month (46%) report having very good or excellent mental health.[8]