



## CROSSING BOUNDARIES: THE VALUE OF MUSEUMS IN DEMENTIA CARE

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Working in collaboration with National Museums Liverpool (NML), the *Crossing Boundaries* research programme focuses upon NML's award-winning dementia care training intervention *House of Memories*, creating a large scale empirical case study on the value of museums in dementia care and a model for responsive culture-led interventions in priority public policy agendas.

### 1 Research context

In 2012, National Museums Liverpool (NML) launched a dementia care training programme that has since received critical acclaim across multiple platforms. More than 10,000 health service, housing and social care workers have now participated in the training nationally. Funded primarily by the Department of Health, *House of Memories* began as a full-day museums-based training intervention combining dramatic set pieces, forum theatre, interactive facilitation, museum and gallery tours, reminiscence therapy and museum education activities, with the aim of supporting and enabling participating dementia carers to help those directly affected by the condition to 'live well' with dementia. The active programme is supplemented by branded training resources including the *My House of Memories* app, which can be taken away and adapted for use in a range of care settings.

The programme has also been adapted and developed for delivery in different professional environments, including a half-day digital training model focused upon the *My House of Memories* app; the *House of Memories* 'buddy' programme, designed specifically for family carers and community volunteers; and most significantly the primary health 'Tier 2' dementia care train the trainer model, launched in collaboration with NHS partners across the North West in November 2015 (funded by Health Education England). Tier 2 training outcomes are described in more detail within the Dementia Core Skills Education and Training Framework<sup>1</sup>, published in October 2015.

Pilot evaluation studies completed by the Institute of Cultural Capital (Wilson and Grindrod, 2013; Wilson and Whelan, 2014) have revealed significant outcomes for participating dementia carers, via the trial of systematic research designs, including a Realistic Evaluation framework (Pawson and Tilley, 1997), development of a standardised Dementia Care Impact Measure and social return on investment (SROI) analysis. Outcomes include increased awareness and understanding of dementia and its implications; improved subjective wellbeing for professional dementia carers; skills development including listening, communication and professional empathy; improved capacity for [individual and collective] critical, reflective care practice; confidence in trying new, creative approaches to dementia care; and increased cultural engagement with museums.

*House of Memories* therefore brings pertinent attention to the potential of museums to contribute to core skills development in the pastoral dimensions of health care for ageing populations, including

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/news/latest-news/item/335-new-dementia-core-skills-education-and-training-framework>

most significantly enhanced empathy and compassion, which are integral to the development of person-centred dementia care strategies and practices (Brooker, 2007). The commissioning of NML to provide advanced Tier 2 level training provision via the recently launched train the trainer model is indicative of the trust placed in the quality of the programme by health commissioners. As such, our research aims to fill a gap in conceptual and practice-based knowledge and understanding of the developmental value of arts and cultural interventions to health and social care sectors.

The successful development and delivery of *House of Memories* has coincided with pervasive public policy developments in dementia care, in response to a growing crisis in numbers of people with dementia in the UK, estimated to be in the region of 850,000 in 2015 and forecast to increase to over 1,000,000 by 2025 (Alzheimer's Society, 2014). Evaluation outcomes described above relating to the 'culture of care' amongst *House of Memories* participants adhere closely to objectives outlined by the National Dementia Strategy launched in 2009. *House of Memories* has subsequently been directly referenced and commended within leading policy response documents including the Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia (Department of Health, 2012) and the recent review of care standards for people living with dementia (Care Quality Commission, 2014). The review highlighted that people living with dementia were at high risk of experiencing poor care at some stage in the conventional pathway, with *House of Memories* cited as a creative intervention that focuses positively upon the individual's quality of life.

In the UK's professional cultural sector, the arts and health movement more broadly has gained considerable traction, partly fuelled by increased imperatives to evidence the value of publicly subsidised arts and culture from multiple perspectives. Within this movement, there are many examples of impactful arts-based interventions with an emerging evidence base focused upon the direct, therapeutic and cognitive benefits for people with dementia (see for example Goulding, 2013; Windle et al, 2014; Young et al, 2015). In this context, reminiscence therapy techniques have become increasingly popular within the museum field, with numerous projects that have been shown to have therapeutic value, promote learning, creativity, improved confidence and skills development (Chatterjee and Noble, 2013: 39). The use of such techniques therefore is not unique to NML. The organisation has however advanced the field by developing a programme specifically for dementia carers, which was achieved in conversation and collaboration with health care sectors after joint acknowledgement of this significant gap, inspiring strategic support from the Department of Health.

There is growing contemporary momentum around such arts and cultural commissioning within social and public services, illustrated by a propensity of referral schemes such as 'arts on prescription' at local levels, and national initiatives such as the Cultural Commissioning Programme 2013-16 (CCP). Funded by Arts Council England (ACE) and delivered through the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), the CCP aims to help arts and cultural sectors to develop skills and capacity to engage in cultural commissioning; develop awareness amongst commissioners of the capacity of arts and cultural sectors to deliver public service outcomes; develop relationships between cultural providers and commissioners; and influence policy makers on the value of arts and culture. *House of Memories* has been profiled as a 'best practice' case study by the CCP. The commitment of ACE to the museums sector's work in the health field has recently been reinforced by funding of the National Alliance for Museums, Health and Wellbeing via the Museum Resilience Fund 2015-17, which includes NML (and *House of Memories*) as key partners.

The strategic leadership of *House of Memories* has been an integral factor in its success. The most significant example of this is the professional, collaborative network that has developed around the programme. Preliminary social network analysis (SNA) undertaken in 2015

provides a snapshot of the extent and range of collaborative leadership undertaken by the Education and Visitors team. NML colleagues were asked to identify up to 10 significant (regional and international) organisations and services under the categories of *House of Memories* ‘influencers’, ‘collaborators’ and ‘beneficiaries’ (see table 1 for category definitions). SNA graphics were subsequently used to illustrate the density of connections within and across *House of Memories* network members (figure 1), including central and local government; national and regional health and social care agencies; cultural organisations; national charities and trusts; universities; and private practices.

SNA centrality measures (figure 2) show NML at the centre of a fully integrated national health and social care workforce. Further SNA research will continue to explore the full range and depth of collaborative practice linked to *House of Memories*. The power and value of such networks – and a central leadership role within them – should not be underestimated in positioning NML at the forefront of cultural practice in health and wellbeing (and other) public policy agendas.

Effective collaborative practice has helped to shape and define other core qualities of the *House of Memories* programme. The My House of Memories app for example, was authentically co-designed in collaboration with a range of regional stakeholders including people with dementia and carers in the city of Liverpool, via Mersey Care NHS Trust, Liverpool Dementia Action Alliance (and its Service Users Reference Forum), Everton Football Club, and Liverpool John Moores University care of the international, European Commission-funded ‘Innovate Dementia’ project. The integration of *House of Memories* as a respected intervention into such local service infrastructures has enabled the development of trusting relationships between NML staff, service providers and users, creating a vote of confidence in NML and providing a seamless platform for the development of other collaborative initiatives led by the city’s museums.

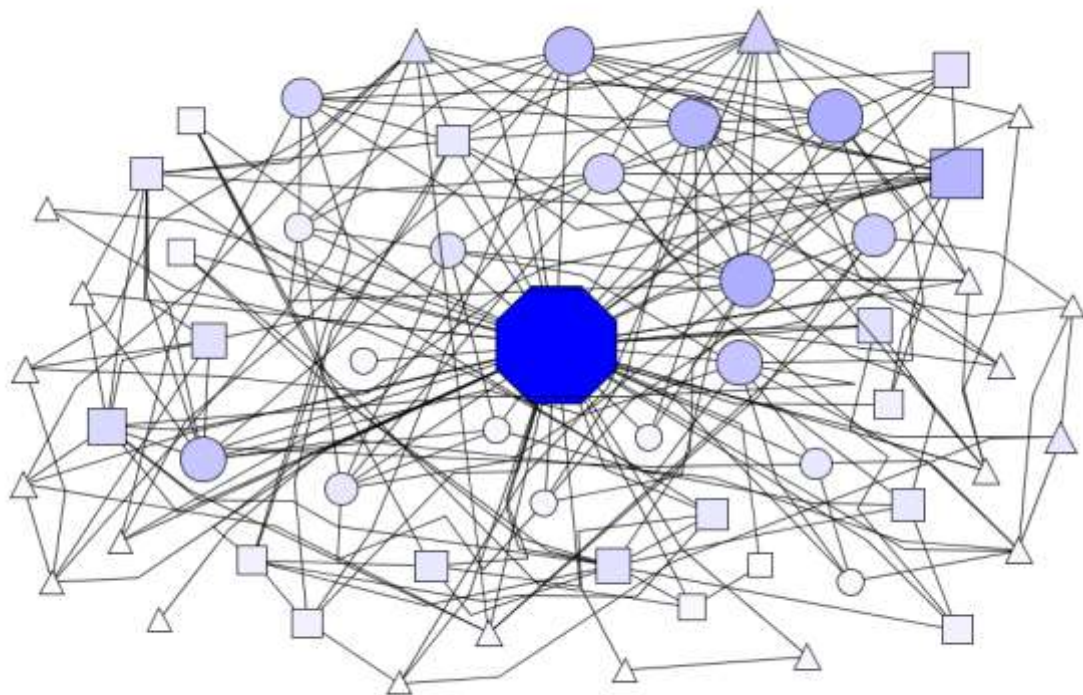
This is further evidenced by NML’s strategic leadership of and relationship with other relevant (regional and national) projects, including the Liverpool-based Happy Older People network<sup>2</sup> and the National Alliance for Museums, Health and Wellbeing<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://happyolderpeople.com/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://museumsandwellbeingalliance.wordpress.com/>





**Figure 2 – SNA centrality measures showing NML at centre of integrated health and social care workforce**

## **2 Developing the ICC’s research collaboration with NML**

The *Crossing Boundaries* programme of research (2016-) will focus upon *House of Memories* as a case study on the value of museums in advancing care standards, creating a model for responsive culture-led interventions in dementia care and other public policy priorities, and a ‘shared language’ on the mutual benefits of such interventions for different professional groups. The theory-led study will generate significant added value for current and future strategy and practice within the arts and health field, and for cultural organisations seeking to contribute to public policy agendas and demonstrate their own collaborative value. The ICC’s existing evaluation studies act as a reliable baseline from which to take this research forward, which will be of significant interest to academic, policy and practice communities across multiple sectors and disciplines. Evaluation research findings to date infer an ‘intrinsic to instrumental theory of change’, including a causal relationship between the uniquely artistic and cultural elements of the *House of Memories* programme and improved care standards, which deserves to be rigorously tested over a longer period of time as the programme expands and develops.

A comprehensive, long-term research programme linked to *House of Memories* therefore has a unique intellectual contribution to make to this field, as little scholarly attention has been paid to the mediatory value of culture-led interventions to the relevant [professional] communities of practice; the symbiotic relationships between cultural practitioners, the health care community and people with dementia; and their holistic impact upon standards of care, reciprocity in care relationships and the collective, shared experience of living with dementia. *House of Memories* offers fascinating insights into the scalable, ‘uniquely cultural’ instrumental value of museums to the health care sector, and the reciprocal added value of such cross-sector working to museums and other arts and cultural

sectors. Professional learning outcomes would furthermore support the development of a national cultural strategy for older people, including Arts Council England's core objective to create and support a 'dementia friendly' arts and cultural sector<sup>4</sup>.

### 3 Research aims and objectives

The overarching aim of the research is to investigate the holistic value of *House of Memories* as a museums-led dementia care intervention. Specific objectives include:

- To assess the development of *House of Memories* as a cross-sector community of practice and its impact upon professional learning, development and capacity building;
- To assess the impact of *House of Memories* on the subjective wellbeing of participating dementia carers and the subsequent 'culture of care';
- To assess the meta-level social value and return on investment of *House of Memories* for participating sectors and funding bodies;
- To share learning with relevant professional communities on modelling responsive culture-led interventions in dementia field and other key health and social care priorities;
- To inform national cultural policy and strategic development of the 'dementia friendly' cultural sector in England.

### 4 Work packages and research methodology

The project will include three distinct but inter-related work packages (WPs), which will run concurrently throughout the project to consider the iterative relationships between different elements of *House of Memories* practice and impact, and create synergy between research analysis and findings.

These will be summarised towards the end of the project by a retrospective meta-evaluation, using Realistic Evaluation principles and creating a model of 'contexts', 'mechanisms' and 'outcomes' across the three WPs, which will feed into recommendations made regarding future policy and practice. The meta-evaluation and mixed methods used within individual WPs (described in more detail below) are designed to create a degree of consistency with existing evaluation studies (e.g. Realistic Evaluation approach used in Wilson and Grindrod, 2013) and reliability across the full suite of *House of Memories* research and evidence.

The study will focus on three areas of *House of Memories* delivery and practice – these include:

- Standard 'health and social care' full-day training programme based at the Museum of Liverpool since 2012, delivered most recently in November 2015;
- Primary health 'Tier 2' dementia care train the trainer model – launched with NHS partners in North West and funded by Health Education North West, November 2015;
- The House of Memories Buddy Programme for family and volunteer carers, to be rolled out nationally in April 2016.

This creates a representative, systematic research model (figure 3) that captures a manageable and comprehensive research data set. For in-depth qualitative work, each WP will work with a different cohort of participating dementia carers and museum professionals (across the three *House of*

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<sup>4</sup> See for example [https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/news\\_article.php?newsID=2496](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/news_article.php?newsID=2496)

*Memories* work areas) to generate a meaningful, comparable sample. This will include 2015 cohorts and participants in the programme as it is delivered throughout 2016-17. A mixed-method approach will furthermore generate substantial, quantitative and qualitative data across the three WPs and *House of Memories* delivery contexts. Researchers will continue to work closely with the NML team to engage stakeholders and research participants from across the substantial networks developed through *House of Memories* since its launch in 2012, including the Department of Health, Health Education England, health and social care services, advocacy and development bodies including the Alzheimer's Society, regional NHS trusts and services and a range of museums and galleries throughout the North West, Midlands and South East of England.

There will be mid and endpoint workshops and dissemination events with an extended community of interest from across the full range of arts and cultural sectors, health and social services, Arts Council England and other policy and governance bodies including the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).

#### *WP1 – Professional Learning and Development*

Working in collaboration with NML's strategic partners at Health Education North West, WP1 will explore learning and development outcomes amongst a cross-section of *House of Memories* participants. Research design for this WP will be informed by situated learning theory (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and a 'communities of practice' (CoP) conceptual framework, where CoPs are defined as vehicles for situated learning, generating knowledge and sharing practices within and across a range of work-based and organisational spatial settings (Brown and Duguid, 1991; Gherardi et al, 1998; Amin and Roberts, 2008).

Individual research methods will include continuing social network analysis and the development of a standardised measure (in survey form) of learning outcomes, skills development, attitudinal outcomes and personal competences. This will be an adaptation and extension of a measure used previously within *House of Memories* evaluation research (Wilson and Whelan, 2014), which will be circulated digitally to all participants from the three training models described above in order to maximise response rates. The measure will be adapted to map directly against Dementia Core Skills Education and Training Framework<sup>5</sup>. Quantitative data will be enhanced by follow-up focus group sessions with selected participants, to explore in greater detail the specific effective learning contexts and developmental conditions of *House of Memories* in relation to professional learning and development outcomes within a CoP conceptual framework.

#### *WP2 – Wellbeing and Culture of Care*

WP2 will assess the impact of *House of Memories* on the subjective wellbeing of all participants, including carers and people with dementia. The subsequent impact upon the 'culture of care' within participating communities, including relationship between carers' own subjective wellbeing and care practices, will also be explored. This WP will be framed by existing studies on the impact of arts and culture on subjective wellbeing, including studies within the dementia field referenced above.

Individual research methods will again include a standardised measure (in survey form) of subjective wellbeing adapted from existing, reliable research tools and consistent with previous *House of Memories* evaluation studies. Reliable instruments include the Warwick and Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) previously adapted for Wilson and Whelan (2014). A cohesive circulation

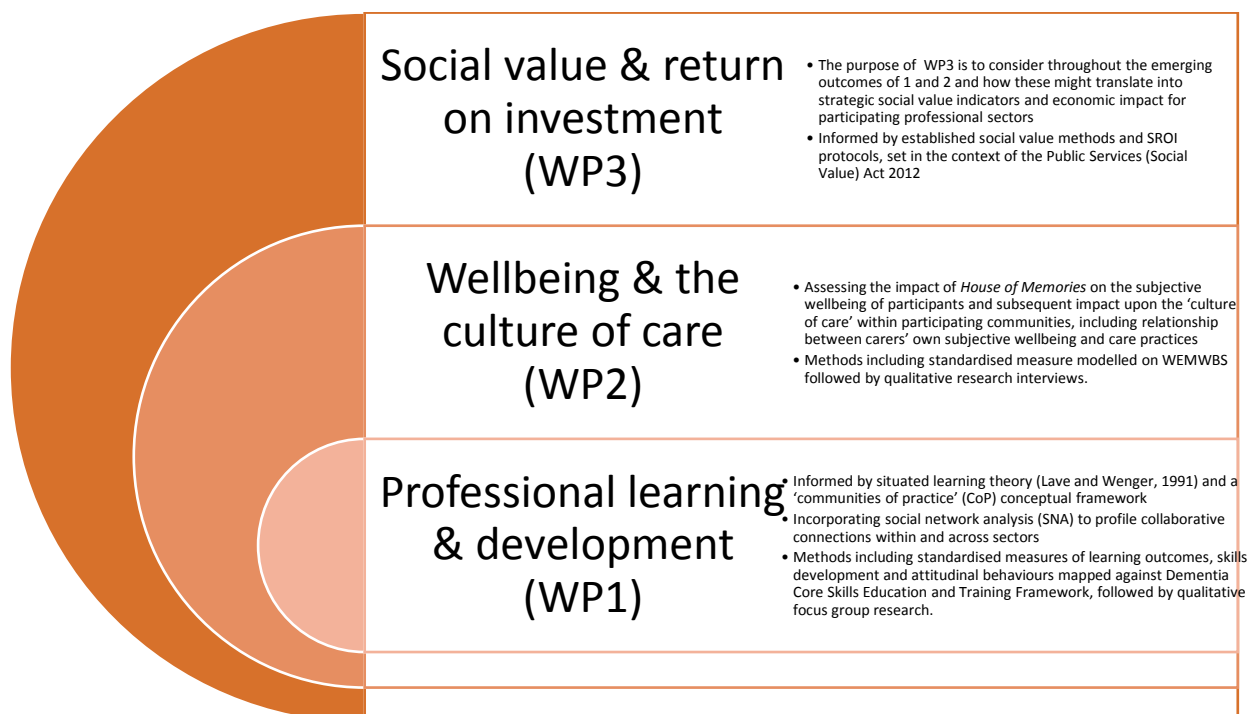
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<sup>5</sup> Adapted measure currently being trialled with participants in the pilot train the trainer model, delivered in North West in November 2015 as part of a commissioned evaluation project.

and sampling strategy will be adopted as per WP1 in order to maximise responses, with respondents invited to express an interest in qualitative stages of WP2. These will include repeated (on longitudinal basis subject to further external funding) semi-structured interviews with a stratified sample of up to 30 individual participants to explore in depth the impact of *House of Memories* upon care relationships, practices and outcomes in relation to own sense of wellbeing and levels of continued participation and engagement with museums and other arts and cultural forms post-House of Memories.

### WP3 – Social Value and Return on Investment

The purpose of WP3 is to consider throughout the emerging outcomes of WPs 1 and 2 and how these translate into strategic social value indicators and economic impact for participating professional sectors. Working in collaboration with a range of stakeholders across the three defined areas of *House of Memories* practice, social return on investment (SROI) workshops (6 in total) will be run to test emerging findings of WPs 1 and 2 as valid impact indicators; determine self-articulated elements of social value created by *House of Memories* for participating stakeholders; the subsequent return on investment for participating communities of practice by way of financial proxies; implications and learning outcomes for the policy and practice of museums and culture-led interventions in dementia and other health and social care priorities. Building the SROI evidence base will expand upon existing *House of Memories* evaluation studies – pilot SROI analysis undertaken by Wilson and Whelan (2014) indicated a return on investment for the *House of Memories* (Midlands Model) of £1:£8.66. WP3 will be led by Research Fellow Gayle Whelan (GW), with research design informed by established social value methods and SROI protocols, set in the context of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. This WP will also be used by NML to inform the development of a licensed, commercial *House of Memories* offer, inspired by cascaded ‘train the trainer’ models of delivery.



**Figure 3: Crossing Boundaries: the value of museums in dementia care research framework**



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