

Gloucestershire Hospitals



NHS Foundation Trust

embrace
arts and wellbeing

Arts strategy

2015 – 2018



Welcome to our new Arts Strategy

This strategy aims to give our Trust the framework to go forward with our arts programme for the next three years. We aspire to deliver a pioneering, inclusive arts programme that transforms the experience of being in hospital for patients and staff.

Most patients would agree that visiting hospital is inherently stressful. The hospital environment can seem bleak when you're staring at a blank wall or waiting for a doctor in a cramped, dark room. Whether unwell or simply anxious, most people would rather look at a sunny view or watercolour than at a blank wall.

Can a painting, drawing or photograph reduce pain or anxiety? Could patients with art in their environment heal faster? More and more hospitals think so.

We will be looking at some key areas including our Children's Centre and the Oncology Centre as well as commissioning some exciting artworks for our larger common spaces. Investing in the arts allows us to reach out to others in the community so we will also be hosting touring exhibitions that highlight the work of key charities.

We also support the use of participation in art for our patients, which can span a broad range of activities. This has already proven to be very valuable in many areas including our Elderly Care wards.

We seek to provide new situations for contemporary art in our hospitals and, by expanding the ways in which art is experienced, encourage people to broaden their understanding of art.

We have called our arts programme Embrace. It intends to counteract common perceptions of hospitals by conjuring words like warmth, light, colour, calming, soothing and human.

We would like our Embrace programme to be seen as open and inclusive as we look to harness the power that the visual and performing arts can have in relation to wellbeing.

Our arts programme is intended to be far reaching and without restrictions. It's not only about paintings and where they are hung, it's about an overall appreciation of the power of the arts and how they can add to and enhance the experiences of our patients and our staff.

A vibrant, thriving arts programme speaks of a trust that is forward thinking and engaged with its stakeholders, one that fosters a sense of community and ownership and one that takes a more nuanced definition of what it means to make someone well.

Our ambition is to develop our Arts Strategy to embrace all types of art including performing arts, music and the written word.

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Foreword, vision and mission



Introduction from our Chair

Welcome to our first Embrace forward plan for 2015-2018. For a number of years, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has supported the arts in health, working to create an environment that improves the experience of our staff and patients.

Over recent years, there has been a growing understanding of the impact that taking part in the arts can have on health and wellbeing. By supplementing medicine and care, the arts can improve the health of people who experience mental or physical problems. Engaging in the arts can promote healing and promote prevention of disease and build wellbeing. The arts can improve the healthcare environment and benefit staff retention and professional development.

In this Plan, we present the next steps in broadening our focus for arts in health. This involves inclusion of arts to develop a sense of place in the healthcare environment through wayfinding, signage and incorporation of art works into clinical areas as well as non-clinical areas, such as gardens.

It also focuses on the use of participatory arts programmes and art therapy as tools to improve wellbeing and on the opportunities that new innovative approaches to art can bring to healthcare. And finally, we focus on art as a way of engaging with our community to harness the power of art to support community cohesion and to develop a reputation for supporting and showcasing emerging local talent.

This Plan has been developed by the newly formed Arts in Health group which provides a focus for this area of work within the Trust. Led by our Trust Chair, this group reports to the Board and includes representation

from patient experience, clinicians, estates and other staff groups. It is currently funded through a Hospital Charitable Funds reserve.

We know that excellence in healthcare is not solely about the detail of clinical care, or the speed and efficiency of our processes. It is also about the quality and nature of the setting and environment – art and artistic practice are a valuable part of this.

The Plan sets out how we will organise and assess this work for the next three years.

Clair Chilvers

Chair

Gloucestershire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

February 2014

Our vision is to achieve excellence in healthcare through a vibrant catalogue of arts projects which support patient and staff well being.

Our mission is to support artists, partners and our local community in enriching the healthcare environment and furthering their own artistic practice.

Our strategic plan focuses on:

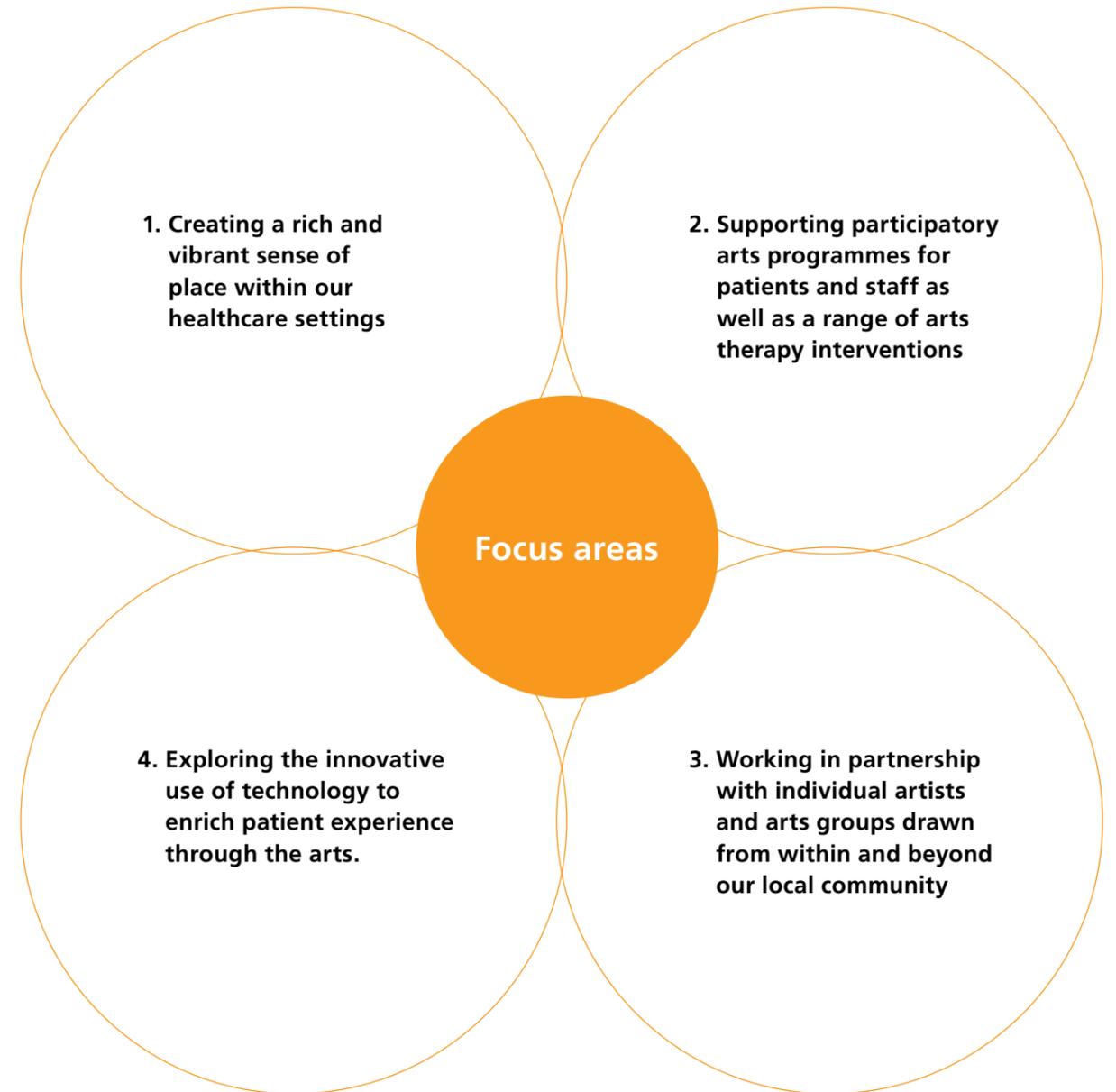
1. Creating a rich and vibrant sense of place within our healthcare settings
2. Supporting participatory arts programmes for patients and staff as well as a range of arts therapy interventions
3. Working in partnership with individual artists and arts groups drawn from within and beyond our local community
4. Exploring the innovative use of technology to enrich patient experience through the arts





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Focus areas



Focus area one: Creating a rich and vibrant sense of place within our healthcare settings

We know that art and design can breathe soul into a building and create a healing environment. We have some established activity that already seeks to do this, but this is not currently drawn together within an overarching plan.

During the plan period we will build on and align these areas of work so that they begin to reinforce one another and form part of a programme of work that we can communicate effectively.

As well as reviewing our current collection of more than 600 artworks, we will also commission new work and make the best use of our four main gallery spaces. We plan to host new exhibitions every three months at our four main galleries.

In addition, we plan to embrace poetry and the performing arts as part of this programme.

Objectives:

- Reviewing and curating the current collection of art within our Trust
- Wayfinding - we know that people use particular works to identify where they are in our hospitals, using them as landmarks and focal points



- Signage - making our collections easier to find
- Use of artworks within our spaces
- Garden design
- Artistic events programme
- Welcoming and supporting touring exhibitions such as 'Keeping Abreast' in October 2015

Focus area two: Supporting participatory arts programmes for patients and staff as well as a range of arts therapy interventions

Participation in the arts can contribute to patient wellbeing and staff enjoyment and motivation.

Our arts projects will build on our successful work with partners and during the plan period we will increase the breadth and range of activities that we offer in this area.

Continuing to support arts projects in the Children's Centre and Oncology is vital. Oncology has been blazing a trail in developing a participatory arts programme for patients, carers and staff, including drop-in artist-led workshops. Over the next three years we will look to identify the particular needs of other departments and tailor programmes to fit accordingly.

Local programme ArtLift has shown that the creation of visual art can help patients with depression and music in particular has been shown to connect with dementia patients.

There are many opportunities for us to explore and the challenge will be to secure funding to enable us to deliver these programmes.



Objectives:

- "Showing your Age"
- Art volunteering
- Art therapy in stroke and elderly care areas
- Artworks - this staff art exhibition has proved a huge success inside and outside the Trust and has become an annual show
- Music therapy
- Embrace performing arts

Focus area three: Working in partnership with individuals and groups drawn from within and beyond our local community

Art can form a valuable conduit to our local community. Our gallery spaces provide an opportunity to engage with and work with artists living and working locally as well as students from a variety of schools and colleges.

We will make the most of this by:

Making best use of our entire assets including our gallery spaces; building on existing partnerships with Cheltenham Open Studios and Carers Gloucestershire; increasing the range of partners that we work with to include schools, higher and further education institutions.

We are expanding our network of partnerships to include relationships with The Wilson (Cheltenham's Art Gallery and Museum) and with the Fine Art Department at the University of Gloucestershire.

Objectives:

- Develop a long term programme of exhibitions for our four gallery spaces
- The Link Gallery; The Star Gallery; Fosters Gallery; The Atrium Gallery
- Explore the scope of our spaces for performing arts and form the necessary partnerships with local groups



- Continue the successful Medicine Unboxed partnership
- Commissioning 'Gift of Life', a permanent installation to celebrate organ donation to be installed in the atrium of Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Focus area four: Exploring the innovative use of technology to enrich patient experience through the arts.

Our ways of interacting with the world are changing incredibly rapidly with the onset of new technologies. New technologies open up new possibilities as well as offering easier access to forms of creative self-expression for more people.

In time, these will have a fundamental impact on many aspects of healthcare. We will use our arts programme to explore these themes and enhance our ability to engage with our key audience groups.

A pilot programme will begin in the Oncology Department in autumn 2015, using digital screen and web-based technologies to create a rolling programme of remotely curated exhibitions, video and news.

Objectives:

- Work with the Public Catalogue Foundation to enable digital display of artworks
- Exploring how technology can enable patients with specific needs to engage in artistic practice.
- Work with local partners, especially organisations representing young people, to experiment with new technologies.





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Monitoring our progress

Within the plan we will monitor a number of qualitative measures to track outcomes arising from our focus areas. We recognise that not all impacts of our work will be measurable. Equally some are likely to emerge some considerable time after and the direct link may be difficult to track.

We will actively use the information collected to develop and refine our strategies, and to communicate the achievements and outcomes that result from our focus.

What we want to achieve

Indicators of progress

Creating a rich and vibrant sense of place within our healthcare settings.

- Enhanced level of informed awareness of the Embrace programme
- Enhanced use of evidence base to direct areas of focus

Supporting participatory arts programmes for patients and staff as well as a range of arts therapy interventions

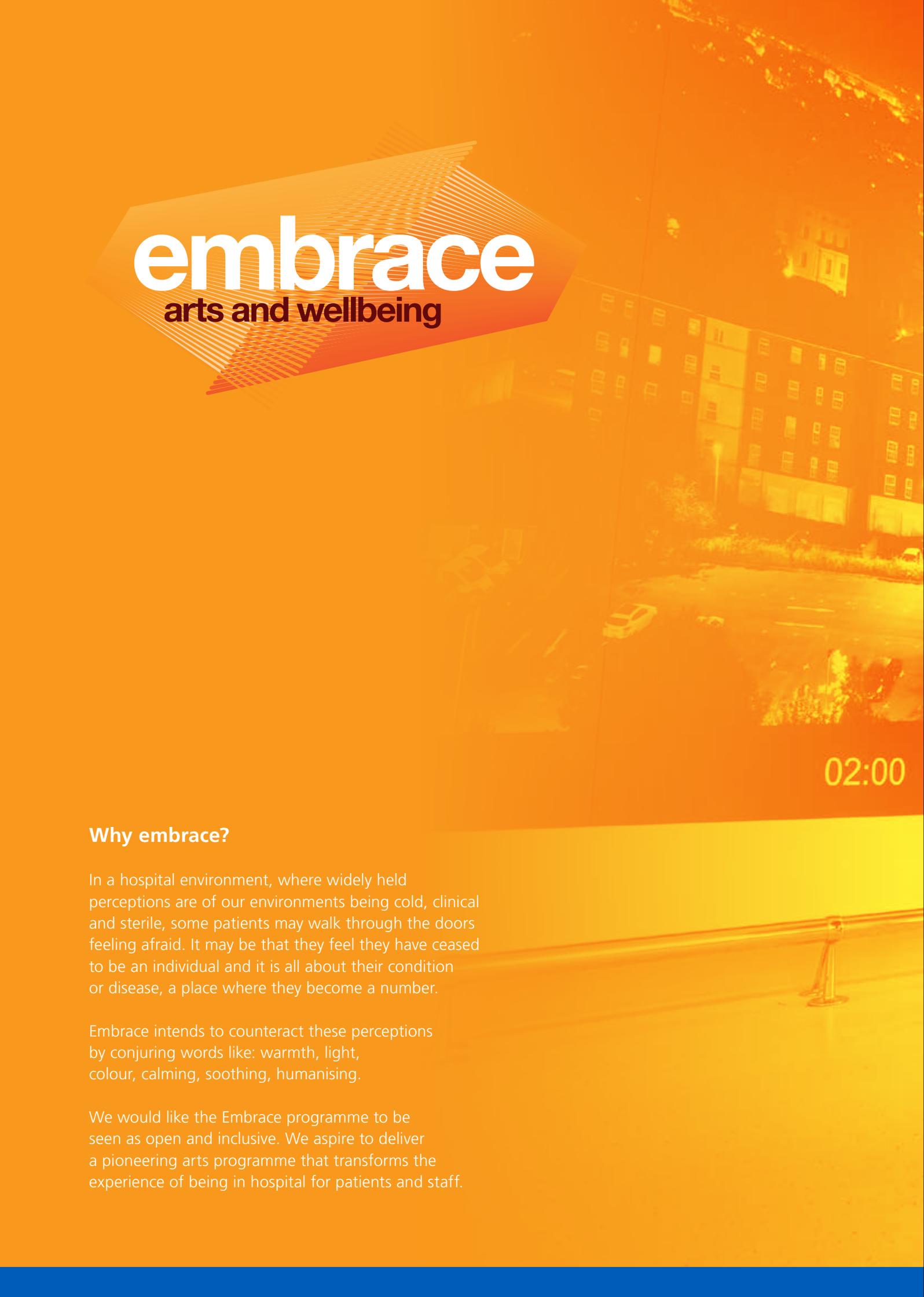
- Achievement of an increase in the range and scale of interventions

Working in partnership with individual artists and arts groups drawn from within and beyond our local community

- Significant engagement of key audiences and increased audience reach

Exploring the innovative use of technology to enrich patient experience through the arts.

- Undertake one or more trial programmes
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Why embrace?

In a hospital environment, where widely held perceptions are of our environments being cold, clinical and sterile, some patients may walk through the doors feeling afraid. It may be that they feel they have ceased to be an individual and it is all about their condition or disease, a place where they become a number.

Embrace intends to counteract these perceptions by conjuring words like: warmth, light, colour, calming, soothing, humanising.

We would like the Embrace programme to be seen as open and inclusive. We aspire to deliver a pioneering arts programme that transforms the experience of being in hospital for patients and staff.