



# Arts Psychotherapies

towards relational health

## Our Impact 2025





# Arts Psychotherapies Service

## Our Report Card 2025

Capacity	36 Arts Psychotherapists providing 24 whole time equivalent posts		
Provision	Arts-based accessible psychological therapy using a Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT) Framework. Individual and groupwork across Adult and CAMHS secondary care Community and Inpatient Mental Health Services		
Who we have seen	In year 2024/25 the team overall has provided 9,000 patient contacts, which are offered in different ways in each team (Inpatient, Community CAMHS) for people experiencing highly complex levels of mental distress		
Ways we have helped	Being interested in you as a whole person	89%	
	Helping you to take control	89%	
	Making a plan of action for you	88%	

reported outcome of treatment as % of completed arts psychotherapies patient feedback form 2024/25

# Arts Psychotherapies Service

## Our Impact from Relational Injury to Relational Health

We offer accessible arts-based psychological therapies across NHS Lothian with joint status as both Psychological Professions and clinicians under the leadership of the Allied Health Professions (AHPs). We comprise Art Psychotherapists, Music Therapists and Dramatherapists registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC).

Our patients with secondary care needs exhibit moderate to severe symptoms of mental distress, including people that attract a diagnosis of personality disorder (EUPD). They have often experienced significant adverse life events and self report difficulties in emotional-regulation, anxiety, self-harm and maintaining their sense of self and relational capacity.

In treatment we aim to encourage relational thinking and awareness for our patients, where mutually satisfying relationships with others are necessary for their ability to live safe and fulfilling lives. We provide accessible psychological interventions, which through the use of the arts form are not reliant on patients being able to find the right words for the right help. We take a psychodynamic approach to therapy within a Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT) framework that best meets the complex needs faced by our patients.

We aim for patients to find greater stability in themselves with an improved understanding of their condition and why they might be in treatment. We aim to improve their capacity to engage relationally beyond hospital and community mental health services with others that can help sustain them in the long term, including community arts-in-health programmes.



# Arts Psychotherapies Service

## Our Feedback from our Patients

### Improved Emotional Regulation

Patients mention learning to manage and understand their emotions better, such as dealing with anxiety, anger, and depression

### Increased Confidence

Responses indicate that arts psychotherapy has helped patients feel more confident in various aspects of their lives.

### Positive Behavioural Changes

Patients mention adopting new strategies and behaviours that help them cope better with their conditions, such as thinking more positively and approaching situations differently.

### Social Interaction

Therapy sessions provide opportunities for social interaction, which helps patients feel more connected and less isolated.

### Self-Realisation and Personal Growth

Patients often mention gaining insights into themselves and their conditions, leading to personal growth and self-realisation.

### Improved Coping Mechanisms

Therapy helps patients develop better coping mechanisms to deal with their challenges, such as using music or art to manage their emotions.

### Enhanced Self-Expression

Respondents highlight the ability to express themselves through art, music, and other therapeutic activities, which helps them communicate their feelings and thoughts more effectively.

*Based on 160 Arts Psychotherapies patient feedback forms 2024-2025. Thematic analysis in response to the statement 'since the experience of Arts Psychotherapy I do the following differently ...'*

# Arts Psychotherapies Service

## Our Patient Contacts

### Our Inpatient Team

have provided around 5,000 contacts in group or individual session format. These sessions are available to anyone on the ward and can be requested by patients or staff. There are no waiting times and sessions are provided on the same day each week. The team support with Continuous Interventions and actively reduce stress and distress. The Mental Welfare Commission (MWC) give consistent feedback on our person-centred approach and the excellent quality of documentation as part of the patient's care planning process.

### Our Community Team

have provided over a 1,000 patient contacts for planned interventions including psycho-education groups, brief interventions and longer Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT) informed attachment-based work for those who attract a personality disorder diagnosis. DNA (Did Not Attend the session without warning) rates are around 6% - well below average for psychological therapies.

### Our CAMHS Teams

have provided over 3,000 contacts, taking young people directly from the waiting list, using arts for specific interventions and core work. Again, DNA rates are around 6% and **WEMWBS** (The Warwick & Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) shows 70% of people showing statistically meaningful positive change.

### Our collaborative approach

We work closely with our multi-disciplinary colleagues and community-based arts in health colleagues to support discharge into meaningful activities which support making social connections. We consistently use feedback, standardised outcome measures and personalised measures to monitor therapeutic change. We collate Mental Welfare Commission reports to follow adherence to organisation and national expectations and cross reference **WEMWBS** (The Warwick & Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) scores against population averages (c. 52- 47.00)



# Arts Psychotherapies Service

## Our Growing Capacity

We have a team of 38 HCPC registered Therapists providing 24 whole time equivalent posts, with an additional 12 trainee posts, as one of the largest NHS Arts Psychotherapies service in the UK. We aim to provide at least 1 day of therapeutic input per inpatient mental health ward and 2 days of input for each community mental health team that we support.

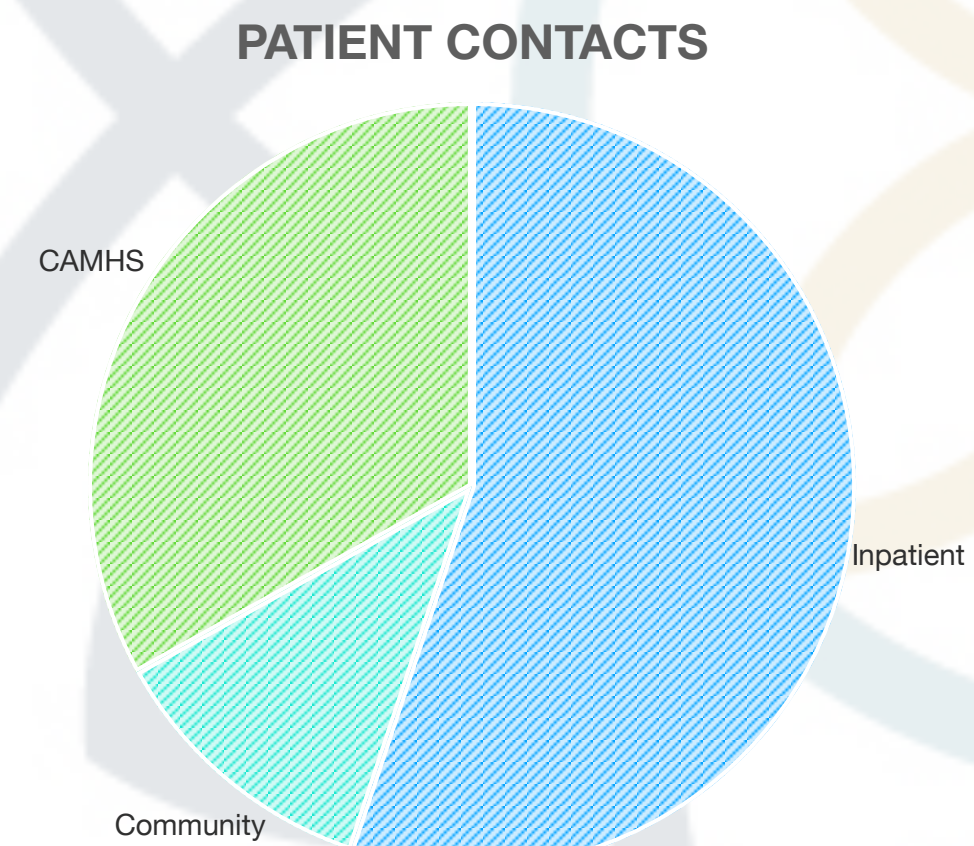
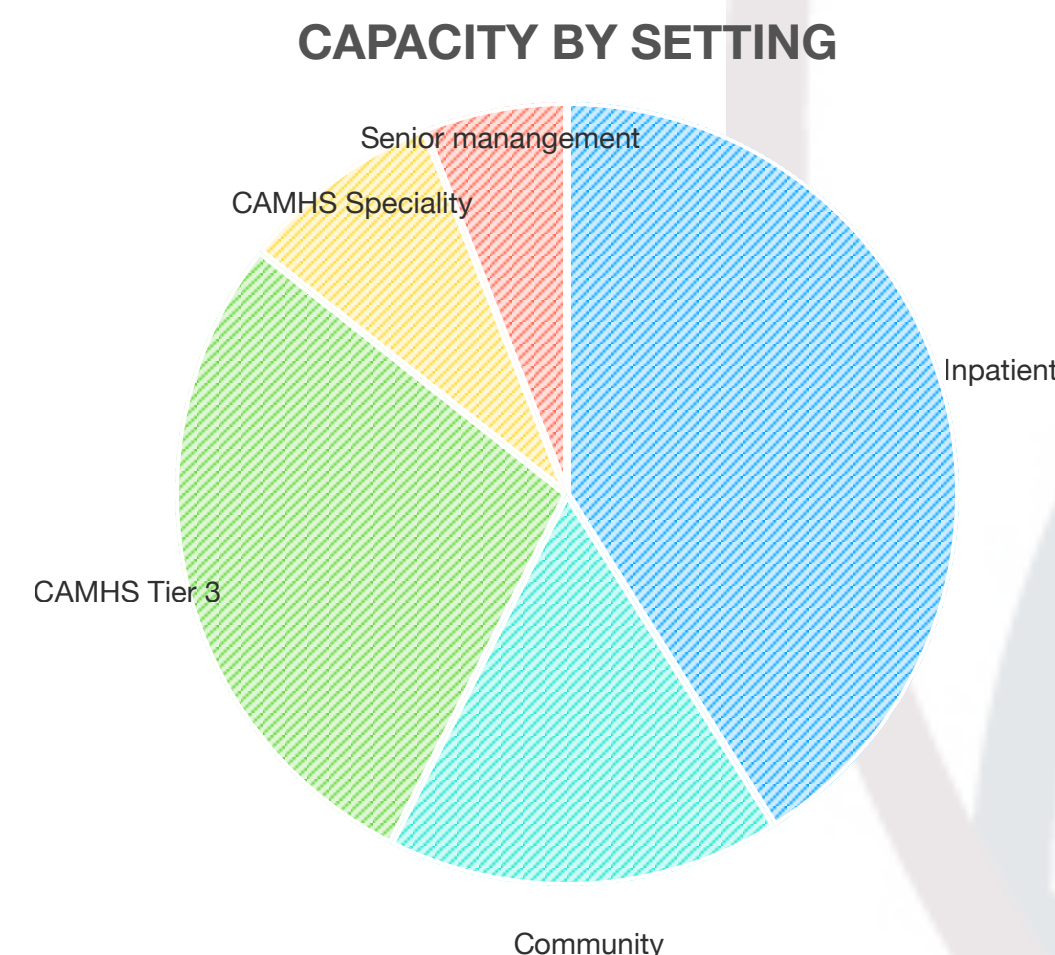
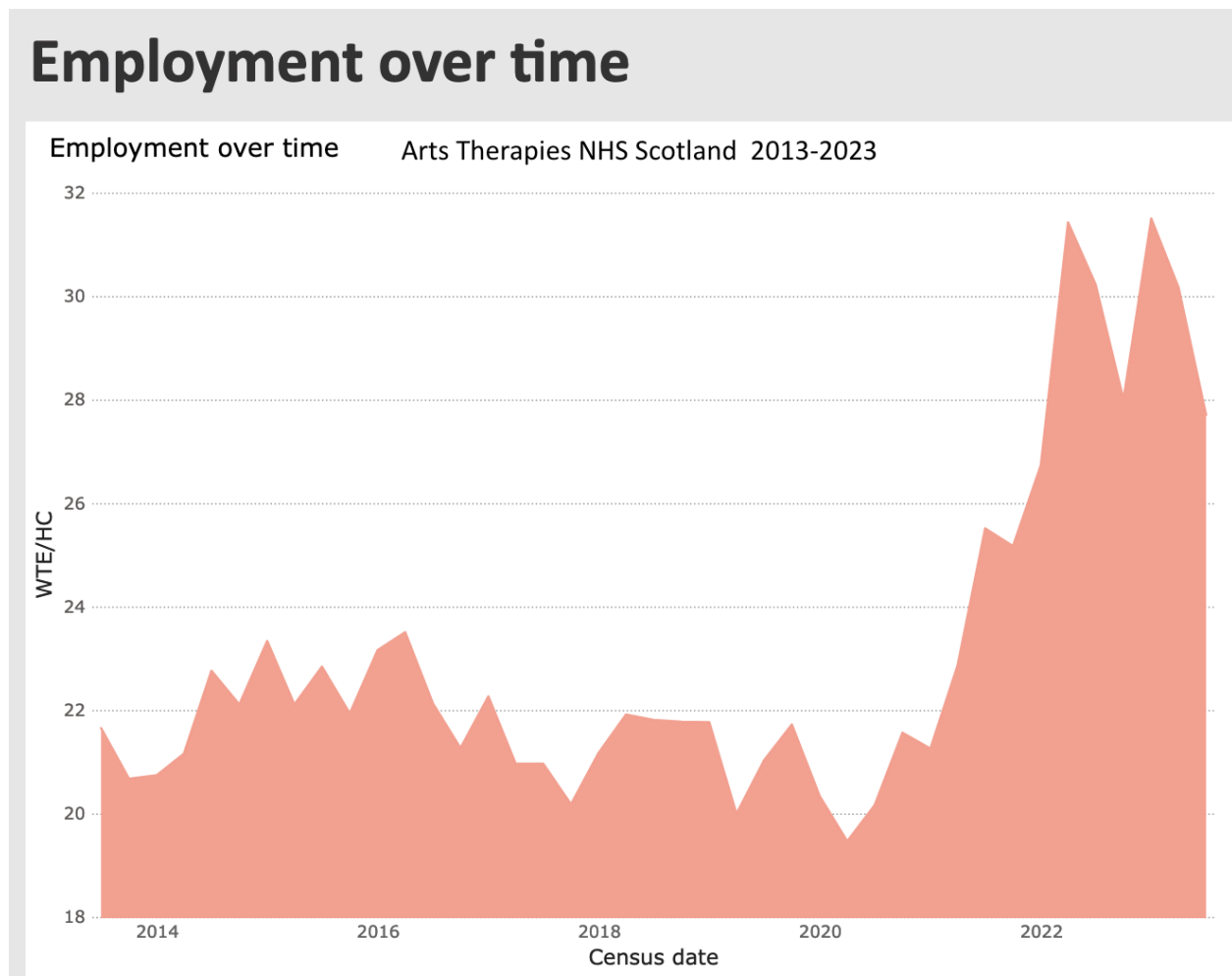
**CAMHS Community Team**  
**CAMHS Speciality Team**  
**Adult Inpatient Team**  
**Adult Community Team**

Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian (Tier 3)

Inpatient and Psychological Liaison

Acute, Rehabilitation, IHTT, Intellectual Disability, Forensics and national Brain Injury Service

Edinburgh & East Lothian Community Mental Health, EUPD pathway and Eating Disorders



# Arts Psychotherapies Service

## Our Strategic Priorities

### Right Care, Right Time

We focus on providing high quality, evidence based, psychological interventions especially to those with complex needs and at risk of encountering barriers accessing services which meet their needs at the right time.

### Nourishment, Training & Development

The whole team are trained to at least Basic level Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT) (adult, family, children, adolescent, AMBIT) to ensure that they are highly skilled and effective. MBT is a gold standard intervention for people whose lives are severely impacted by the effects of emotional dysregulation.

### Support & Wellbeing

All staff have a minimum of monthly psychodynamic clinical supervision and have access to monthly MBT skills sessions. The inpatient team also have access to weekly reflective practice for 12 months.

### Future Strategy

Develop increased confidence in clinical work - be clear about what we do and what we don't do  
Greater integration of outcome evaluation, research and innovation into delivery of treatments  
Improved accessibility to at least two modalities of Art Therapy, and Music Therapy to all inpatients



# Arts Psychotherapies Service

For some patients, Arts Therapies were more helpful than anything else for their health and wellbeing, and so there was a strong desire for as much access as possible. As Arts Therapies are so highly valued by so many patients in the hospital it should be a priority for these services to be maintained and expanded.

Royal Edinburgh Hospital Patient Council - Patient Experience Report

## Our Feedback from Mental Welfare Commission reports

In particular, individuals spoke positively about the psychological therapies available in the ward, music and art therapy. One individual commented that they “found talking difficult” and engaging in music therapy provided them with an opportunity to express and explore their emotions, thoughts and feelings. Rehab Wards REH April 2025

Individuals and staff spoke very positively about having access to both art and music psychotherapy as they promoted a whole systems approach necessary to support individuals in rehabilitation services meet their care, treatment and support outcomes. We heard from individuals and staff that regular access to music therapy supported their emotional, cognitive and social needs by offering a safe and supportive environment for promoting well-being. Rehab Wards REH April

We were impressed with the quality of the recording of the one-to-one art psychotherapy sessions which were comprehensive, strengths-based, included the young person’s views of the intervention and a plan for the next session.

CAMHS Melville Unit RIE July 2024



# Medical staff said ...

*It was interesting to be able to join the music therapist today. It helped me to appreciate the technique underlying the session. For example when the patients were encouraged to play freely on the instruments one of them performed a noticeably intense 'angry' drum section. This then led to a discussion of the emotions underlying this and aided in processing and moving forwards.*

**Adult Acute Ward**

*It has been really wonderful working with your team, I wish we'd worked together more! Your team is wonderful, some of the best joint-working I've had the pleasure of being a part of.*

**CAMHS Inpatient ward**

*Attended an art therapy session on one of the wards. I was able to see how the psychotherapists interact with patients and support them in their rehabilitation. The psychotherapist talked through how she assessed patients and how a lot of small actions can be analysed to give better insight to a patient's thinking and mindset. This was really useful to hear, and I understand how valuable these sessions can be to both the patients and the doctors. Engagement, for example, can be a useful factor for doctors to assess progress - and the patients feel more able to express themselves.*

**Adult Acute Ward**

*The development of art and music therapy over the last few years has been one of the most positive things for engaging folk on the wards. It is part of NICE and SIGN guidance for this group!!*

**Rehab Wards**



# Patients said ...

*I feel that throughout our sessions ... has pushed and encouraged me to reflect on situations in a different perspective which has really helped me overcome a lot of trauma I've been working on for years. I feel that these sessions of art therapy have helped me progress so much further and I feel that is down to the compassion, time, kindness and space that ... has showed from our first session*

*I do near enough everything differently...I am kinder to myself and mentalising to not create uncomfortable environments for others – able to explain things a lot clearer*

Community Team

*I feel in tune and accepted (Rehab)*

*Express my mind's image and what life feels like at the moment for me (Acute)*

Therapist has helped me:  
*Be more confident with my art making and build relationships within the group (Rehab)*

*I feel ... definitely suggested tools that will help me on my journey to walk alongside anxiety. I cannot thank her enough (OAMH)*

I am socially anxious. I feel I can come to sessions and not feel I have to talk all the time. Art making helps with this. (REHAB)

Since coming to Arts Psychotherapiies I do the following differently: (CAMHS)

*"I understand why feelings happen and I can be more honest in talking about how I feel :)*

*Art Psychotherapy gave me confidence and gave me a voice (OPMH)*





Cover photo Benjamin Wedemeyer

