



As part of the Big Lottery Fund in Wales, in September 2018 a study was undertaken by University of Exeter's BSc Psychology student, Katrina Evans. Her research interests are how social interaction impacts mental health, mood and other health conditions and if engaging in the arts improves wellbeing. This study is supported by the Big Lottery Fund in Wales People & Places grant.

### Aims and Objectives

The aim of this report was to evaluate the success of the Goldies Cymru programme which comprises of traditional singing and activity sessions. The evaluation will conclude whether the programme is effective and whether there are significant benefits from attending Goldies sessions.

### The Conclusion

Both quantitative and qualitative responses have concluded that there is a significant increase in positive mood, wellbeing and community spirit since attending the Goldies Cymru programme. Many of the participants reported that they lived alone, experienced poor health and needed a reason to socialise. Many of the sessions are situated in socially isolated areas to tackle issues of loneliness faced by older people – the average age of a Goldies attendee being 74. One of the most popular reasons for attending Goldies was to make friends (51%) and qualitative analysis concluded that attending sessions increases participants' social network. By attending a session, **93% of participants claim they feel more involved in knowing their community.**

*“Goldies is very important in bringing people in the community together and especially for older people who are living on their own”*

**A total of 97% of people agreed that singing improves their mood.** For some, this uplift in mood from singing is a rare occurrence as **52% claimed that the last time they sang was at a Goldies session.** The analysis of qualitative data shows that many mentioned how the songs from the 50s, 60s and 70s brought back memories. These statements show how beneficial the sing and activity sessions are for dementia sufferers in both closed sessions and community sessions. Singing also becomes beneficial to other closed groups, such as those with special needs and the blind/ partially sighted community, which has been seen on evaluation.

*“My dad has dementia and has been coming to the group for a long time. The singing and meeting up with the others in the group has such a positive impact on him. He so looks forward to coming”*

34% of participants initially attended Goldies to improve their health. Both mental and physical health significantly improved from before attending, with **80% agreeing that Goldies has improved their mental health** and **57% stating their physical health has improved.** The before-and-after effect on how participants feel was also significantly different. On a scale of 1-10 (1 low; 10 high), the average attendee's response was **6 for before and a 9 for after** – the majority agreed on observation that they always look forward to attending.

*“It's fun to feel like a teenager again!”*