

# First large scale community study into the value of group singing for older people with lung disease

January 30 2013

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Members of the COPD singing groups in Kent.

The research was undertaken by Canterbury Christ church University's Sidney De Haan Research Centre for Arts and Health, following a grant of £130,000 from The Dunhill Medical Trust.

Key findings from the ten month study include evidence of significant improvement in measures of [lung function](#) and [health](#) related quality of life for participants in the singing groups, as well as social, psychological and physical health benefits from taking part. The report also recommends singing groups as a cost-effective health promotion strategy for people with chronic [obstructive lung disease](#) (COPD).

Professor Stephen Clift, Research Director for the Centre, said: "Our project was the first large scale study in the community to test these ideas scientifically and we are very grateful to The Dunhill Medical Trust for the funding to make this study possible, and for the support we have received from NHS professionals in Kent.

"The evidence from this study shows that regular group singing can be beneficial for people with [breathing difficulties](#), improving their lung function and breath control, as well as reaping the social benefits and enjoying [peer support](#). The more regularly participants attended the singing groups, the more their health and wellbeing improved, with the participants wanting the groups to continue.

"We feel that group singing is a cost-effective [health promotion](#) strategy for people with COPD."

Along with the help of Kent NHS professionals and GPs, the research centre recruited people with COPD to take part in the study. Over 100 people were recruited to take part in singing groups, with the aim of assessing the effects on older people with COPD, measuring breathing, health-related quality of life and mental and physical wellbeing.

The groups were be set up in Ashford, Canterbury, Deal, Dover, Ramsgate and Whitstable, and met once a week for ten months. The health and wellbeing of the singers was carefully monitored, with the researchers looking for signs of physical or emotional changes in the participants that can be attributed to the singing activity.

**More information:** The [Summary Report](#) can be found on the [Centre's website](#).

Provided by Canterbury Christ Church University

Citation: First large scale community study into the value of group singing for older people with lung disease (2013, January 30) retrieved 24 April 2024 from

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