

# Building community through art

President of the NZ Association of Artist Doctors, Dr Bevan Rogers of Southside Health Rangiora chats to GP Voice about the value of bringing doctors together to express themselves through art.

## So you've been a member and then president of the Association for decades now Bevan – what do you get out of performing with your colleagues and making music?

“I get such a buzz and sense of community from bringing doctors together to express themselves creatively. It's something that never really wears off for me.

Personally, I've done things that I never would have had the chance to do otherwise – I've performed with the choir, composed music and even conducted the orchestra, which is something I never would have imagined. Honestly I don't think anyone else would have me! I have no formal qualifications aside from school cert music, which I completed in 1965.”

## What is the level of ability like across your members?

We have some very talented artists in our ranks, and it's such a pleasure to see their work. We have amazing painters, photographers and musicians, and even people doing things like jewellery and stand-up comedy. There's also a wide range of ability, from people who are trained and very talented to people of average talent like me. The Association is certainly not about delivering virtuoso performances – it's about building a sense of community, providing people with the opportunity to express themselves creatively, and putting on an entertaining show once a year for friends, family and colleagues.”

## What is the show like?

It's a variety performance really. We do it once a year, starting with an exhibition of the visual art which runs for a few days, followed by a performance that involves music, dance, skits, comedy and other acts. The first time I attended a show was as an audience member when I was a very new doctor, and I immediately knew I wanted to be involved. I have been a GP for my whole career. This year's performance is on Saturday 18 May in Christchurch, so I'd encourage people based in Canterbury to come along as it's always a lot of fun.



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– Dr Bevan Rogers



**What would you say to people who are interested in getting involved but aren't sure whether something like this is for them?**

Firstly, come along to the show and check it out. But basically, if there is something creative you want to try with others, I'm sure we can find someone who would be keen to do it with you. It can be hard to carve out time for creative pursuits, and many people wait until they retire to make time for the things they love to do, but if I've learned anything through my involvement in the Association it's that it's worth making time now to be creative. Being involved has given me the confidence to pursue music outside of the Association and I've actually got a band I practise and perform with in Rangiora. I'm not sure I would have done that otherwise, because I wouldn't have had the confidence.

**What about people who live outside the Canterbury region - is it something open to people all around New Zealand?**

We do have some people who travel from further afield to be involved, although that presents some logistical challenges, but it's possible to learn music at home and come down for rehearsals, and definitely possible for artists to exhibit their work. I'd suggest anyone who might like to be involved but is based elsewhere in New Zealand to get in touch with us to discuss and we'll certainly do our best to accommodate them.

For more information about the Association and how to get involved, visit the [New Zealand Association of Artist Doctors' website](#).

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