

MEDIA RELEASE

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Leicester arts roadshow celebrates NHS 70-year history



A unique arts exhibition celebrating the 70-year history of the NHS has been unveiled in Leicester before embarking on a county-wide NHS roadshow.

Paintings, sketches and poetry feature among more than 60 pieces of work now on display at the Attenborough Arts Centre on Lancaster Road, in Leicester.

The work was created by mental health service user artists who attend the ArtSpace arts project, based at The Attenborough Arts Centre. The project is delivered by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) in collaboration with BrightSparks: Arts in Mental Health Group.

Artists worked with participatory artist Scott Bridgwood to produce the works on display, with funding from Attenborough Arts Centre and the University of Leicester.

They are now displayed as a 'walk-round timeline' celebrating key highlights of the 70-year NHS story, including:

- Its creation, through the vision of its creator, the health minister Aneurin ‘Nye’ Bevan who inaugurated the service on 5 July 1948 in Manchester
- The development of the first polio and diphtheria vaccinations a decade later
- The birth of Louise Brown, the first ‘test tube baby’ in 1978
- The launch of NHS Digital in 1998
- The creation of the first ‘walk in’ centres in 2000



The exhibition was opened by Michaela Butter, Director of the Attenborough Arts Centre, as part of a special celebration event, with specially commissioned performances of poetry and music also taking place.

Tim Sayers, one of LPT’s arts in mental health co-ordinators, said: “We’re proud of the quality of the work on display and the positive perception of mental health that the

exhibition will inspire in visitors as it tours its different venues.”

The exhibition roadshow will move to the Bradgate Mental Health Unit on 1 July, where it will form one of the central features of NHS at 70 celebrations by LPT. It will then transfer to the reception area of Westcotes Health Centre in the city, with a smaller satellite exhibition at the Evington Centre on the Leicester General Hospital site.



Plans are also in hand for the exhibition to transfer to the Leicester Royal Infirmary where it will be mounted as a long-term display in the hospital’s well-known long connecting corridor after the NHS at 70 celebrations.

Photo captions:

TOP: Pictured at the launch of the *70 Years of the NHS* exhibition are (front left to right) artist Jane Knight, Attenborough Arts Centre director Michaela Butter, participatory artist Scott Bridgwood, (back left to right) Dr Karolin Kroese, community engagement officer for the University of Leicester College of Life Sciences, Tim Sayers, arts in mental health co-ordinator for LPT, artist Richard Abraham and Marianne Pape, education and outreach officer at Attenborough Arts Centre.

- CENTRE:** 1. Artist Jane Knight with her painting marking the birth of the first test tube baby
2. Artist Richard Abraham with his dramatic painting depicting the first diphtheria and polio vaccinations.

OVERLEAF: Montage of some of the exhibits

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. **Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)** provides community health, mental health and learning disabilities services for the one million people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We have a budget in excess of £275 million and employ approximately 5,500 staff. For more information visit: www.leicspart.nhs.uk

2. **Raising Health** is our registered charity (number 1057361) which raises funds to support LPT's excellent care initiatives, equipment and innovations which go above and beyond core NHS provision, to enhance the experience of our patients, service users and staff. www.raisinghealth.org.uk

For further information contact: Sheila Ashton, communications manager for adult mental health and learning disabilities services Tel: 0116 295 0042, Email: sheila.ashton@leicspart.nhs.uk or Sophie Ion, external communications officer, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Tel: 0116 295 0994, E: sophie.ion@leicspart.nhs.uk