

National Galleries Scotland

Supplementary Information for Culture Committee Meeting 11 09 2025

Health & Wellbeing Programmes

Gallery Social

Dementia friendly monthly programmes at NGS. Programme supports people living with dementia and their carers to connect with others and feel a sense of belonging and inclusion through art. The Dementia programme was started by NGS in 2013, based on a model from MOMA, New York, our programme quickly attracted the attention of other cultural organisations across Scotland who subsequently began their own sessions, resulting in dementia programmes becoming a standard offer now in museums and galleries.

Current Annual participation figures are approx. 250.

NGS partnership with Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

- NGS has been working with Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity in the RHCYP Edinburgh since 2018.
- Began with 2 x art trolleys within RHCYP – located in Planned Investigations and Oncology depts
- Wellbeing packs containing art materials and creative ideas on art postcards created by NGS and distributed to children and families by hospital staff eg in 2023, 500 packs were produced, further packs and materials were distribution at christmas time in 2024, and we'll do the same this year.
- Creative Clinic – monthly artist led creative sessions in the Outpatients waiting area at Royal Hospital for Children and Young People (RHCYP) in Edinburgh.
- Monthly artist led sessions for young people in CAMHS secure unit in (RHCYP)

Annual participation figures – c.800 (not including use of trolleys and wellbeing packs)

Alcohol Related Brain Damage

Monthly programme at Portrait Gallery with charity Rowan Alba. Rowan Alba supports some of the most vulnerable people with alcohol addiction and related harm. NGS and Rowan Alba have

been working together since 2013. We also host quarterly sessions supporting Rowan Alba's work with volunteers and partners including Young Carers, Headway and NHS Lothian.

'The Guided Self Discovery Group' is an 8-week programme established to support the transition from an in-patient rehabilitation hospital, Milestone House, back into the community.

Both programmes involve excluded, isolated and stigmatised members of society with welcoming and generous creative sessions that support the participants emotional wellbeing, social networks and assist recovery.

More information: [Galleries are a Safe Space for people with Lived Experience of Alcohol-related Harm | National Galleries of Scotland](#)

Supporting Health and wellbeing charities

Art in Healthcare

Our partnership with Art in Healthcare is ongoing, hosting their monthly ROOM FOR ART sessions - visual art workshops using a social prescribing approach to enhance the health and wellbeing of participants. Participants are referred from GPs, Community Health Organisations, support workers, etc.

Alongside this, NGS offers a programme of artist-led gallery visits for charitable groups. This popular programme provides free sessions for groups that support health and wellbeing such as Headway, Speak their name (for people affected by suicide), Care 4 Carers.

Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD)

NGS delivers programmes for families with a family member who has PMLD. Supported by the charity PAMIS, our work with this community began in 2018 when NGS installed its first Changing Places Toilet, enabling families who had previously been unable to visit to enjoy the benefits of NGS with equity. Since then NGS has delivered regular programmes for PMLD families and have recently launched Sensory Art Club, a fully inclusive art club for people of all ages with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their families, friends and supporters where they will explore the gallery spaces with a sensory-friendly tour and take part in creative activities in the learning room with our friendly artists.

In April 2025 NGS hosted the conference for the Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health: Beyond Words – An exploration of the mental health of children and young people with

severe and profound learning disabilities. The conference welcomed medical professionals from across the UK and NGS presented at the conference along with PAMIS on the work that we have done together.

Babies and early years

Bring your own Bump/Baby has been a long running programme of gallery tours for expectant and new parents, it was created in recognition of the support wanted by new parents to reconnect with their former selves, get out of the house and connect with others. This programme has recently evolved in ABC (Art Baby Connect), a programme that offers a calm and creative space for parents, caregivers and their babies.

Nesta/ArtFund Mini Wonders programme

In 2024-25 we were accepted as one of eight lead museums to take part in the research and development project Mini Wonders developed by Art Fund and Nesta. It involves the creation of a fun and engaging programme for parents and caregivers of children aged 2-4 years old, layered with evidence-informed principles and messages that support parents to build confidence and skills that help their child's social and emotional development. The programme aims to explore the role museums and galleries can play in supporting low-income parents with children in their early years, to ensure every child has the same chance of developing to their full potential. We have worked with charity Home-start who identified families who would benefit from the programme and the staff and volunteers supported the families throughout. NGS also delivered wellbeing sessions to support the staff and volunteers.

Healing Arts Scotland

Healing Arts Scotland is a nation-wide festival celebrating and advocating for improved physical, mental and social health through the arts. Spearheaded by Scottish Ballet as part of the Jameel Arts & Health Lab's global 'Healing Arts' campaign in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, the conference launched in 2024 with National Galleries Scotland a key partner and host.

NGS is again hosting the main conference day for Healing Arts Scotland 2026 at the National in June 2026.

2. Our Aims / Wellbeing

84%

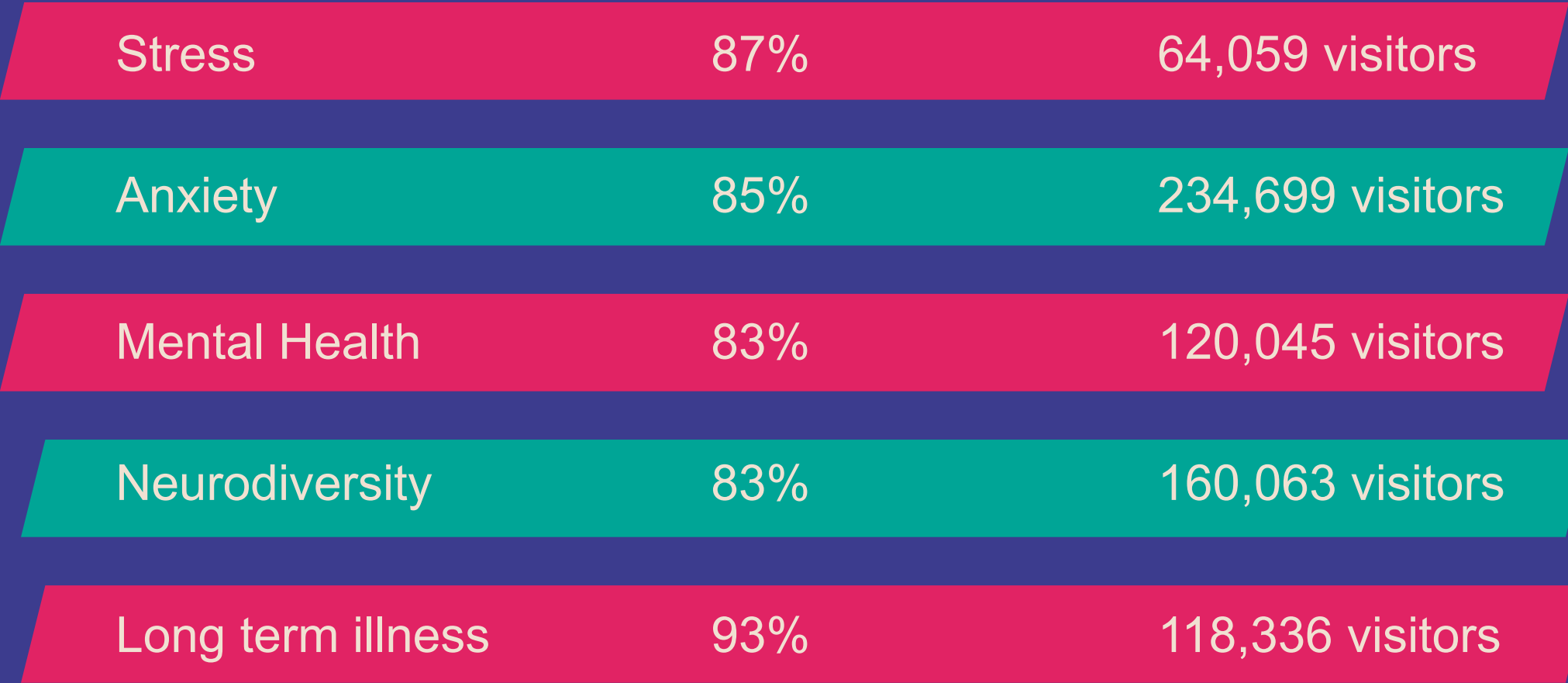
of visitors said that their visit that day impacted positively on their Wellbeing



7. Equalities / Lived Experience of Visitors & Wellbeing

We've previously seen that overall, across all sites, 84% of all visitors say that their visit that day impacted positively on their Wellbeing.

Is there a Wellbeing impact for those visitors with challenging Lived Experiences? How many of those visitors said their visit impacted positively on their Wellbeing?



Together
we care...

