

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL VETERANS ARTS MUSEUM



The Veterans' Compensation and Rehabilitation Inquiry
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City
ACT 2604

9 March 2019

Dear Commissioners,

Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans

The *Australian National Veterans Arts Museum* (ANVAM) is a cultural institution, charity and Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) working with current serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members, veterans and families across the military continuum. ANVAM employs the creative arts in an Arts and Museums for Health and Wellbeing engagement framework to relieve the suffering of veterans and veteran-families in the areas of mental, social and physical health.

ANVAM is pleased to make this submission to the Productivity Commission under its current review into compensation and rehabilitation for veterans. The focus of this submission is on the role and value of facilitated arts engagement in supporting veterans and families.

Yours respectfully,

Mark Johnston
Chairman and Director

Submission: Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans

INFORMATION REQUEST 6.2

The Commission is seeking further views on the potential use of consumer-directed care for the rehabilitation services provided to veterans, or on alternatives for providing more tailored, person-centred rehabilitation services.

The purpose of this submission is to inform the Commission of the framework developed by the *Australian National Veterans Arts Museum* (ANVAM) to promote wellbeing through the current and ex-serving community and their families (the veteran community) *as an alternative providing more tailored, person-centred rehabilitation services*. ANVAM's framework supports the improvement of health and wellbeing through an arts-based approach evidenced by the [National Arts and Health Framework](#)¹, which is further supported by the [Arts, Health and Wellbeing Across the Military Continuum - White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action](#)², and numerous other sources^{3 4} and testimonials^{5 6}.

Importantly there is a clear distinction between rehabilitation and treatment⁷ and the role of art therapy in treatment, in particular for Post-Traumatic Stress, is developing an evidence base.

In developing its own distinct model within the Australian context, ANVAM encompasses and looks beyond these well-established frameworks, to embrace the role of 'place'. The evidence for this is compelling and includes worlds' best practice social prescribing^{8 9 10} and arts-on-prescription. Cultural institutions and places of cultural significance are immersive - building creativity, self-expression, identity, agency, purpose and hope for individuals and communities¹¹.

1

<http://www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Portals/0/National%20Arts%20and%20Health%20Framework.pdf>

2

http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2013/by_program/legislation_and_policy/art_and_military/ArtsHealthwellbeingWhitePaper.pdf

³ <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/CF-Clinical-Research-Framework-and-Agenda-6.26.18.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/17454832.2016.1170055>

⁵ <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP06/20190226/108950/HHRG-116-AP06-Wstate-StoweM-20190226.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-15676268>

⁷ <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2017-53954-001>

⁸ <https://museumsandwellbeingalliance.wordpress.com/links/>

⁹ <http://healthland.time.com/2011/05/24/for-men-good-health-may-be-found-at-the-museum/>

¹⁰ http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry/Publications/Creative_Health_Inquiry_Report_2017.pdf

¹¹ <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/museums-they-re-good-for-your-health>

A review of the evidence for the longitudinal effects of the arts on health has concluded that “the research demonstrates a positive association between engagement in high quality arts activities and life expectancy, disease resistance, and mental acuity”.

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ANVAM’s person-centred¹³ framework has been developed by Masters’ qualified creative arts therapists¹⁴.

ANVAM’s arts engagement programs are outcomes focused. The ultimate intended outcome of ANVAM’s framework is the wellbeing of members of the veteran community, which is enshrined in the primary objective of ANVAM’s constitution¹⁵. This objective mirrors the Commissions own overarching goal for the veteran support system, whose essence ‘*should be to improve the lives or wellbeing of veterans and their families*’.

In the several years since its establishment ANVAM has delivered on its role as a PBI supporting many in the veteran community in their rehabilitation; improving and enriching their own quality of life and build social networks that will sustain themselves and others into the future. The potential impact from ANVAM as a museum for the veteran community is in a range of areas directly relevant to the Commissions review¹⁶.

As a cultural institution ANVAM utilises its arts-based framework, together with the Dimensions of the Veteran Community (Figure 1), across and by linking the Wellbeing, Arts and Military Continuums (Figure 3). This framework is inclusive of

¹² <https://www.bmj.com/content/352/bmj.i1641>

¹³ ANVAM defines Person-Centred as the care or treatment based on the goals of the individual being supported. (see footnote 2 Pg 52)

¹⁴ Masters degree in Art Therapy with a minimum of 750 hours supervised clinical placement. Note: This qualification is equivalent to other mental health professions recognized in the Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS) including social work, psychology and occupational therapy (<https://ahpa.com.au/allied-health-professions/art-therapy/>) with Standards of Professional Practice and Code of Ethics (https://www.anzacata.org/resources/Files/3_ABOUT/ANZACATA_CodeofEthics.pdf).

Note: An emerging trend to employ art with vulnerable populations and labelling the activity as art therapy or as therapeutic, including rehabilitation, is of concern when it is not designed, overseen and/or facilitated by qualified creative arts therapists. The emergence of the use of ‘buzz-words’ implying that an activity has ‘therapeutic’ or ‘mindfulness’ benefits, or that an arts activity/class is the same as art therapy, may be misleading, and even dangerous, without oversight and/or delivery by mental health professionals qualified in the use of creative ‘tools’ in the health and wellbeing context. Arts educators or practitioners who perceive a therapeutic benefit, while being careful to say the activity is not ‘art therapy’, may be emboldened to use misleading language. To provide structure and ensure a safe environment national legislation is needed to regulate the sector and how it is promoted to the community.

¹⁵ The primary object is to promote the health and wellbeing of wounded or ill current and former members of Australia’s military and family members via facilitated arts programs, art exhibitions and arts events.

¹⁶ <https://www.museumnext.com/2019/02/how-museums-are-helping-homeless-people/>

the veteran community regardless of personal situation. ANVAM's framework provides early intervention in a context that reduces stigma.

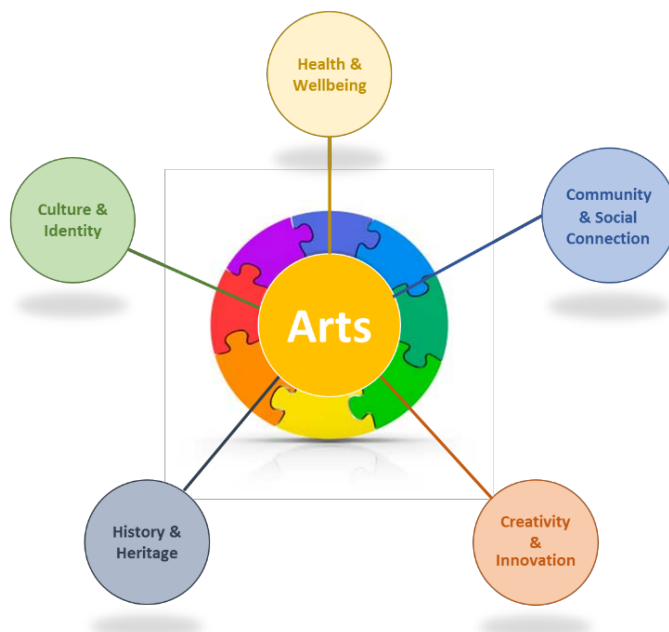


Figure 1: Dimensions of the Veteran Community & the Arts

To elucidate the interaction of these dimensions, ANVAM's framework is aligned to *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* (Figure 2). The Aspen Foundation's review into the needs of the veteran community also drew upon Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs¹⁷. Aspen's review emphasized that *'there is clearly a requirement for individualised approaches to suit the specific needs of each veteran and family'* (Pg.15). This is reflected in ANVAM's tailored programs within the person-centred framework that complements and works collaboratively alongside existing veteran services.

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<https://www.aspenfoundation.org.au/sites/default/files/Final%20Report%20%28Main%20Doc%29%201.6b.pdf> (Pg. 13)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

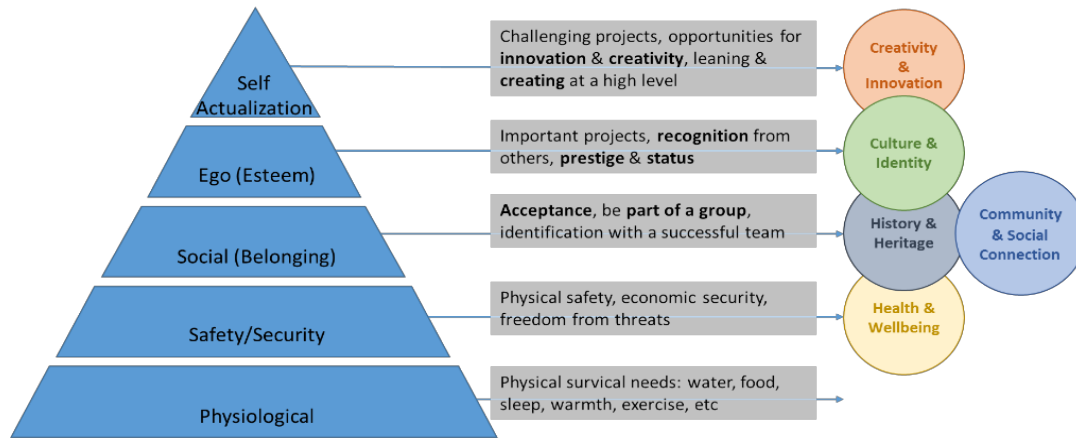


Figure 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs & Dimensions of Veteran Community

Two continua characterize the veteran community. The 'military'² continuum representing life span and the wellbeing continuum, which includes physical, social and mental wellbeing¹⁸.

To support rehabilitation, i.e. the improvement of health and wellbeing, for individuals on these continua, ANVAM's person-centred framework engages a third continuum, the Arts¹⁹.

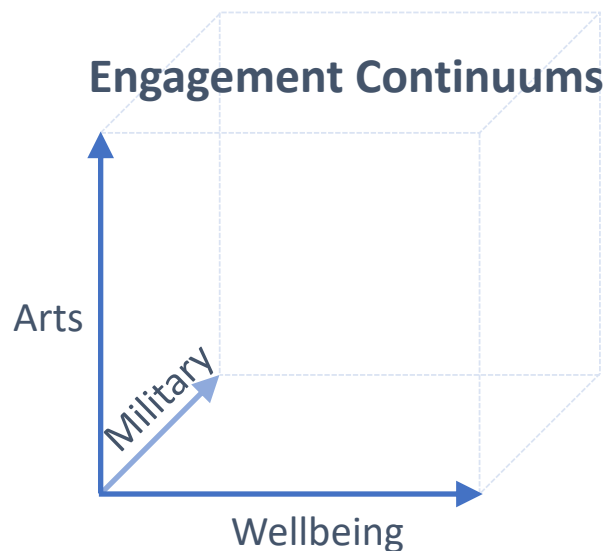


Figure 3: Engagement Continuums

¹⁸ WHO, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

https://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/

¹⁹ An example of the Arts continuum was the recent *From War* exhibition at the Australian Parliament House. The exhibition included veteran artists who had not exhibited works, as well as an Archibald Prize winning artist and a Fine Arts PhD student.

<https://www.aph.gov.au/Visit Parliament/Whats On/Exhibitions/Custom Media/From War>

These three continua are representative of the breadth of application of ANVAM's person-centred framework in support of rehabilitation outcomes. The framework also emphasizes community and contributes to the ANVAM mentoring program similar to DVA's community and peer program²⁰.

Arts based engagement programs follow three stages; 1. needs analysis and design, 2. oversight and 3. delivery. ANVAM's arts facilitators are involved in at least two of these three stages in working toward rehabilitation outcomes. Program evaluation is a key component to ensure ongoing relevance, effectiveness, improvement and development.

ANVAM programs facilitate opportunities to establish and strengthen social connection across the continua. A recent ANVAM arts engagement brought together members of the veteran community including, but not limited to:

- Tri-services
- current, ex-serving and family members
- male and female
- aged (over 90) through to younger members (under 30)
- full-time and reserve military
- war and operationally experienced alongside non-operational service
- Totally & Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) alongside full-time employed
- self-trained veteran artists alongside veteran art students and established veteran artists recognised in the Australian honours system.

This approach and focus resulted in new relationships and support groups where veterans continue to work together following their engagement with ANVAM, in a veteran support system (peer) context, independent of ANVAM's ongoing support²¹ while demonstrating improvements in wellbeing.



Figure 4: *From War* exhibition artists and curator

In the words of one veteran who participated in ***From War***,

“Words will never express how much of an honour tonight has been. To all those who put in the hard yards at Australian National Veterans Arts Museum to enable these kinds of opportunities for Veterans from all eras, thank you.

²⁰ http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/2019/feb/va014.htm

²¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-47374019>

Community is so important. Community is how we share our individual stories and how we find our own ways to move forward and the community @anvam310 is working towards creating will be integral in developing, nurturing and ensuring the stories of our veterans will continue to be shared. Thank you."

In its draft report the Commission suggests that *"The overarching objective of the veteran support system should be to improve the lives or wellbeing of veterans and their families."* (Pg12) As stated, this objective mirrors a major tenet of the ANVAM constitution.

ANVAM reflects the Commission's approach to this objective as follows²²:

1. Preventing and minimising injury and illness.

ANVAM's person-centred approach works to support this outcome in the following ways:

- a. *Military Continuum.* ANVAM's framework applies across the Military Continuum. Early exposure to facilitated arts engagement provides the opportunity for preventative engagement with ANVAM. Early engagement may also assist in minimizing injury and illness.

Arts engagement provides a range of benefits that contribute to prevention. These include physical and cognitive activity, social engagement and creative expression.
- b. *Reduced Stigma.* Facilitated arts programs offer the veteran community an environment with reduced stigma and one that builds social networks and cohesion.
- c. *Arts Engagement.* Creative arts engagement can build resilience, enhance coping, reduce hospital stays and increase self-esteem and self-efficacy. ANVAM's framework is as a facilitator, catalyst and enabler where, in ANVAM's experience, veterans may express reluctance to engage in the arts or seek support more broadly.
- d. *Social Prescribing.* Social prescribing is an integrative approach to addressing a range of issues commonly reported to general practitioners. Arts-based social prescribing may deliver physical activity (dance & movement) or community engagement with a focus on preventing or reducing injury. Figure 5 provides a broad summary of social prescribing outcomes²³. ANVAM's framework aligns to a social prescribing and arts on prescription model.

²² The Commissions points are itemised in bold

²³

<https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk/download/f3cf4b949511304f762bdec137844251031072697ae511a462eac9150d6ba8e0/1340196/Making-sense-of-social-prescribing%202017.pdf>

Physical and emotional health & wellbeing	Cost effectiveness & sustainability	Builds up local community	Behaviour Change	Capacity to build up the VCSE	Social determinants of ill-health
Improves resilience	Prevention	Increases awareness of what is available	Lifestyle	More volunteering	Better employability
Self-confidence	Reduction in frequent primary care use	Stronger links between VCSE & HCP bodies	Sustained change	Volunteer graduates running schemes	Reduced isolation
Self-esteem	Savings across the care pathway	Community resilience	Ability to self-care	Addressing unmet needs of patients	Social welfare law advice
Improves modifiable lifestyle factors	Reduced prescribing of medicines	Nuture community assets	Autonomy	Enhance social infrastructure	Reach marginalised groups
Improves mental health			Activation		Increase skills
Improves quality of life			Motivation		
			Learning new skills		

Figure 5: Social Prescribing outcomes

VCSE = Voluntary and Community Sector HCP = Healthcare Professionals

2. Restoring injured and ill veterans by providing timely and effective rehabilitation and health care so they can participate in employment and life

- a. *Early intervention and reduced stigma.* This is a core goal of ANVAM's framework. It is achieved by seeding and nurturing the availability of arts engagement across the veteran community and military continuum. ANVAM's cultural institution status is integral to this goal of increasing the conversation and understanding of the role and value of the cultural sector for rehabilitation through social prescribing and other means. ANVAM adds to the tools available to the medical system to support individual (i.e. veteran). ANVAM's framework promotes an integrated early and ongoing approach.
- b. *Arts-based physical, mental and social rehabilitation.* The arts offer a range of mediums (e.g. visual arts, creative writing and performance arts) that can be called upon to meet the needs of individuals in the veteran community. ANVAM's arts facilitators design person-centred programs in partnership with other support mechanisms.

3. Providing effective transition support for veterans and their families.

ANVAM supports transitioning veterans and families through arts-based programs with the primary focus on identity.

4. Enabling opportunities for social integration.

ANVAM enables, facilitates and supports social integration through place-based arts engagement. ANVAM's programs support veterans in a range of environments, locally, nationally and internationally whereby arts engagement provides static and/or dynamic environments to showcase

interests, share stories of lived experiences, promote empathy and empowerment as a tool for social integration and to explore creativity²⁴.

5. **Providing adequate and appropriate compensation for veterans (or, if the veteran dies, their family) for pain and suffering and lost income from service-related harm.**

Financial supports are out of scope for ANVAM. ANVAM may, however, provide support in and around pain and suffering.

The Commission also identifies that the veteran support system should be:

1. **Wellness-focused.** ANVAM's facilitators are trauma-informed and work from a strengths-based approach to aid rehabilitation.

ANVAM is a cultural institution dedicated to veterans' wellbeing and that embodies wellness²⁵.

2. **Equitable.** ANVAM is founded on the principle that all veterans matter. Regardless of type or length of service, rank or service experience ANVAM seeks to support all veterans and families and ensure an environment where all in the veteran community are valued.

3. **Veteran-centric.** ANVAM was established as a cultural institution for the wellbeing of the veteran community and understands the unique needs that result from service. These unique needs and lived experiences warrant a dedicated approach whereby the arts play a role in and beyond veterans-centric rehabilitation and support²⁶.

4. **Needs-based.** ANVAM's framework is flexible across the spectrum of needs through tailored arts engagement programs and throughout the Engagement Continua, which allows a prioritization to where the needs are greatest. ANVAM's framework is infinitely adaptable to the needs of the individual.

5. **Evidence-based.** ANVAM's arts engagement framework is founded on an evidence base that points to the positive wellbeing outcomes through arts engagement^{27 28 29 30 31}. Other references have been cited elsewhere in this

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https://www.nzherald.co.nz/entertainment/news/article.cfm?c_id=1501119&objectid=12056256

²⁵ www.anvam.org.au

²⁶ The Dimensions of the Veteran Community (Figure 1) and the Engagement Continua (Figure 3) referenced above, illustrate awareness and approach to working with the veteran community.

²⁷ <https://culturecase.org/research-category/health-wellbeing/>

²⁸ <https://www.adelaidereview.com.au/arts/visual-arts/maree-meredith-arts-centres-remote-communities/>

²⁹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07421656.2018.1540822?journalCode=uart20>

³⁰ <https://arts.sa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/AHF-evidence-guide-final.pdf>

³¹ In relation to art therapy specifically, which is just one component of the broader Arts engagement framework, Ms Liz Cosson, Secretary for Veterans Affairs, provided evidence to Senate Estimates on 30 May 2018 to ensure that "as part of our rehabilitation programs, we include art therapy." <https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/estimate/0841c105-12a0->

submission. ANVAM's approach to rehabilitation can work across DVA's medical rehabilitation, psychosocial and vocational streams.

6. **Administratively efficient.** As ANVAM grows a key focus is on process development to ensure administrative efficiency. As a charity, ANVAM, by necessity is effective, responsive, veteran-focused and compliant with regulations.
7. **Financially sustainable and affordable.** ANVAM's framework, including the discussion below regarding a home for veterans' arts, is centred around a self-sustaining model. ANVAM is designed to deliver value to the veteran and Australian communities.