2008 Membership Survey Summary Report

In September, the Society for the Arts in Healthcare conducted the second annual membership survey to learn about member arts in healthcare programs and initiatives, and find out what programs, services and information would best serve the field. Out of the approximately 1,650 members who have e-mail addresses, 354 (21.5%) responded to our survey. According to a survey random sample online calculator (www.custominsight.com), our survey has about a 96% confidence level with a 4% error rate. (Last year, there were 564 respondents with a 96% confidence level and 4% error rate.) This summary report includes an analysis of some of the findings, highlights of the 12 survey questions and sample comments. The Society will consider these findings as a guide to improve member benefits and create programs designed to meet member needs.

**Highlights:**
The Society for the Arts in Healthcare obtained a great deal of information about who our members are and what their work is in the field. Many of their responses support existing program plans and ideas, including publishing a State of the Field Report with action recommendations, pursuing an economic benefits study to build the business case for arts in healthcare and increasing webinars on organizational capacity building and program development. New suggestions by members include developing a mentoring program for students and an international Society network with ambassadors from different countries. This year, we requested quotes regarding the value of arts in healthcare and the benefits of Society membership. These quotes will help us to promote the importance of arts in healthcare through the voices of those in the field.

**Findings:**
Questions 1 & 2: How did you first learn about the Society? What were your primary reasons for joining the Society (check up to 3)?
Almost half of the member respondents (48.1%) said they learned about the Society from a colleague, which supports our member-to-member campaign concept. Another 17.4% found the Society through an Internet search and 11.4% heard about the Society at a conference or event (a marketing area that we can build on). These are the same ranked order as last year.
The top three reasons for joining the Society included:
1. Networking with arts in healthcare peers (66.3%)
2. Access to current news and research (60.1%)
3. Eligibility for grant programs (48.2%)
Another 30.3% said they joined to support the Society’s mission. This was similar to last year’s rankings, with the mission in third place.

**Question 3: What Society resources/services/programs have you used/participated in?**
The top five ranked resources/services/programs in the “excellent or most used” category include:
1. Read the Society e-News Brief (54.5%)
2. Read/post news to SAH Connections (54.2%)
3. Used the Society website resources (50.8%)
4. Attended one or more conference (40.7%)
5. Applied for/received a J&J grant (35.8%)

These are the same top five as last year in a slightly different order.

The top five ranked resources/services/programs in the “haven’t used” category include:
1. Received Society consulting services (81.6%)
2. Applied for/received a Blair L. Sadler Award (80.6%)
3. Participated in renewal seminar/webinar (76.7%)
4. Hosted/viewed the Expressions of Courage exhibit (75.5%)
5. Attended one or more regional meetings or symposia (75.2%)

The top four least used resources/services/programs are the same as last year.

**Questions 4: What are the priority actions the Society should initiate to advance the integration of the arts in healthcare?**
The majority of member respondents (83.9%) felt that the Society should support arts in healthcare research through grants and awards. The following percentage of respondents ranked the other six actions listed as 5=“very important” or 4=“important”:
1. Complete an economic study – “business case for arts in healthcare” (69.7%)
2. Create a PPT presentation to use to educate hospital decision makers (65.6%)
3. Work with the Joint Commission to survey health institutions about their arts programs (64.7%)
4. Release a State of the Field Report with action recommendations (64.5%)
5. Launch an artist registry database (62.1%)
6. Develop arts policy/advocacy agendas (57.4%)

Other suggestions included:
- Develop a mentoring program for students
- Provide information on marketing and selling creative arts programs
- Acknowledge the levels of practice—creative arts therapists, arts healers, arts recreation, environmental arts—and promote education and training opportunities to become credentialed
- Create an online gallery
- Open an international network for the Society with ambassadors from different countries representing the Society’s to expand its work throughout the world
- Add a SIG on literary arts
- Develop more partnerships/grants with national businesses
Questions 5: Rank ideas to provide more professional development opportunities
Three quarters of the respondents (75.3%) indicated that the Society should offer regional seminars on developing and sustaining arts in healthcare programs. The following percentage of respondents ranked the other four suggestions from the survey as 5=“very important” or 4=“important”:
   1. Increase webinar opportunities on developing/sustaining programs (64.7%)
   2. Initiate a Help Desk for experts to answer questions via email (53.2%)
   3. Initiate an artists’ scholarship fund to help artists join the Society and attend conferences (50.8%)
   4. Develop a mentorship program for student members (43.1%)

Questions 6: Rank ideas on the potential public education roles for the Society
Over three quarters (76.9%) of member respondents felt the Society should disseminate research findings to the public. Of the eight other suggestions listed in the survey, the following percentage of respondents ranked them as 5=“very important” or 4=“important”:
   1. Create a concise definition of the arts in healthcare field that communicates its vast value to the public (75.7%)
   2. Create an online press center for the media to access info about arts in healthcare (66.1%)
   3. Create a PPT for members to use in their communities (61.9%)
   4. Launch a juried online gallery to showcase arts in healthcare work (57.4%)
   5. Create model press releases and editorials for members to use (56.6%)
   6. Give media special access to the member directory to search for resources for stories (51.3%)
   7. Provide training for members on working with the media (29.1%)
   8. Hold a press conference at the annual conference or special events (48.3%)

Questions 7: How do you think the Society should support arts in healthcare networks?
Sixty-seven percent (67%) of member respondents indicated that the Society should provide grants to support networks. Of the three other suggestions listed in the survey, the following percentage of respondents ranked them as 5=“very important” or 4=“important”:
   1. Provide communications support such as listservs and meeting time at the annual conference (63.1%)
   2. Assist with regional meeting/event planning (53.8%)
   3. Allow network members to join the Society as affiliate members (52.6%)

Type of organization respondent works for (top 3)
   1. Hospital/Medical Center (40.8%)
   2. University (14.8%)
   3. Arts Organization (8.3%)
Additional comments about members’ programs and how the Society can best serve them

A sample of these comments included:

- We did not know all of these services and resources were available to us
- Get out into the field and visit smaller, more localized models for arts in healthcare and make grants available to help these programs
- Keep going, keep it up and don’t give up
- Thank you for your professionalism and varied ways of communicating with members
- Influence more research and projects for professionals in arts in healthcare that offer career development and more substantial salary support
- I love the prospect of a journal
- Have more artists presenting at the conference
- Future Society conferences should give more emphasis to smaller, regional programs in rural communities
- More emphasis on physician input and validation
- More opportunities to connect with substance abuse programs using arts treatments
- Focus more attention in independent arts in healthcare programs versus hospital/clinic-based programs
- Let members share their artwork online

(*Comments were edited for brevity)

Sample Quotes

“Society for the Arts in Healthcare has played an indispensible role in my development as a hospice and hospital musician, through the educational and networking resources it provides.” Laura Sue, 2006

“Without a doubt, the Society for the Arts in Healthcare is the number one resource for the arts in healthcare professional.” Cheryl Belanger, 2002

“Creativity is the voice with which we all speak as healers and carers. The value of the arts in healthcare cannot be underestimated.” Lisa M. Wong, MD, 2004

“I am in awe of the healing of mind and body and spirit that often takes place when a patient is presented the gift of a drawing or painting from that person’s grandchild to the music played by our music therapist. It is fun and amazing to witness the positive transformations that take place for the patient, family and artist.” Chaplain Steven Rice, 2006

“As a healthcare educator, the Society has helped me teach future health professionals how to support and use the arts in their clinical practices.” Andrea Kovalesky, 2004

“Every act of healing is always a creative act. Membership in the Society provides a myriad of benefits; networking with other artists, access to research, grants
opportunities, the annual conference but, most meaningfully, validation and inspiration!” Shirley Grierson, 2004

“The Society was instrumental in assisting through a consultancy grant the permanent addition of a gallery within the psychiatric hospital.” Geoffrey Thompson, 2003

“The use of art as a therapeutic creative medium gives me an opportunity to capture in a unique way the pain of our client population that “talk therapy” does not capture.” Dr. Robert Morgan, 2007

“The healing power of the arts is transforming for individuals with mental health issues and other life challenges and their supportive allies, and for building strong communities.” Judith Rosenberg, 2008

“My original intention in joining the Society was to be eligible for a grant. However, I have been more than pleasantly surprised by the wealth of information, networking possibilities, and professionalism of the Society. It has brought far more to our organization than I expected and I am grateful. Thank you.” Susan Laurenson Shipley, 2008

“In my work with murder victims’ families, one mom called our art intervention ‘an oasis of peace where I could express what words could not express’.” Suzanne Boucher, MEd, LMHC, 2007

“The Society has caring responsive staff, insightful programs and contagious enthusiasm for the arts and healing.” The Rev. Dr. Terry Thomas Primer, 2006

“The healing power of the arts is an untapped resource for all of healthcare.” Dr. Phyllis I. Gillie, 2006

“Art creates a space-time for human flourishing that is so linked to health, that unless we name it, claim it and protect it, we will become part of a market clock that is out of synch with our human clock and health will not happen.” Carolina González Schlenker, MD, MPH, 2006

“It is a beautiful thing to see healthcare returning to the roots of the pioneers like Florence Nightingale, who put the patient’s well being and surroundings above all.” Monica Simon, RN, MSN, 2008

“The Society for the Arts in Healthcare annual conferences and the members I have come to know over the years have been my mentors and guides into the world of arts in healthcare and helped me shape and grow the Gifts of Art program at the University of Michigan.” Elaine Sims, 1990