

Arts and Culture in every care home?

What would it require for all care homes to offer their residents access to relevant creative and cultural opportunities on a daily basis?



“

“I would like to get out to do painting from life and visit with artists”

“Take me back to when I was 20 and I could dance”

“I would like to continue to use my hands with woodwork”

“I would like to write poetry in groups”

“I like painting with the children - it would be nice to see them more”

“I would love to learn how to play the piano”

“More paint canvases and brushes please”

“I would like to do more colouring, stamp art, collages, origami, pastel, different kinds of painting, woodwork, making boxes...”

“I would like to do crochet and drawings”

“I’d like to chat with people more”

“I would like to do some more garden fence painting”

“If we had a minibus we could go to the seaside and other places”

“I haven’t done any baking for a long time...”

“I enjoy creating a garden...topiary”

“I think a lot of [my fellow residents] would enjoy doing more art but they are restricted by what they can actually do”

“It’s nice to do things for charity – knitting”

“I’ve been wondering about talking books”

“I’d like to get out a bit more”

“Ballet, I love the whole thing – opera too”

“I don’t like sitting on my own, hour after hour...”

“I am very keen to go to the theatre”

“I miss my family so involve children”

“In an ideal world I would like to see things happening every day”

“More reading and walking”

“I would love to watch the ballet”

”

Some of the views shared by residents from care settings.

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Foreword

The National Activity Providers Association (NAPA) is a national charity and membership organisation with 3,000 care home members. NAPA supports care services to prioritise wellbeing and provide support services that equip Activity Providers with the essential knowledge, skills and resources required to provide person centred, meaningful connections.

The restrictions on social contact put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 have had an impact on all our lives but were particularly detrimental for people living in care homes. Creative expression is essential in the lives of care home residents. Social contact from family members and friends and the opportunity to take part in creative activities are integral to individual wellbeing and a vital part of care home life, restrictions have meant that the wellbeing of people who live in care homes has been at significant risk.

At the forefront of the care home experience during COVID-19 has been the incredible effort and commitment shown by Activity Providers who rapidly adapted their approaches to ensure resident wellbeing. A notable intervention has been the use of the creative arts to encourage connection and the expression of loss and grief.

Our Arts in Care Homes Programme and the support provided by the NAPA Helpline has been a constant beacon of light at an exceptional time, encouraging care home staff to support creativity and connection. We need to ensure that this is sustained and becomes an expected and required element of person centred care. The Care Quality Commission recognise the important part creativity plays in the lives of care home residents and describe an outstanding service as one that is “flexible and responsive to people’s individual needs and preferences, finding creative ways to enable people to live a full life.”

The Government’s new Plan for Health & Social Care includes a £500m commitment to help the social care workforce; with support in professionalising and developing the workforce, mental health support and recruitment and a recognition of the importance of social care within local Integrated Care Systems, and there is mention of working together to produce a comprehensive national plan for supporting and enabling integration between health and social care. It may be that there is an enhanced understanding of the critical role that social care plays in helping people to live their best lives, surely this must include access to the arts, creativity and culture. The current situation facing the social care workforce is like nothing seen before, with many experiencing an increase in staff exits, significant difficulties in attracting new staff as well as retaining existing staff. NAPA are keen to demonstrate the difference the arts can make to the lives of the people we support as well as those who provide services and will endeavour to support the sector in embedding the arts into all aspects of care provision.

This consultation provides exciting data and demonstrates why we must continue to prioritise wellbeing and promote the importance and wellbeing benefits of arts, creativity and culture. It also supports NAPA’s position on the need to professionalise activity provision. The skills and knowledge required of Activity Providers is considerable, it is time to recognise the need for qualified Activity Professionals who can ensure arts, creativity and culture are an integral element of health and social care delivery.

We would like to thank The Baring Foundation for this opportunity, everyone who took part in this consultation and to dedicate this report to all those residents and staff who sadly lost their lives during COVID-19.

Hilary Woodhead
Executive Director NAPA

Executive summary

In April this year, the Baring Foundation commissioned NAPA Arts in Care Homes to carry out a consultation with care homes in response to the question:

“What would it require for all care homes to offer their residents access to relevant creative and cultural opportunities on a daily basis?”

The question aimed to start a conversation through hearing the views of care home residents and care workers to understand what they thought the offer should look like. It was suggested that the consultation should start with care settings in England, leading to a second stage which will be sharing an independent discussion document about how the different parts of the system can best play their parts and be resourced to do so.

The responses collected through this consultation provide valuable insight into the lived experience of people resident, working in and visiting care settings. It should be noted however, that responses have been received from care settings who already have an arts and cultural offer. Nonetheless this is an opportunity for us to listen to those whose voices have not been heard, and to start to build a legacy from the pandemic. It is essential that their views are listened to and fully taken into account at the beginning of any discussions around a daily arts and culture offer in all care settings and incorporated into planning any related next steps. Care homes have faced a uniquely challenging time during the COVID pandemic. Throughout this period NAPA has seen and heard about countless examples of staff-led creative and cultural engagement and how valuable this has been to both residents and staff. As a result, we were keen to take the opportunity, presented by carrying out the consultation, to gather information that would help to capture and bring alive the value of arts and cultural engagement.

We did this through:

- Designing short questionnaires to be completed by residents (with an adapted questionnaire for those living with dementia), managers, activity coordinators, key care staff other than managers and friends and family. We also designed a short questionnaire for a group of people living with dementia
- Artist-led workshops to provide an alternative method of capturing residents' thoughts and feelings about creative engagement, allowing people to respond non-verbally along with those of the artist facilitators
- Collecting a series of best-practice Case Studies to capture examples of current outstanding examples of cultural and creative engagement which would help inform the next stage of the discussion
- Creating Fictional Portraits based on residents to demonstrate how an individual creative offer could be developed.

114 surveys were filled in by **67 care homes in England**, we held artist-led workshops in five care homes, collected **18 case studies** and created four fictional portraits.

The response to whether there was a desire for a daily arts and culture offer found:

- 60% of residents that completed surveys actively expressed a desire to see a daily offer of arts and culture
- 75% of participating managers would like care settings to work towards a daily offer of arts and culture
- 100% of responding Activity Providers would like care settings to work towards a daily offer of arts and culture
- 100% of participating relatives and friends would like to see care settings start working towards a daily offer of creative and cultural activities.

The main barriers to achieving a daily offer in the view of participating care homes and barriers to delivering arts and creative engagement generally were:

- Time constraints
- Lack of specialist knowledge
- Staff structure and how teams work together
- Resources in terms of ideas

Whereas the following were cited by care providers as most needed in terms of working towards a daily offer:

- Community and arts partnerships
- Culture shift in terms of belief in necessity of regular creative engagement
- More specialist training in arts and activities for people with complex needs
- More resources in terms of creative ideas

Another key finding was that the families and friends of residents expressed a strong interest in joining in with arts and cultural engagement alongside their family member or friend.

When announcing the consultation, The Baring Foundation confirmed that it would lead to a second stage where they would issue an independent discussion document about how the different parts of the system can best play their parts and be resourced to do so and would continue to advocate for the sector. We look forward to participating in that UK-wide conversation. We have gained a great deal of insight from carrying out this consultation that will influence our work, and we have a renewed awareness of issues relating to the provision of creative health in care settings as a result of these conversations and discussions which we look forward to sharing more widely with the sector.

Introduction

The Baring Foundation stated that their guiding principles for the consultation were:

- A desire to understand how the system that supports creative ageing is best organised: including the roles of staff, managers, artists and arts organisations, regulators and funders and how they work together
- A belief that access to arts and creativity should be an entitlement for all residents in care homes across the UK:
 - That an offer should be ‘relevant’ to the residents’ personal tastes, whether opera or pop music, their background, cultural preferences, and their ability to take part;
 - That ‘creative and cultural opportunities’ should include both being able to participate creatively and as an audience member
 - That the offer should be on a ‘daily basis’ – individuals not want to wait for special occasions or may be left dissatisfied by an occasional offer. Perhaps the explosion of online provision means that daily access to opportunities is no longer unrealistic.

We aimed to address these issues through the four strands of our consultation. Surveys were filled in by 67 care settings to gauge their views on the idea of a daily offer whether it was feasible, what the current envisaged barriers were and next steps needed. We consulted with managers, staff including Activity Providers and residents via surveys and received 114 responses. We also carried out telephone interviews with three members of staff. The survey questions and methodology were devised by the NAPA team with input and advice from Lydia Davis and her team at City, University of London and Dr Kate Dupuis, Schlegel Innovation Leader, Centre for Elder Research, Sheridan College, Canada.

This information was then supplemented through artist-led workshops, best practice case studies and discussion with non-care sector individuals doing related work in this field. We hoped this would be an effective way of bringing in the work and voices of artists and other creative leads and practitioners working in or with the sector, to deliver context to the question.

The consultation process was overseen by a steering group consisting of three members of the NAPA team (Alison Teader, Hilary Woodhead and Natalie Ravenscroft) as well as Mike Phillips, NAPA Associate/Consultant and NAPA Ambassador LGBT Inclusion and Chris Maddocks NAPA Dementia Adviser.

Finally, this report comes out 15 months after the COVID-19 pandemic became official and the UK went into its first lockdown. We want to acknowledge the terrible impact the pandemic has had on care settings, and the huge challenges it has brought to the sector. We thank everyone who has made the time to take part in this consultation.

Although written from NAPA’s perspective, we hope that this consultation report is true to the everyday experience and the views and wishes of people living and working in care settings. We hope we have captured the lived experience, through gathering the first-hand views of people living and working in care settings as well as relatives, artists, arts organisations and researchers specialising in arts engagement in, with and for the care sector.

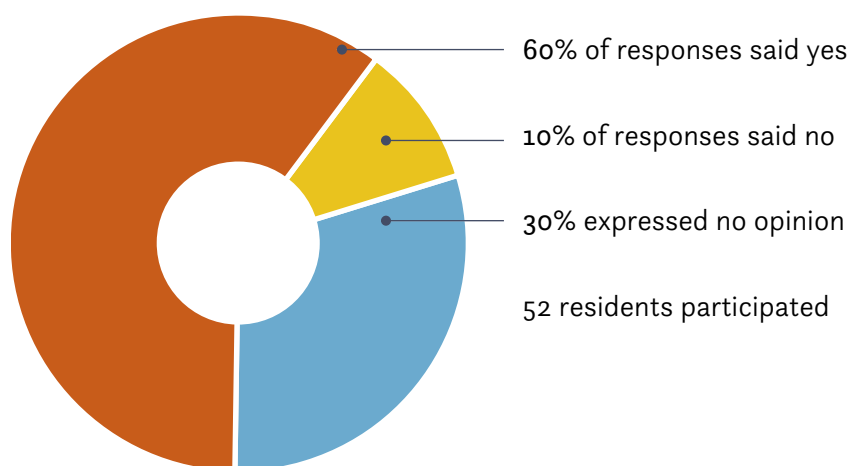
Summary of key statistics

Questionnaires

A total of 67 care settings from almost every administrative county across England participated in this study by sending in their responses to the surveys, either submitted online, through the post or over the telephone. We received 114 surveys responses in total. The callout for participation was shared on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and via Care England and The National Care Forum. Although time and effort was taken to push the invitation to participate to as wide an audience of care settings as possible, it should be noted that our responses seem to be mainly from organisations that are already offering arts and cultural engagement for residents.

Resident responses

Q: Do you want a daily offer of arts and culture?



Q: In what ways are creative and arts activities helpful or enjoyable for you?

98% of respondents shared benefits of creative and arts activities. Residents expressed how arts and creativity gave them pleasure, happiness, entertained them, and provided an opportunity to play. They commented how it gave them an opportunity to have an interest, to keep their minds active, helped pass the time, was relaxing and calming, or alternatively made them feel alive. They expressed enjoyment of social aspect and how it helped distract them from worries and health issues. Some loved singing and dancing, others appreciated theatre or daily reading.

“Gives me pleasure to see what I have created”

“It makes me happy when I am drawing and also the final pictures when I’m finished”

“When I dance it makes me happy and when I sing”

“Reading is an essential skill and it provides a lot of enjoyment – I spend most of my day reading”

“Painting seems to be therapeutic”

“Helps me mentally and helps me forget about my illness”

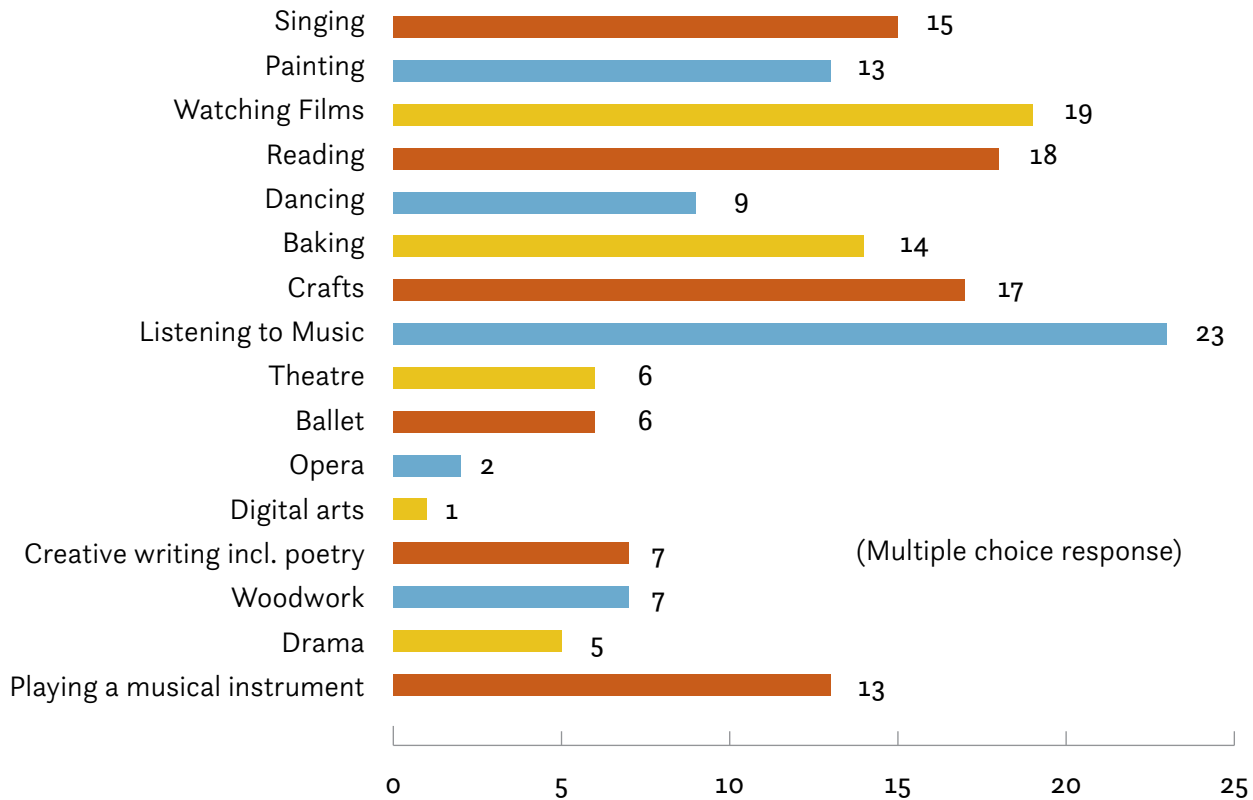
“I like the fun creative side, being with other people and using your mind”

“Keeps me busy and my mind active”

“Keeps me focussed, calm, occupied and pass the time”

“Helps me connect with other people”

Q: What type of creative activities do you like doing?



Q: What creative activities you would like to do more of?

Residents provided a huge and very creative range of responses to this question, showing a passion for creative opportunity:

“I would like to get out to do painting from life and visit with artists”

“I would like to continue to use my hands with woodwork”

“I would like to write poetry in groups”

“I would love to learn how to play the piano”

“Ballet, I love the whole thing – opera too”

“I would like to do more colouring, stamp art, collages, origami, pastel, different kinds of painting, woodwork, making boxes...”

“I would like to do crochet and drawings”

“I enjoy creating a garden...topiary”

“It’s nice to do things for charity – knitting”

“I’ve been wondering about ‘talking books”

“Woodwork making boxes”

“More groups daily and evenings occasionally”

Q: What would be a lovely day for you?

This answer elicited a lot of nature related activities and a desire to go on more trips

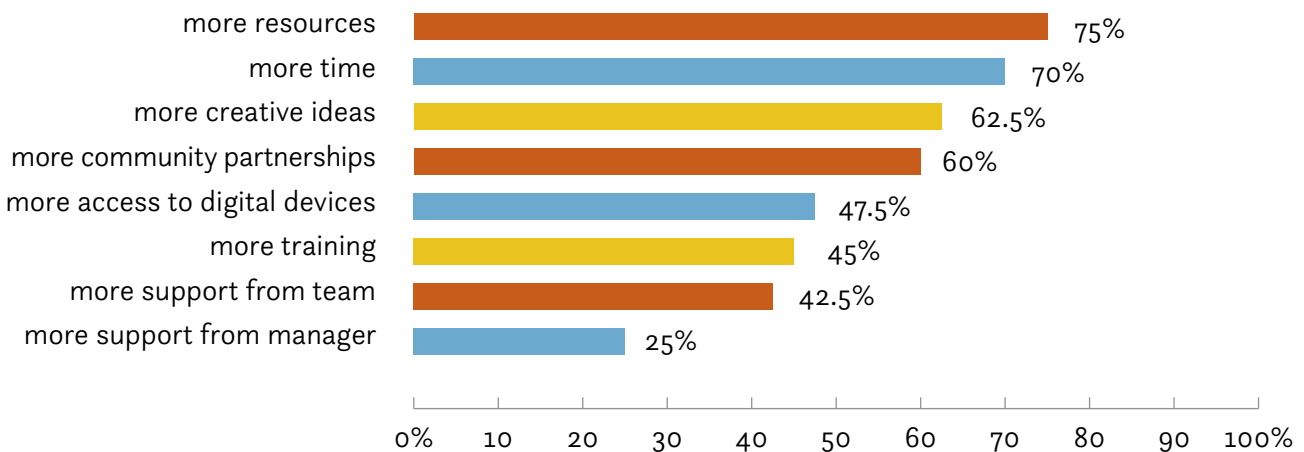
“Going to the beach to collect stones to do crafts with. Take photos to make into arts and crafts. Going to woods to collect leaves, wood, plants to use for arts and craft. Water photos”

“Collecting images to try to copy using arts/craft”

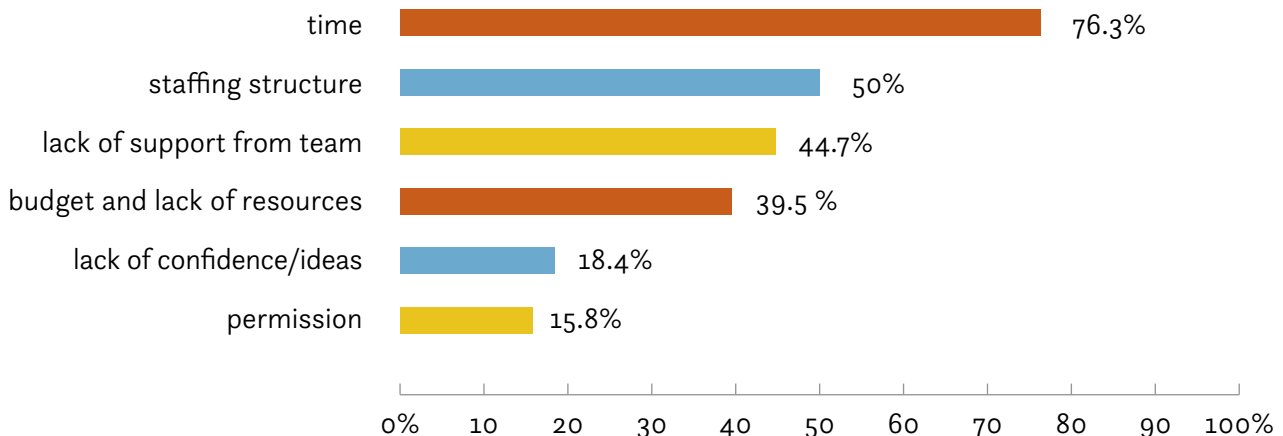
Activity Provider responses

Of the 42 Activity Providers that took part, 100% said they would like care setting to work towards offering daily offer and nine of these also added that they were already doing this.

Q: What would help you move towards achieving a daily offer of creative activities for all your residents?'



Q: What barriers are there to achieving a daily arts and cultural offer for all our residents?



Q: What do you think the value of creative, arts and cultural activities is in care settings for residents, staff and activity co-ordinators?

We heard that the value of arts and creative engagement included physical and mental health benefits, increased sociability and helping to make life meaningful for residents.

Some thoughts included:

“Arts and culture is important as it can be used in millions of ways to fit each resident and can bring an element of calm and thoughts and conversation. It has so many amazing outcomes and it’s so versatile”

“The value of creative, arts and cultural activities is that they are beneficial to everyone. It helps bring everyone closer together and allows people to relate to each other.”

“It provides endless value. Residents have sense of purpose, feel valued, are more content. Residents sleep better...have more interest in their own lives and are also have the confidence to try new experiences. It boosts the morale of care staff, it gives them confidence to initiate activities when the activities team are unavailable, and the opportunity to enrich their relationship with residents”

“Engagement and stimulation in meaningful activity leads to happier residents with better mental health – possibly also improving sleep and physical health”

“Staff don't lose sight of the person behind their illness, it helps to see the person not the illness. to interact with the resident and be person centred”

“Giving residents a sense of purpose and achievement, while giving a structure to their day that can otherwise feel empty”

But some highlighted barriers:

“Valued highly but time consuming and currently unachievable due to staffing issues”

Q: What arts and creative activities are currently on offer in your care settings?

Activity Providers shared a wide range of examples that they offered, including: music, singing, arts, craft, music, everyday creativity such as flower arranging and baking, photography, reminiscence, sensory activities. Music, singing and painting/crafts were the examples most commonly mentioned with only a few mentions for drama or poetry/creative writing, photography.

The biggest barriers to delivery of a daily offer were identified as:

- time
- support from rest of staffing team
- lack of knowledge for developing suitable activities for people with complex care needs

Q: What arts and creative activities are most effective in your care setting for people living with complex needs?

Painting, music and crafts were chosen as most effective. Multi sensory and nature related activities, watching films, baking, yoga, creative writing and flower arranging were also mentioned.

Q: Please share information about any creative activities or projects done in your care setting that you are particularly proud of, or think are very effective?

“Music appreciation where the residents select their favourites for sharing; art workshop which allows for individual art expressions - just laying out the equipment for the residents to select what to do rather than give them one single craft idea to complete”

“Simply displaying a huge world map encouraging discussion with residents on where staff have family especially at the moment when staff can’t easily visit their homes and family”

“Pre covid we formed a choir, we had 10 to 15 members who were very invested. We called ourselves a singers as opposed to a ‘choir’ we worked exceptionally hard and sang a variety of songs from different genres, we held concerts for family & friends and even appeared on local radio. Sadly our pianist is no longer with us and we have no one now to lead us...it was fabulous while it lasted”

“Dignity Trees”

“Poetry has had profound effect when structured correctly with Residents. Accessing aspects of poetry that are historically specific or pertinent to individuals has been key in this regard. Giving access to resident who do not normally have access has been rewarding.”

“Ones that invoke memory or reminiscence [or] engaging residents with each other, e.g. knitting or gardening chats.”

“Music for life – playlists to help cognition and reminiscence”

Manager responses

Eight managers took part with a combined 182 years’ experience of working in the care sector. Of these, six of the managers felt that working towards a daily creative offer for all their residents is realistic.

Reasons why they believed in was important included;

“A daily creative plan would be really helpful as a guide, allowing for people to change their minds. I believe this may challenge some people to start with but is an amazing way to fulfil individual lives. This would be great way to help care staff know what they could be doing daily with people, love this idea very much.”

“I think it is very important working within mental health...we work using the recovery star, little & often. Every expert was once a beginner.”

Some did highlight concerns:

“We have a really wonderful team who are dedicated to different groups of residents. But, this does require many hands so I can see it may be difficult for other homes.”

Of the two that did not want a daily offer, one commented:

“It's quality not quantity when it comes to time with residents. Some residents take longer to feel satisfied with their efforts. I think daily is pushing it as not everyone wants to be creative.”

They identified the following as most critical to achieving a daily offer:

- Training
- Resources
- More staff

They felt the main barriers to achieving a daily offer were:

- Time and “perception of time”
- Funding [lack of funding or difficulty accessing it etc]
- Awareness of importance of creative engagement

One manager provided useful context to perceived barriers:

“Perception of time and thinking of it has an extra task! I think staff will be surprised how easy it would be to achieve as like anyone we don't always want to be active all the time! There is a difference we find with all the activities residents used to do and what they currently want to do. It is also accepting that some people may not want to do much at all.”

Q: How does creative engagement support wellbeing in you care setting?

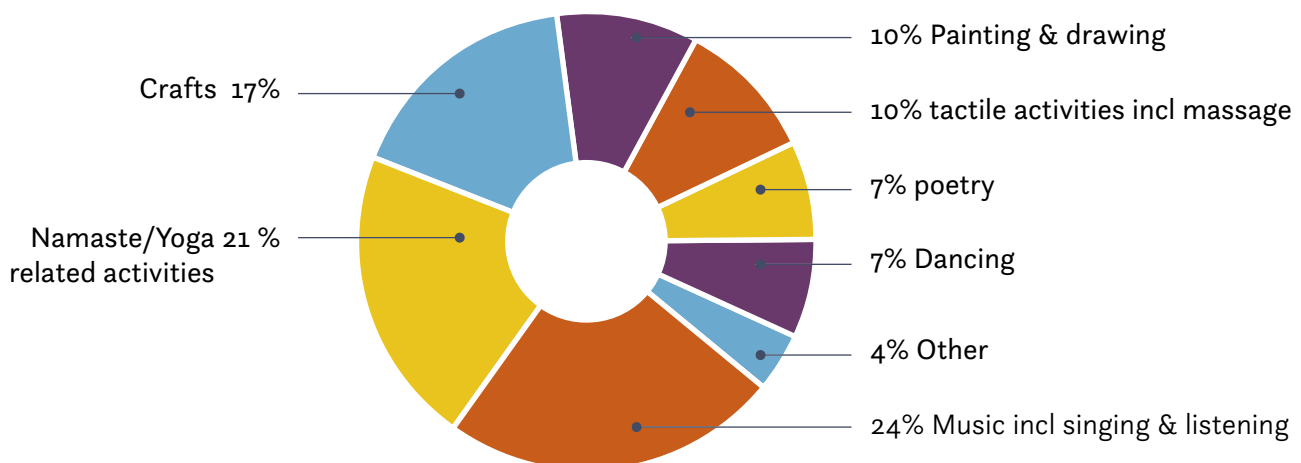
“Residents improved wellbeing noted and observed from family and friends, reduced falls, good nutrition and hydration, 4 Outstandings awarded by CQC, good reputation, marketing opportunities”

“This has a calming effect. Diverts arising issues keeps the mind functioning”

“It's an integral part of the daily care and all staff are expected to embrace this”

“It gets residents out and about, to be sociable and interact with others. Many also enjoy creativity so is a great activity in its own right.”

Q: What arts and creative activities are most effective in your care setting for people living with complex needs?



Q: Would digital creative programming and content help you achieve your goals for a creative offer in your care home?

When asked if digital programming such as digital guides and resources, live streamed concerts, on-line tool-kits and video activity film clips would help their care home develop their creative offer, there was a consensus of agreement that this would be helpful. However there was also a noticeable variation in access and how much was digital programming currently being used. We also heard about lack of suitable digital resources and Wi-Fi access in some homes.

In terms of digital technology, the comment was very useful to hear:

“[During] the pandemic we have installed Wi-Fi boosters to ensure all areas have full connectivity. This has allowed for live streamed performances from residents’ favourite entertainers, quizzes and activities with our Little Visitors from Friend in Deed intergenerational charity, and regular reminiscence sessions through our Smart TV’s. We also used this technology for video calls with residents loved ones throughout the pandemic.”

General care settings staff responses

We received responses from a range of different staff members including care staff, administrators and office staff working in a variety of housing and marketing roles. The low number of responses from care staff suggests that perhaps more needs to be done, in terms of involving them in this conversation. NAPA members tend to be in activity coordinator roles and it is clear from discussion and comments shared here and on social media during COVID-19 that it would be helpful to consider how to better facilitate relationships between activity coordinators and care staff.

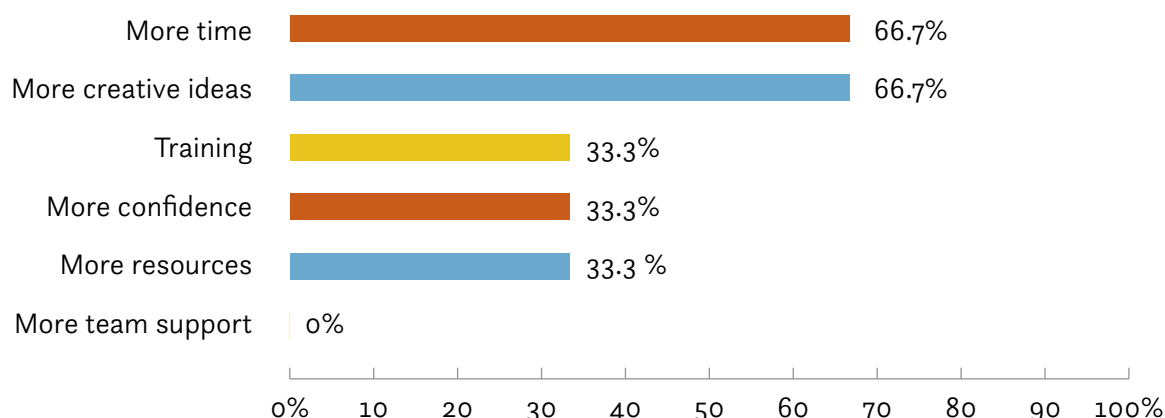
100% of respondents to this category of surveys, said they would like to work towards a daily arts and culture offer in their care homes including this comment:

“Yes – the majority of our homes have a daily creative offering within their activities schedule, but tailoring these activities to ensure everyone felt they could take part would be wonderful.”

In terms of perceived benefits, they shared the following:

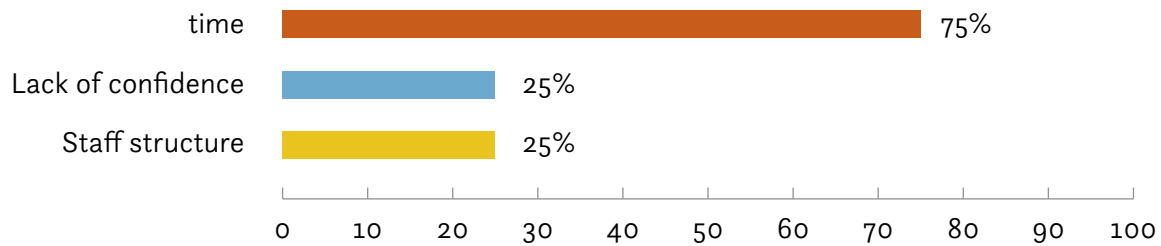
“We see the positive impact of art and creativity on our residents daily. It helps improve mood, self-esteem, can bring back memories and assist with reminiscence.”

Q: What would help you work towards having a daily offer of creative activities for every resident?



More support from the team was not cited at all as helpful, which is significant as this was seen as very important to Activity Co-ordinators.

Q: What things would make daily offer goal difficult?



Care providers responses

We received five responses from staff from care providers, that manage a combined total of 324 care settings. These staff work across multiple schemes rather than being based in a specific care setting, as the other staff surveyed more commonly are. 80% felt that a daily relevant arts/cultural offer for all residents was necessary. 60% thought it would be feasible and the remaining 40% felt it wasn't.

Reasons they cited supporting working towards a daily offer included:

“A daily arts/cultural offer will provide people with opportunities to continue doing things that are important to them, or a chance to try/learn something new. Art and cultural activities are so broad, so there is a lot of room for variety.”

“It is important to broaden the mind and keep it active. This also helps with communication and interaction with others.”

“It provides interest for our residents and staff alike and as an organisation it shows that we are thinking about the wellbeing of our residents”

“Promotes care homes as places to live, not 'exist'”

“This could benefit all with communication, interaction, creating a positive link between all of the homes to ensure that all of our residents in all of ours homes are provided with the same choices, allowing all to be creative, coming together to build on this to maintain a high standard of care.”

And one respondent emphasised the importance of choice:

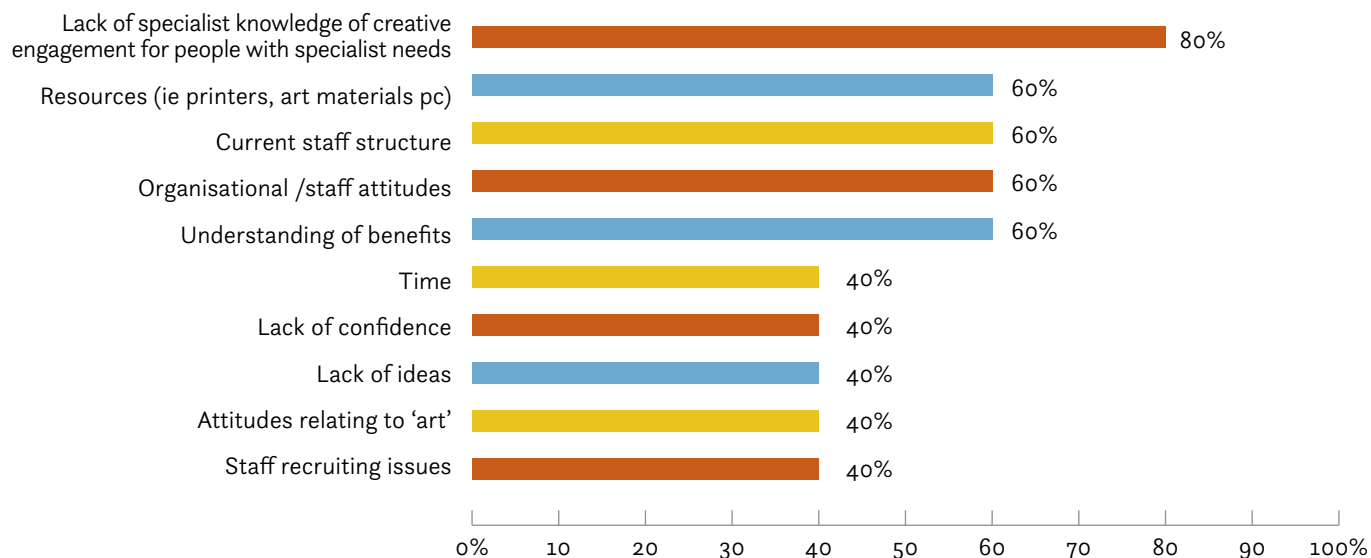
“Only if the resident wishes to partake, all residents should have a choice”

Reasons against a daily offer included:

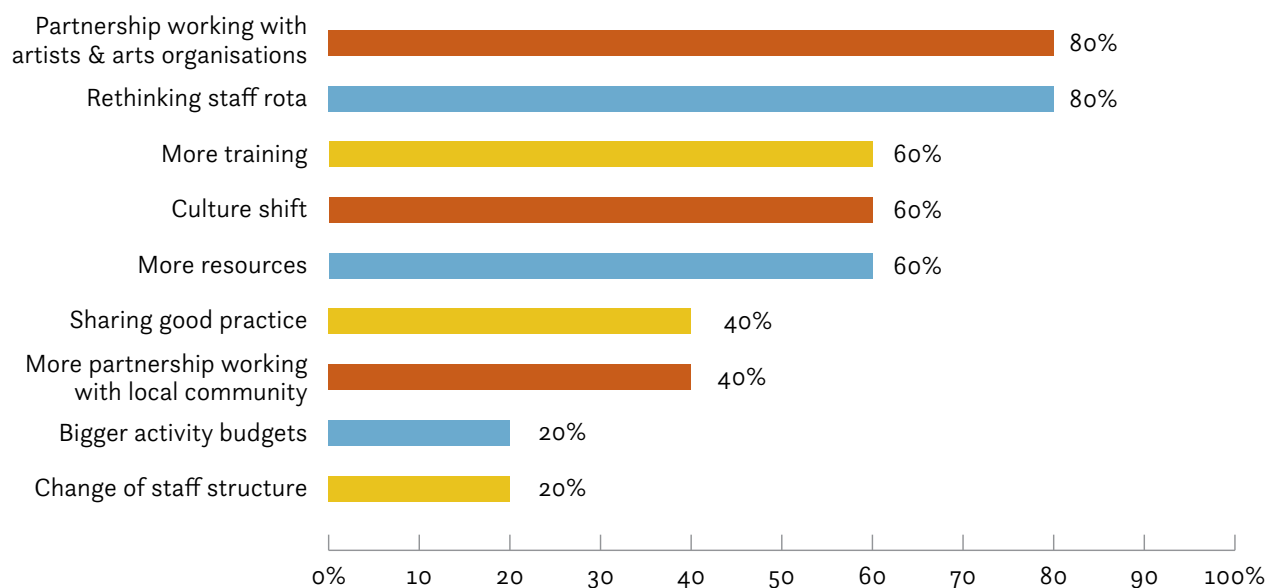
“Not all residents will be interested and it could turn into information overload.”

“[Not possible] due to lack of staff awareness/education and imagination. Lack of management vision”

Q: What do you think the barriers are to achieving daily offer?



Q: What steps need to be taken to move towards achieving a daily creative offer for all residents?



Relative and friend responses

NAPA and the NAPA Leaders Network recognised it was important to canvas and share the views of this very important and often overlooked stakeholder group. During COVID-19 relatives have been unable to visit their loved one's face to face for long periods of time, and physical visits with residents are only just starting to become general practice again at many care settings.

We received responses from 19 relatives and friends of residents, and 100% felt that arts and cultural participation in care settings were important. Reasons given included the following:

“Arts and cultural activities are crucial. They contribute hugely to quality of life, and make people's lives meaningful and enjoyable.”

“Has massively improved my mum's [who is living with dementia] quality of life”

“For enabling people to live whole lives, to enable staff and carers to get to know the residents in their care, to maintain artistic expression and creativity and to fill homes with vibrant life. Much more too...”

“Residents need as many varied activities as possible to keep them busy, engaged and interested in living.”

“Yes,...and these activities should not just be focused on mental agility or staving off illness, but on finding ways to communicate meaningfully with people with different and complex needs”

“Most certainly yes, they are an anchor which roots the resident to their past and makes their present time real”

“Yes, it is important to have a programme which residents can look forward and contribute to, beyond the daily routines of eating and sleeping”

Q: What arts, creative or cultural activities would you like to see on offer in care settings?

They shared the following examples of arts and culture they would like to see on offer in care settings:

- Everyday creativity (crafts, baking, garden related)
- Poetry
- Painting
- Drawing
- Music
- Drama
- Dance
- Digital
- Designated creative spaces
- Virtual museum/gallery visits
- Sculpture
- Weaving
- Festival celebrations
- Model making
- Visits to National Trust properties
- Theatre
- Drumming

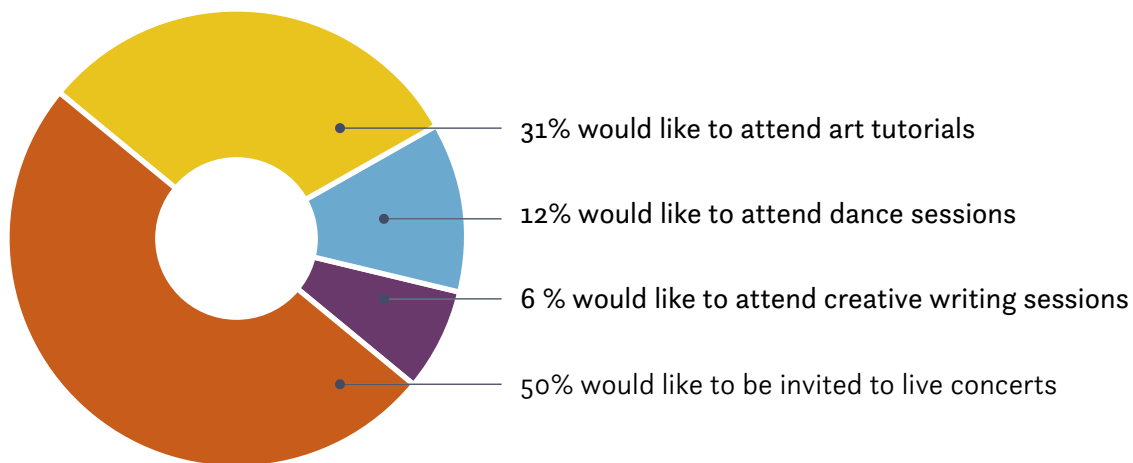
“Artists and crafters and poets in residence, exploring what’s possible and taking small steps towards creating own work. Co production and collaboration working from an ‘us’ perspective.”

“This is most dependant on each residents individual needs and past experience and must be tailored to the individual's own past history, 'roll out the barrel' and like singing may not be relevant to a tee total, concert pianist.”

“Bespoke, interactive, sensory experiences; collaborative writing, performing and music making opportunities; opportunity to experience and discuss other cultural activities e.g. films, concerts, exhibitions.”

89% of respondents would like to be offered the chance to attend arts, creative or cultural activities and events in the care setting where their relative or friend lives and engage in the activities with them.

Of these:



Other things that relatives said that they would like to attend in care settings included textile sessions, film screenings and Lego/engineering or construction related activities.

Consultation responses

Daily offer

It is clear from the survey responses that there is a desire for a daily arts and cultural offer in care settings from the majority of residents and staff and also from relatives. Respondents expressed an interest in both active participation and learning new skills, as well as enjoying the creativity of others, by listening to music, watching films etc. **A daily offer needs to include opportunities for both types of artistic and cultural participation.**

Staff roles

The staff structure within care settings is cited by staff as a major factor limiting care settings' ability to have a daily offer. The surveys show evidence that activity providers do not feel that they are currently working as part of a team and this data certainly reflects feedback that NAPA has seen on social media in care chat groups during COVID-19. A review of staff roles, organisational attitudes and allocation of staff hours/rotas would be very productive. **Exploring the benefits of creativity and developing a 'whole home' approach could prove instrumental in achieving buy in for a daily offer.**

Partnerships

The need and desire for more partnership working with the arts and cultural sector is clearly shown in staff responses. Indeed it is seen as key to implementing a daily offer in all care settings. **More partnership working between the care sector and the arts and cultural sectors would help care settings move towards a daily offer.**

Art forms

Survey responses demonstrate an understanding of the role music has to play in care provision. Visual arts and crafts are also cited as popular and seen as beneficial by both residents and staff. **Perhaps more work needs to be done to emphasise the range of other art forms that could be included in a daily offer and ways that they could be incorporated.**

Knowledge and ideas

Perhaps surprisingly money does not come out as the most major factor in terms of achieving a daily offer. Digital resources are seen as useful, are being utilised and certainly have an important role to play. The collected data shows that more knowledge and resources are needed in order to help staff develop arts and cultural engagement, particularly for people with complex needs. **Specialist arts training, ideas and resources for staff to use when planning and delivering activities would help all care settings move closer to achieving a daily person-centred offer.**

Discussions

From our discussions with non-care sector organisations and people working in related fields, several issues were also flagged up as important issues for consideration.

Some key findings to highlight are:

Palliative care

When working towards a daily offer in care settings, much useful learning can be gained from looking at the infrastructure, resources and general ethos of hospices and palliative care provision. Many hospices have dedicated arts budgets and creative spaces as well as specialised staff members, including professionally trained art therapists and artists. Community links and partnerships also seem to be valued and developed. The important role that the arts can play in end of life care provision in care settings should be explored.

Early years provision

Similarly there is useful learning to be had from early years' provision in terms of training and resources for staff and developing work around national days and festivals, in order to support inclusion. NAPA has developed a monthly digital calendar with ideas for creative activities and links to digital resources for every day of the year.

Environment

The physical environment of the care setting should be considered when developing a daily offer. If a dedicated creative space is not feasible, attention needs to be given to finding a suitable space for creative work and cultural engagement. Leaving out work in progress and art materials can inspire people to 'have a go'. Displaying artwork around the care setting makes a public statement about the importance placed on art and pride in the creative skills and achievements of residents and staff.

Attitudes to arts

In order to develop a truly comprehensive daily offer, ingrained attitudes about 'art', 'culture' and ability in residents and staff need to be addressed. NAPA has seen many examples of people taking up a new art form, such as learning to play a musical instrument or developing new artistic skills, whilst in care settings. The potential for continued learning in care settings needs to be explored further.

Case studies

We made the decision to collect 18 case studies, to capture snapshots of current best practice work taking place in and with care settings across England and one from Switzerland. We hope that by sharing these case studies we can help to bring the subject alive and provide hope and inspiration, at a most difficult time for the care sector.

The case studies collected were:

- **64 Million Artists & Luminate** – Training for artists connecting remotely with social care settings
- **Culture Box** – Delivering remote creative activities to care homes during the pandemic
- **Bright Shadow** – How delivering live creative activities online can contribute to embedding creativity and culture into care provision
- **Leeds Arts, Health & Wellbeing Network** – Sharing examples of work in Leeds with care settings and/or older people around arts, creativity and culture
- **Live Music Now** – Perspectives creating a sustainable musical care culture in care homes for older people from Live Music Now and OSJCT Monkscroft Care Centre
- **City University of London** – Use of personal storytelling to increase creative communication opportunities in care homes
- **Magic Me** – Inside Out Project: bringing together care professionals inside care homes with artists working outside to work collaboratively
- **Music for Dementia, The Utley Foundation** – Making music an integral part of dementia care
- **The National Archives – Archives** - How we can inspire, enthuse and promote wellbeing in care homes
- **Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums** – Museum Health and Social Care Resources – Supporting health and social care professionals to use museums as part of a care practice when working with older people
- **Everyday Creative Care** – Everyday Creativity, creating meaningful in the moment connections
- **Manchester Museum** – Collections in Care Homes
- **Vamos Theatre** – Love Through Double Glazing and Joy in a Box– finding new ways to connect with care homes in COVID Times
- **The Digital Home** – The Home: creating an experience of residential care using theatre and digital gaming
- **OPUS Music CIC** – Making Music with and for care settings
- **Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana** (Lugano, Switzerland)- Music and words: promoting intergenerational encounters between nursing home residents and music conservatoire students

- **House of Memories On The Road** – When you can't get to the museum, this museum comes to you!
- **Open Eye Gallery** – How cultural organisations can build relationships and be responsive to support creativity and culture in care provision.

Some key findings to highlight are:

- Sufficient time needs to be put aside to develop meaningful relationships with artists coming into care settings and staff should be encouraged and given the time to participate in artist-led sessions.
- Artists and cultural organisations can contribute a great deal to workforce development in terms of sharing skills, resources and learning to help when working towards a daily offer.
- Residents need to be given choice and an ongoing variety of opportunities to get involved in arts and cultural participation.
- Involve the whole community of the care setting and everyone will benefit.

See [Appendix 1](#) for case studies.

Artist-led workshops

We asked six artists already working with care settings to run art sessions with residents and complete a short survey at the end. The purpose of these sessions was to demonstrate the benefits of creative engagement and provide another means of consulting with residents, including people living with dementia. A strength of creative participation is that it creates a space for sharing views, expressing feelings and imagining possibilities in both verbal and non-verbal ways. We also wanted to get the views of the artists.

Artists encouraged residents to share their views about arts and culture, whilst participating in the workshop. Workshops delivered were:

- **Sally Knocker and Nancy Cunningham**, Capturing The Magic using Images, Photography
- **Sarah Fenner, Creative Minds**, capturing Creativity in Self Portraits, Mixed Media
- **Emily Chilvers, Nightingale Hammerson**, Your Perfect Day in Clay, Ceramics
- **Karyn Stavert, Creative Paths**, Coral Creations, Mixed Media

Unfortunately, two workshops on creative writing and dance were unable to go ahead due to issues relating to COVID-19.

See [Appendix 2](#) for Artist-led workshop write-ups and photos.

Some key findings to highlight are:

Spontaneity

Sometimes it is about small spontaneous interaction and not necessarily formal art sessions. All staff need to be given readily accessible tools to enable them to encourage creative exchanges throughout the day. Mobile resources could help to take activity out of formal 'learning' spaces and include more people as a result, by allowing for more person-centred one-to-one interaction.

Play

Art thrives on risk, curiosity and play. Creating a space where an assortment of art materials, objects, natural materials and prompts may encourage people to get involved and 'have a go' by sharing their creative responses, memories and associations

Process or product?

The process of creating something is often as important as the final result and this should be acknowledged and honoured. However, it can also be important for participants to produce something they feel pleased and proud of so both aspects should be considered.

Art can be found everywhere

The starting points for artistic activity can be found everywhere but a creative approach is needed. Encourage and inspire participants to get involved by finding things that interest them and taking the time to really listen and be in the moment. Small things can make a big difference and creative engagement in care settings often strengthens feelings of connection and community.

Funding

More funding is needed to allow artists to develop meaningful lasting relationships with care settings, regardless of their budgets.

Resident portraits

In order to help illustrate what a daily person-centred arts and cultural offer might look like in reality for different people, Natalie Ravenscroft NAPA Wellbeing Support Manager has devised four fictional portraits. These are drawn from her experience of working in care homes for 19 years. Although fictional, they are based on her observations from working closely with residents and as part of a team in several different types of care settings.

Fictional portraits created by Natalie included:

- Bill – a portrait featuring music
- Hannah – a portrait featuring cultural identity
- Derick – a portrait featuring technology
- John – a portrait featuring dance

See [Appendix 3](#) for 'Resident portraits'.

Some key findings to highlight are:

Teamwork

By working as a team and sharing suggestions with all members of staff, creative engagement and activity ideas can be embedded into all aspects of care.

Technology

The use of appropriate digital technology should be incorporated into person-centred care plans as a means of providing increased arts and cultural engagement.

Thinking outside the box

By being creative and trying out different things, based on an individual's history and interests, care provision can be made more person centred with beneficial results for the individual and for staff.

Consultation with Dementia Craftivists

We also invited the Dementia Craftivists, a group of people living with dementia who have an interest in arts and culture to share their views with Philly Hare from Innovations in Dementia. We felt this would provide insight into the role of arts and culture in the lives of people living with dementia.

The group shared interesting reflections on the benefits of arts and cultural participation that they had experienced first-hand.

Some key findings to highlight are:

Benefits

Engaging in arts and cultural activities improved group members' quality of life by providing purpose, distraction, relaxation, stimulation and reduced anxiety.

Creative opportunities

The group felt that care homes should provide dedicated creative spaces and a wide range of creative opportunities, with art materials and resources available for people to use when they want to.

Nature

Access to nature and natural objects were felt to be good ways of encouraging creativity.

Attitudes about art

Group members felt that their feelings about their own creative abilities had been affected at an early stage of life by parents or teachers. How creative activities are presented to participants is important. A relaxed, friendly non-judgemental atmosphere can really help develop confidence and encourage participation.

See [Appendix 4](#) for Dementia Craftivist write-up and poem.

NAPA overview

It is clear that a collective care sector discussion about the role of art and culture in care provision is crucial to achieving a comprehensive approach to arts and cultural provision and ensuring engagement from all team members. We would like to highlight some key considerations for next-steps:

It seems that in order to move towards the possibility of arts and cultural opportunities being offered on a daily basis in all care settings, a consistent approach and framework is required. All NAPA member care settings offer creative activities in some capacity, but only a few currently demonstrate evidence of a fully comprehensive arts and cultural offer.

Care plans offer an opportunity to help identify what kind of arts and cultural offer each resident would like. They can help ensure that an individual's daily offer is tailored specifically to their needs and preferences and facilitates a more person-centred approach.

It is important to have nominated staff leads who have the necessary dedicated time and resources to plan and prepare a wide range of exciting arts and cultural engagement opportunities. This should be done with the support and ongoing involvement of other staff within the home. The role of the manager is absolutely key in leading and facilitating the arts and cultural offer in the care home. It is clear that more support and specialist training is required for staff in all roles.

There is an opportunity for arts and cultural partnerships to play an important role in embedding arts and creative provision in care settings. There are many benefits to be had from partnership working with individual care homes and care provider groups. The development of suitable resources that can be used by many different care homes would also be very helpful.

The creative ideas, vibrancy and energy that artists can bring to care settings is of great value. Artists need to be fairly paid for their work, and funding for artists to develop more creative resources and training opportunities for care home staff is needed.

The role of everyday creativity is of great value, including crafts such as knitting, sewing and woodwork and baking, nature and multi sensory related activities. These activities may be more accessible to a larger number of both residents and staff including those who do not identify as wanting to engage with arts or creative activities. We suggest that care settings also try to take activities out of the activity room into every corner of the care home, and recommend the development of mobile resources such as dressing up boxes, poetry satchels and party trolleys. These can be taken from room to room, including to bed bound residents or left in communal spaces in order to encourage spontaneous interaction.

Finally, access to technology and digital resources are of course essential to the conversation. Online sessions, digital activity packs, concerts and performance via Zoom and interactive games played a vital role in keeping residents and staff connected to an arts and cultural offer during the pandemic. Developing this offer will be an important part of the picture, moving forward.

Context

It is important to emphasise the context in which this consultation was carried out, the global COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a massive impact on care settings.

The pandemic and resulting lockdowns led to an increase in the use and change of attitude about the benefits of digital technology in care homes for creative and entertainment purposes. A NAPA survey looking at the use of technology in the provision of activity, arts and engagement between March 2020 and July 2021 in care homes in the UK, suggests a marked increase in the confidence and use of technology to facilitate digital connection in NAPA member care homes. As we return to in-person interaction, NAPA will continue to support care homes to embrace technology beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic. We must share the lessons we have learnt and ensure that care homes and Activity Providers have the skills and resources to further embed technology into the provision of activity, arts and engagement. Each time we use a tech-based approach we have an opportunity to explore new ways to connect with an individual's interests, background, culture and sense of self, allowing us to be creative, inclusive, learn more about the person we support and enable them to remain connected to the people they love and the things that matter to them most.

A notable use of the arts and creative engagement that NAPA has seen during this difficult time is as a means to reflect on and commemorate lived experience. As Mary Beard noted in a recent Guardian Article: www.theguardian.com/books/2021/sep/19/mary-beard-twelve-caesars-interview "If we want to understand what we went through in the pandemic, we need the arts."

Inspired by conversations with front-line workers, loss and bereavement specialists and national organisations, NAPA and other organisations agreed on the need for a collective digital connection to say goodbye. We chose 31 June 2020 as #StarsInMemory Day. Over 30 care organisations joined together in an act of collective meaning making, relieving the 'disenfranchisement' that many bereaved people felt, by making grief visible. #StarsInMemory lit up social media as people who wanted to join in on this collective idea, create a star, put their star up in their window, or on show, as a public and unified display of grief and loss. Doorways and corridors full of home-made stars were shared by hundreds of contributors on social media, with the event also shared in the specialist and mainstream media. This shared showing of the losses encountered during COVID-19 is one way in which the pandemic has presented us with an opportunity to highlight the creative work of care homes and to learn from each other, in the sharing of grief. It also highlights the power of social media. We hoped that the idea would spread light and ignite other creative and collective sharing rituals in the future.

Following the success of Stars in Memory, NAPA were approached by Marie Curie who were leading on a National Day of Reflection, to take place on the anniversary of the first lockdown. On March 23rd, 2021, Marie Curie and hundreds of other organisations, including NAPA marked the National Day of Reflection. The nation came together virtually to reflect on our collective loss, support those who have been bereaved and share our hope for a brighter future. Hundreds of organisations, including care homes and millions of people, paused for a minute's silence at midday and many people took to their doorsteps with their own candles, torches, and phone lights. NAPA led a national poetry campaign and published a digital anthology of poetry inviting our members and supporters to write and/or support someone else to write a quatrain (a four-line poem.) We encouraged poets to reflect on the pandemic and their experience of lockdown. We were amazed to receive hundreds of digital poems and moved by the impact the process had on many of the contributors.

On 23 March 2022, the nation will come together once again to support the millions of people bereaved during the pandemic and remember the people we've lost. As a national partner, NAPA will support the care home sector to participate and express their loss through activity, arts and engagement.

Thanks

We are very grateful to everyone who has shared their views with us and contributed to this consultation

We would particularly like to thank all the residents, staff and relatives who took the time to share their views with us.

We are also very grateful to all the participating artists, the individuals and organisations that shared their case studies with us and the following contributors:

Siobhan O’Leary

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Dr Kate Depuis

Philly Hare

George Rook

Keith Oliver

Agnes Houston

Frances Isaacs

Chris Maddocks

Mike Phillips

Mah Rana

Elizabeth Lynch MBE

Arti Prashar

Mandy Bruce

Lisa Hocking

Brendan Commane

Nichola Charalambou

About the authors

Hilary Woodhead is the Executive Director of the National Activity Providers Association (NAPA) and is responsible for all aspects of the charities work. Hilary studied Drama at university, her love of the arts and her commitment to providing arts based activities for all has underpinned her career. Before joining NAPA, Hilary led service improvement and workforce development programmes for health, housing and social care providers. She is passionate about dementia, engagement and practice development.

Alison Teader is NAPA Arts in Care Homes Programme Director and a freelance arts and health consultant. Alison has extensive experience working in creative health specialising in creative ageing and work with older people, gained from over 20 years working for a London based housing trust. She has also led on projects for leading arts organisations including Green Candle Dance and Magic Me.

Natalie Ravenscroft is NAPA Wellbeing Support Manager, a wellbeing practitioner with 15 years experience in the care and support sector, 12 of those years leading Activity Provision. Natalie is passionate about the arts, dementia and engagement and currently manages the NAPA Activity Support Service (including The NAPA Helpline and a number of initiatives to improve activity practice.

The National Activity Providers Association (NAPA) is a membership organisation for people involved in providing activities for individuals within care homes, day centres, hospitals or living in their own home. Its aim is to connect, signpost, encourage and motivate anyone with an interest in improving the lifestyle and well-being of individuals in care. NAPA provides training for care staff so they can provide person centred activities for individuals in care settings. Founded in 1997 NAPA now has over 3,000 care setting members across the UK.

napa-activities.co.uk

NAPA Arts in Care Homes (AICH) is a five-year initiative funded by The Baring Foundation, which champions the importance of the arts, creativity and cultural participation in care settings. It exists to promote The National Day of Arts in Care Homes . an annual event that takes place each year on 24 September, and sign-post resources, research and practitioners through its website. Care settings across the UK are encouraged to organise an arts related event on the day and share positive stories about creative engagement and inspire more care settings to develop an arts offer.

www.artsincarehomes.org.uk

Appendix 1 – Case studies


As part of this consultation exercise, NAPA invited several organisations and individuals doing relevant work in the field of arts in care settings to share case studies.

The aims were to:

- Highlight current best practice
- Share findings and views of people working in the field
- Help us flag up relevant issues for discussion.

Training for Artists Connecting Remotely with Social Care Settings

64 Million Artists & Luminare, Scotland's creative ageing organisation

 www.64millionartists.com • www.luminatescotland.org

 @64M_Artists • @LuminareScot

 64millionartists

 64MillionArtists • #TheWeeklyChallenge • LuminareScotland

Outline of project

64 Million Artists collaborated with Luminare to provide artists with training and resources to help them deliver at-distance creative sessions to care homes. A series of three training workshops helped practitioners connect remotely with activity co-ordinators, and supported them to provide residents and staff with enriching creative experiences. The fourteen participating artists worked in a range of disciplines, including visual arts, craft, dance, story-telling and singing.

The pilot training was designed by 64 Million Artists who have been running successful online facilitation training for cultural practitioners throughout COVID-19 pandemic. In collaboration with Luminare, three workshops were developed which aimed to build participants' confidence and skills when it comes to remote delivery. Central to the training was the collaborative relationship between artists and activity leads, helping them to prepare for a creative session and connect it to the wider cultural life of the care home.

The pilot, which was part of a programme run by Luminare and supported by Creative Scotland, was offered to Scottish-based artists as a professional development opportunity. Practitioners were invited to apply to take part and fourteen were chosen, all of whom had some experience of working in care homes or day centres. They had varying degrees of experience of working remotely, with some never having delivered an at-distance activity beforehand. Luminare awarded each participant with a bursary to support their attendance.

The three online training workshops focused on a range of topics, including use of technology; development of online session plans; provision of materials; issues of safety and risk; and online group dynamics and communication. As well as providing artists with models of

best practice, the workshops were strongly participant-led, with artists sharing their own experiences of online delivery and offering each other peer support. The three workshops ran on Zoom, lasted 2.5 hours and were held over consecutive weeks in July 2021.

To accompany the training sessions, participants were also provided with a range of accompanying resources. These included a Reflective Inquiry Activity Book which invited participants to explore areas of their practice, information sheets on topics such as Zoom best practice, and various documents and reports including case studies of successful creative projects run in care home settings.

This training pilot was very warmly appreciated by artists and Luminare who are still in the process of gathering feedback. 64 Million Artists are very keen to extend this training more widely to practitioners who, it seems likely, will work in a blended in-person/online fashion with care homes in the future. We are particularly keen to develop the training to include activity co-ordinators as well as artists, so that collaborations can be nurtured and the fuller model of at-distance delivery of creative experiences explored.

Key findings

A key point that emerged from the training was the vital importance of the artist-activity co-ordinator relationship and the need for clear communication, shared outcomes and expectations, and decent preparation for sessions.

Despite the pressures on care homes during the pandemic, those in which a manager or co-ordinator championed remote-delivered activities experienced overwhelmingly positive outcomes from sessions. These outcomes benefitted staff as well as residents.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

The training underscored the importance of the role of the manager and activity lead in making at-distance sessions a success.

What are the barriers?

Technology: having the right equipment for both practitioners and care homes can be a problem. Care homes with smart TVs found sessions more accessible.



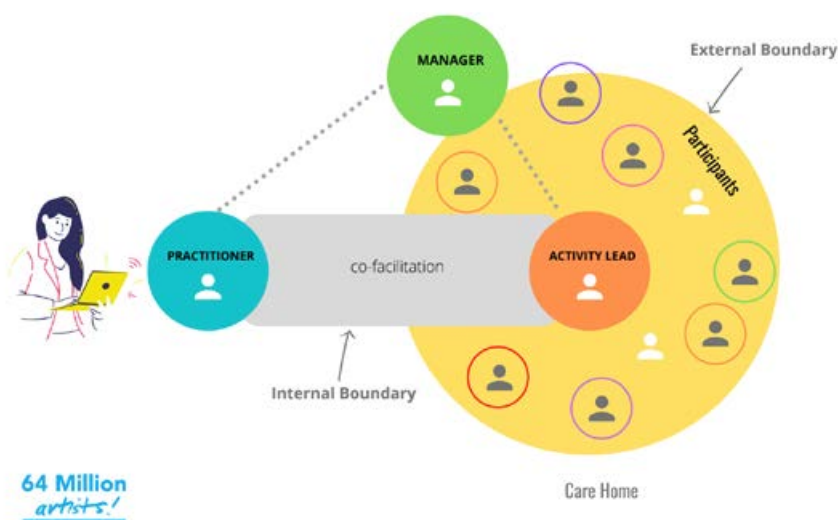
These sessions have been a brilliant support, providing me with the confidence to deliver an online session and giving me permission to be myself and trust in the process.

Feedback from participant at the end of the session.

TOP TIP


Develop a sound, long-term relationship with an artist and invest in it.


REMOTE DELIVERY TO CARE HOMES



How delivering live creative activities online can contribute to embedding creativity and culture into care provision

Bright Shadow

 www.brightshadow.org.uk

 twitter.com/brightshadow_u

 www.instagram.com/brightshadowzest

 www.facebook.com/brightshadow.uk

Outline of project

Bright Shadow is a multi-award-winning arts organisation offering creative opportunities to people living with dementia and their loved ones. Our mission is to use the power of the arts to enable people living with dementia, and those affected by it, to live well and to thrive. We do this by delivering high quality creative sessions led by professional artists in care homes and the community. We also deliver training and resources for care, arts and community organisations on creative approaches to supporting people living with dementia and we create platforms to advocate for more creativity in the care of older people and people living with dementia.



We are at the forefront of the dementia positive movement; we pioneered and have delivered Zest creative sessions in care homes across the country since 2009. Zest sessions for care home residents celebrate the present moment and combine a mix of activities: singing, sensory, movement, dance, story-making, music, quizzes and games, all scaffolded by an accessible theme.

During the first national lockdown, we used charity reserves to offer free of charge Zest arts sessions for residents and staff of 10 care homes using the video conferencing platform, Zoom. Each care home received a series of three hour-long sessions. A parcel of sensory props was sent in advance, and residents enjoyed activities on themes such as USA Road trip and Garden, led by a professional artist working from home and supported by care home staff.

The feedback from all of the care homes was extremely positive, so following the success of this pilot, we secured funding to deliver a series of 6 themed sessions for 16 care homes. This benefited a total of 293 participants and 56 members of staff.

Had it not been for the pandemic, we would never have considered delivering our sensory and highly interactive creative sessions remotely; however the extremis of the situation made us feel we simply had to try to support care home residents and staff at such a difficult time. However, it was in fact much more successful than anticipated, the parcel of sensory props and the partnership with the care home staff providing the bridge that enabled the artist to still make a connection to the participants.

With a clear theme (e.g. London, Paris, India, Sixties, Winter Wonderland), a sense of anticipation was built up in advance of each session, and we established trusting and supportive relationships between the Bright Shadow artist and the care home activity coordinators, which meant issues such as scheduling and technical difficulties could be overcome. Our years of experience and skilled and experienced practitioner brought confidence and quality to the project and meant that we were able to adapt sessions when necessary, tailoring to individual requirements and preferences.

Whilst we were initially concerned about the barrier of not being present in the room, it was suggested by some care home colleagues that the familiarity for residents of watching something on television appeared to encourage engagement for some and was not a barrier for others.

The project also gave care home staff the opportunity for some professional development, at the same time as providing a boost to morale; because of the high demands of working during the pandemic, staff were very appreciative of external input, and even the chance to share their experiences and stresses with a compassionate colleague during the artist preparation calls. For many homes experiencing Zest for the first time, they engaged with a new approach to activity provision and because the facilitator was not in the room, staff had to be more active in assisting the delivery of the session, which in turn was empowering and confidence boosting for care home colleagues.

The enthusiasm and enjoyment of care home staff led to high levels of engagement and many homes reported how residents and staff extended the content of the sessions, deepening conversations, developing existing activities and using the props in other ways. For some it became a catalyst to their own creativity, inspiring new activities – this is a key goal of Bright Shadow – embedding everyday creativity for people living with dementia and those that care for them.

Posts on the Facebook pages of homes, showing the enjoyment and engagement of their residents received warm responses from family members who were at that time unable to visit their relatives. They felt relieved and happy to see their loved ones looking happy and meaningfully active.

Summary of outcomes

In adapting work online, finding a way to still be able to provide sensory activities is key for interaction, and themes are helpful for providing variety and building anticipation. Clear and concise communication beforehand with the care home builds trust and makes for smoother sessions on the day. One of the most unexpected findings is that artists and participants can build strong connections and engagement even if they have never met in person.

Anecdotes

Seeing the power of music in action as a lady living with dementia recited a song with melody and lyrics after only being told the title, and the popularity of sixties music getting participants up and dancing out of their chairs spontaneously and dancing with one another and staff members.

Residents created stories, poems, songs, choreography and artwork, giving a sense of ownership for the participants and a freedom to express themselves.

One care home staff member commented on the fact that zoom was so effective in getting everyone's attention, she would still want to use it after the pandemic as a way of engaging her residents in activities.

All sessions contributed to positive engagement and lifted staff morale at an extremely difficult time when some had experienced loss of loved ones and residents due to the pandemic.



This afternoon some of our residents joined in with a zoom workshop from Bright Shadow. The session was so much fun and left those who took part invigorated and excited to talk about what we had done ... After the session we sat around the table to have tea and cake, and everyone spoke about it for ages. We have 2 more sessions over the next two weeks, and can't wait 'til next week.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

The success of this project rested on our experience as an organisation of delivering high quality sessions face-to-face over many years. It would have been difficult to achieve the positive engagement outcomes in such a short time frame without this body of work to adapt from. Further funding is required to ensure activities like this can continue on a regular basis as this remains the greatest barrier to residents accessing arts provision at this time. Training opportunities delivered by artists for care staff in ways to develop everyday creativity for staff and residents are needed to build confidence and skills.

TOP TIP

Use simple sensory props to stimulate conversation, movement, story-telling or role play.

What are the barriers?

Ensuring all care homes have sufficient technology provision. Many of the care homes didn't have the technology and skills to take part in the sessions and initially we had to do a lot of problem solving to set up the audio and visuals for the sessions, but once we overcame that the rewards were great.


How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

Moving our Zest care home and community sessions online and expanding the number of sessions available. Providing weekly creative newsletters and online video content suggesting simple art activities that residents/relatives could do with support from carers using items freely available in their care home or home. Providing 1 to 1 activities for people living with dementia with a professional artist, either by phone, online or in socially distanced garden visits. Connecting families separated by the pandemic through bespoke family art projects online. Providing telephone companionship and support throughout.

Culture Box: Delivering remote creative activities to care homes during the pandemic

University of Exeter

 www.cultureboxstudy.org

 @CultureBox

Outline of project

Background: People living with dementia in care homes have been severely negatively impacted during the pandemic with those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups disproportionately affected. As well as high rates of mortality, levels of social isolation, loneliness and responsive behaviours have increased as visits from family and loved ones were stopped due to social distancing measures. Regular visits from artists and creative practitioners also ceased. Culture Box aimed to respond to this by providing regular postal and digital deliveries of creative activities for use in dyads (a resident with dementia and a member of care staff) and public health guidance suitable for those with cognitive impairment.



Method: Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used to provide a dynamic and cyclical method that involved 1. Planning, 2. Action, 3. Evaluation and 4. Reflection. The Planning phase involved co-design with people living with dementia, care home staff and those from BAME communities. Action includes production and delivery of Culture Boxes every week (1 via post, followed by 3 digital boxes each month) for 12 months. Evaluation involves collection of baseline and follow data survey data on social isolation, responsive behaviours and personal preferences regarding creative activities. Dialogic interviews plus reflective notes, photos and videos are collected at 3 time points to determine the impact of materials provided. The Reflection phase includes project team notes and discussions, and alteration of materials provided if warranted.

To date, 89 people with dementia and 33 staff members across 33 care homes are participating in the study which runs until Dec 2021.

Key findings

The data is still being analysed, these are tentative findings only.

- Culture Box materials help to identify new information about care home residents, such as shared interests. This stimulates interaction and helps to build relationships
- Remote deliveries support the provision of creative activities by supplying regular ideas, inspiration and materials for use by activity coordinators
- Activities focussing on the natural world such as trees, flowers and travel are particularly valued

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

Training and career progression linked to creative skills e.g., CPD; regular artists in residence, to provide activities and to inspire and train staff; more research evidencing the health and wellbeing benefits; managerial support including. adequate and ongoing funding.

What are the barriers?

Lack of funding; task-focussed care model; staff attrition; poor quality materials and potential infantilising activities

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?


Culture Box is pandemic responsive. Additionally all my other research has had to be paused or adapted to remote activity.

TOP TIP


A professional artist in every care home


Sharing work being done in Leeds with care settings and/or older people around arts, creativity and culture.

Leeds Arts Health and Wellbeing Network

 www.lahwn.co.uk

 @LeedsAHWN

 g.montgomerie@leeds.ac.uk

 @LAHWNpage

What's happening in Leeds?

Leeds has long been interested in supporting broad engagement in the arts and exploring benefits for health, with organisations in the city having decades of experience. Most recently [Time To Shine](#) has worked with a range of organisations, using arts approaches as part of their programmes to combat social isolation and loneliness in later life.

In 2021 Leeds Arts Health and Wellbeing Network has brought people together as part of a series of webinars, to explore how [care homes can benefit from arts and culture online](#) supported by 100% Digital Leeds and Care Delivery Services. We have also launched our Creative Ageing Forum in partnership with artists, arts organisations, health and care professionals exploring how arts and culture play a role in an Age Friendly City where people age well. The forum brings together a wealth of experience and appetite for collaboration across our city and wider region. We have showcased diverse projects such as [Reasons To be Hopeful](#), an intergenerational project engaging care home residents, alongside other people identified as most likely to experience loneliness, in mixed art activities such as singing, drawing and textiles.



Existing relationships between care homes and arts organisations have led to new work that focuses on the wellbeing of care home staff as well as residents - such as [Dance Down Memory Lane](#) which has used film and dance to prompt connection between people and to their wider community. To follow are some reflections on our joined-up approach and highlights of Arts in Care Homes in Leeds from Jo Bailey, Wellbeing and Activities Co-ordinator and Catherine Smethurst, Operational Development Manager in our Care Delivery Service.

Do residents in care settings and care staff in Leeds want access to relevant creative and cultural opportunities on a daily basis?

Jo: “Yes! A few weeks ago we had a visit from Leeds Playhouse's travelling show - Fairy Poppins - on a truck where the sides come down and the actors inside the truck perform a play. It was really well done and a few residents came to me and said 'we are so glad they've come to us because we can't get to them ... they've remembered us.' You can't beat the experience of face-to-face.”

Catherine: “Definitely. Residents in care settings have embraced any opportunities to take part in creative and cultural opportunities. Feedback surveys indicate that people would love to have access to more activities generally and have been delighted when they have taken part (whether through in-house support to take part in craft activities or interactive Zoom sessions with museums and galleries, libraries, dance organisations, poetry, theatre or other arts activities).”

How are we embedding this into care provision in Leeds?

Jo: “I look after six care homes and before the pandemic I arranged regular trips for residents to all the dementia-friendly performances. I work closely with Yorkshire Dance, who have an older persons project manager, and they are running 10 weekly sessions of music and movement with residents. I train care home staff (in all departments) in creative engagements and I say, at its most basic level, if your residents look happy then you are doing a good job, if not, do something about it!”

Catherine: “To give an example Joan, who lives in a care home and who had always wanted to act, joined Leeds Playhouse’s “Reasons to be Hopeful” programme and performance – followed by a visit to Leeds Playhouse in person when it was possible. She is still in touch and hopes to continue her activities with Leeds Playhouse – it will be a great support as her care home closes and she moves to a new one. It led to a meeting with a befriending group connected with Leeds Playhouse – made up of musicians, actors and other creative people who meet with some of the residents in a different care home each week on Zoom – they talk, sing and make friends with people who are restricted in their opportunities to get out and about.

Another example is the partnership with Together With Music, who have supported care homes to make and renew connections with schools through musical events.

Yorkshire Dance also offer weekly chair-based dance classes in partnership with Leeds’ Care Services, which regularly attract up to 50 participants on Zoom. The care teams have seen the benefits of exercise, music, entertainment and connections and have promoted the events, making use of the themes to continue creative opportunities in between sessions (such as prompting discussions or through art and crafts activities).

In our day services we already use daily opportunities to access creative and cultural opportunities – such as our Complex Needs Services leading a weekly online knit and natter meeting.”

Any examples of practical steps and local partnerships that enable this in Leeds?

Jo: “I love Fragments Leeds. Their facilitator, Lily Craig, I’ve known for a long time and she approached me with the idea for an installation. The result - Bringing the Outside In - created a pop-up park within a care home lounge. We all got so much from it and it inspired a permanent garden room in one of the end rooms in the care settings.

Also Opera North did the first dementia-friendly opera - I worked with Alice Gilmour on their production of La Boheme; bringing singers into our homes as part of a programme across dementia cafes.”

Catherine: “Having community engagement workers across the service allows us to make new connections, share the experience of customers and their families, staff, volunteers, and students.”


TOP TIPS


Recommendations for people looking to develop a daily offer of creativity in a care setting:

- Ask people what they want
- Build your network - sometimes it is not what you know it’s who you know - get your connections going on Twitter and through joining mailing lists for local and national organisations. Use networks such as Leeds Arts Health and Wellbeing Network (LAHWN) to meet others and share ideas, experience and opportunities
- Encourage people to try something different - Jo says “I tell my managers - trust me!”
- Base what you do on your strengths – as individuals and as part of a group - and make the most of what you’ve got. For example through Leeds International Piano Competition Jo got support to make use of the pianos in care homes by bringing in volunteer piano players.
- Build a strong digital offer to support people who are often excluded to access far wider opportunities.

Perspectives on creating a sustainable musical care culture in care homes for older people from Live Music Now and OSJCT Monkscroft Care Centre

Live Music Now

 www.livemusicnow.org.uk

 @LiveMusicNowUK

Outline of project

Live Music Now musician Julia Turner worked with residents, the activities and care team at OSJCT Monkscroft Care Centre in Cheltenham and with a local nursery school, as well as staff members, about 10 from each. She ran participatory live music workshops over a period of 8 weeks. Julia is a professional musician, singer, songwriter who has been trained by LMN to work with people living and working in ASC settings for older people, including people living with dementia.

The aim of the residency was to make music together, have fun and to create some new music, as well as to build confidence in the team and residents at Monkscroft to carry on music between and after the sessions. Julia brought some new songs but also the aim of writing a new song together, which they achieved.



Summary of outcomes

Together they wrote a short song about the chickens who lived in the Care Centre garden. This idea emerged from conversations between the participants as a group. They named the chickens and gave each one a character, which allowed lyrics and verses to emerge around each of the chickens. This led to spontaneous singing and a jointly written song emerged about the lives of the chickens at Monkscroft, co-created by the group. Having fun, laughing and being playful were key, eg making animal noises and making up actions to go with the chorus. This helped everyone to get involved. The song is performed by Julia in a pre-recorded interactive music video she made for the residents at Monkscroft during the Lockdown.

The key to the success of the project was the way that the Julia, the team, the children and the residents worked together and that contributed to building a legacy of ongoing music in the setting. The approaches that made a difference included the following

- 1. Planning, collaboration and communication.** It was important that there was clarity from outset on what was going to happen, the logistics, the planned activity and the set up of the space. They allocated time for planning and reflection on each visit of the musician, talking about what they were going to do and what they had just done. This led to sharing things, learning throughout the process and meant that the group could be adaptable to new ideas. Also the Team in the setting made sure Julia was made to feel welcome and part of the team.
- 2. Regular, consistent group; both residents and staff taking part in the activity.** This built relationships which facilitated trust and confidence and a shared way of working. This allowed for improvising and ad-libbing. This included a cross-team involvement, including carers, which meant there was a whole home approach, including, crucially, support from the Home Manager.

3. **Set up of activity space.** It was important to make sure that the set-up of space was considered and laid out in advance to meet the needs and overcome barriers faced by those of who will be coming; asking what will support people to be able to take part ?
4. **Learning & creating together.** The group were all doing something new together, including Julia, and therefore, learning and creating something new together. This helped the sense of group with a shared experience and ownership of something new; everyone was a learner.

Key findings

Carefully planned and delivered participatory live music activities that involve all, building on their strengths knowledge and skills can support the growth of a new musical skills and confidence in the setting and contribute to a legacy of ongoing music activity . Targeting work to a fixed group of residents and staff over time rather than trying to reach as many people as possible can build something strong that is more likely to build grow and remain, benefiting the whole home. The people living and working at Monkscroft continue with regular music activities and recently independently wrote a song together to mark an OSJCT event.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

Planning , collaboration and communication, regular, consistent group participants (both residents and staff taking part in the activity), considering the set up of the space and learning & creating together, and of course having fun

What are the barriers?

Lack of time and confidence, or people feeling they do not have the skills or know-how to work with music in a person-centred, interactive and meaningful way and include it in the day-to-day life of the setting.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

We took all our provision online, apart from some doorstep and garden concerts. We produced **an online library of free pre-recorded live music content**, and weekly Facebook live concerts, targeted at older people living in care and the community. We carried out live interactive music residencies over Zoom, with people living in care homes, including music making 1 to 1 sessions, using digital music tech. We produced and distributed DVDS of live music content. We ran online care professional workforce development activities both live and pre-recorded, and produced **online information** to support music activities to carry on in the face of difficult and changing circumstances



Working at Monkscroft was such a joy, because all the staff were so welcoming and really took the time to introduce me to the setting when I first arrived, which doesn't always happen. I think it's such an important thing. I really felt I knew where I was and got a feel for how the place worked.

Julia Turner LMN
musician

TOP TIPS

Everyone is a musician, and has musical identity; taking the time to explore this, having fun, and being playful, will help music to grow in a setting.

Use of personal storytelling to increase creative communication opportunities in care homes

City, University of London

Lydia Davis, research speech and language therapist

 @STARs_CityUni

Outline of project

Stories help us share and explain who we are, where we've come from, and things that have happened to us. Communicating and connecting with the people around us through telling stories improves mood, confidence, and wellbeing. Maintaining and supporting the communication skills of care home residents, however, can present a unique set of challenges, due to a high incidence of physiological, sensory, neurological, and emotional/psychological needs, as well as situational and environmental limitations.



At City, University of London we have developed a novel personal storytelling group intervention programme called STARs (STorytelling for older Adults in Residential settings). STARs aims to increase communication activities and promote stronger social networks within care homes by targeting the quality of personal stories and the communication skills needed to tell them effectively.

We recently completed a pilot study of the STARs programme in Sherwood Grange residential care home. The STARs programme was delivered by Head Lifestyle Coordinator, Kimberley Atkin, over 4 consecutive weekly sessions. Training and support were provided by the project Research Assistant, Lydia Davis (a qualified SLT). Sessions focused on 3 key areas of the storytelling experience: selection and sharing of personal stories; story structure; and exploring and extending vocabulary use. Accessibility, collaboration, reciprocal communication (rather than one-way delivery of an activity) and a relaxed, conversational, group environment are key principles in the STARs approach. Some residents chose to bring items with personal meaning and value (such as photos or art work) to show the group, which helped to stimulate recall and discussion of memories and anecdotes. We used a variety of prompt questions such as “What was/is your best age?” and “Have you ever had a pet?”, but aimed to let conversation flow naturally, rather than sticking rigidly to a predetermined output from the individual sessions. Enlarged images of paintings and portrait photography were used to inspire and stimulate group descriptive language tasks (e.g. describing a selection of paintings and portrait photography) as well as a STARs narrative framework template to help structure stories and aid recall of previous sessions.

Key findings?

The response to STARs was positive and the programme was found to be feasible within the setting and acceptable to both residents and staff. Storytelling and mental wellbeing assessments were used before and after the STARs programme to measure any changes in these domains. Early analysis indicates improvement in mental wellbeing and observed changes in the use of descriptive language (adjectives and adverbs) in some individual participants.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

I think there can be an assumption or sense that creative opportunities and interactions require a prepared activity. With the right training, staff can facilitate resident storytelling/ recall and discussion of memories and anecdotes pretty much anywhere, at any time, without relying on specific resources. It's great to get residents together for a specific activity but if that's not possible, for whatever reason, we can bring the opportunity for creative and meaningful interaction to them.

What are the barriers?

As is often the case, limited time and resources can be barriers. There may also be concerns about whether residents will be able to understand and/or contribute to certain activities. Specialist training (e.g. from a speech and language therapist) could help residents access daily opportunities for interaction and creativity.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

We had originally intended to carry out a controlled trial in 2 care homes but this wasn't possible due to COVID-19 restrictions. Instead, we ran the STARs pilot study (delivered by a member of care home staff with support from the research team) and conducted 2 online surveys (of Activities Coordinators and speech and language therapists).



I consider I have quite a wide vocabulary but I wasn't using it... It's hard to access the vocabulary now. This has forced me to go into it and find it. It's brought the vocabulary up into the present.

I thought it was interesting, the stories that came out. Some of it was very funny. There were more in it than I expected.


Resident participants


TOP TIPS

Specialist training in facilitation and consideration of the communication environment can enable residents to access interaction and creativity opportunities. This can have a huge impact on mood, confidence and wellbeing.


Magic Me's Inside Out Project: bringing together care professionals inside care homes with artists working outside to work collaboratively

Magic Me

 www.magicme.co.uk

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 @MagicMeArts

 @magicmearts

 www.facebook.com/MagicMeArts/

Outline of project

Inside Out 2021 connected care professionals in three care homes in Waltham Forest with artists. Pooling knowledge, skills and expertise, they worked together equally to respond to the unique challenges care homes face – developing creative ideas and activities to benefit residents during this time.

In response to the challenges care homes faced as the pandemic and government restrictions persisted, we adopted ways of working that would:

Be adaptable to each care homes' circumstances; **Be flexible** so plans could change; Be supportive of care professionals' time and energy; **Be able to work remotely** in the likely case that artists would not be able to visit.

Each team identified a central question relevant to their care home to guide and inspire the activity design.

At Alliston House, care professionals, Sandra and Agnes, and artist, Georgia Akbar, asked the question:

“How can we create a sense of occasion across units, whilst taking care to include residents who prefer to stay in their rooms?”

They created and experimented with a colourful, carnival-inspired, mobile entertainment trolley that moved seamlessly to different units and rooms with a variety of activity offers. Multi-sensory experiences of music and moving images were made possible with a bluetooth speaker and HD projector. An ongoing collaborative scrapbook activity has given care professionals an opportunity to do detailed 1:1 work with residents. Residents and staff shared ideas and imagined future activity for the trolley including beauty therapy and gardening.

At Mapleton Road care professionals, Cathy and Linda, and artists, Ishwari Bhalerao and Leonie Rousham (Knead) asked the question: “How can we create group euphoria?”

The collaborators experimented with bread-tasting with residents, encouraging them to share their views and explore memories, stories and conversation. Inspired by how much these conversations helped care professionals to know the residents better, they began experimenting with sound recordings of impromptu singing and creative interviews with staff and residents on different themes.

A tablet with a user-friendly, accessible interface designed by the artists continues to build an interactive archive of sound recordings. It also forms part of the ‘Activities Arcade’ a customisable pegboard with a range of collaborative activities tailored to residents’ interests which also provides a permanent exhibition space for artworks at the home.



At George Mason Lodge care professionals, Pat and Maxine, and artists, Chuck Blue Lowry with Paula Varjack asked the question:

“How can we create activities and events that can be carried out in a covid-safe way, that bring variety and connection to the residents’ lives?”

Artists and care staff explored Scrapbook activities and resources that stimulated conversation and reminiscence. Inspired by existing ‘reminiscence walls’ in residents’ rooms, residents each produced a mobile scrapbook to share with friends and family that could be taken to newly constructed outdoor ‘pods’ for visits within COVID-19 restrictions. The collaborators also worked together to throw a socially-distanced, COVID-safe ‘Mad Hatters Tea Party,’ attended by staff and residents. Activities included party games, creative ‘conversation starters,’ an interactive photo booth and Polaroid photoshoot (with interchangeable parts to be used for future themed sessions) , party decor, and refreshments.

Key findings

The model of artists and care professionals working together in equal collaboration, and identifying a ‘central question’ meant that Inside Out activity was bespoke and met the unique needs of each care home, meaning in many cases the activities or resources created had potential for legacy beyond the project.

Across all three homes the staff reported how much they valued the opportunity, and protected time, to work one to one with residents and that the creative stimulus helped unlock information and stories that might otherwise not have been elicited.

Support with technology and wifi access is key: Magic Me staff time and project budget was used to support care homes access technology and data to keep communications and project activity going, as well as realise their creative ideas.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

Empowering staff through working in a collaborative way with artists/creatives that acknowledges their professional expertise gives them the confidence to take on the delivery of creative activities.

Protected time, supported by management, for care staff to work with residents one to one and as a group builds an important level of knowledge and connection meaning arts activity is tailored to the resident and their likes and dislikes.

Investment in technology opens up possibilities for creativity with residents (for example sound recordings, play lists, projections), but also opens up communication pathways for family members to get involved in creative activities (mobile phones with data and messaging/email capacity),

What are the barriers?

Lack of time for care staff to carry out one to one activities with residents – all who took part in the project reported how useful and rewarding this was but that it was only because they had protected time for the project that they were able to have these interactions.

Lack of technology – see above – many homes have no home wide wifi and rely on staff to use their own data packages to help residents stay connected with the outside world or enjoy online creative stimulation – the multi sensory elements of the Inside Out project – film, music, audio recordings – were really beneficial but needed technology to make them happen – particularly for residents who do not leave their rooms.

“

What it done for me – brought out some creative side that I did not know that I had... The more I did, the more I wanted to put in. For me it’s brought out something I didn’t know I could do. I’m confident to do anything and I found it very enjoyable to do. Have been given the tools to do that job, by Magic Me.”

Care Professional

Lack of confidence – both care staff and managers were unsure they could meet the challenge of carrying out creative activities when the artist would not be on-site to help them. The work with the artists and on the project provided them with that confidence and ensured a future for the work in those particular homes.

TOP TIPS

Find time to take activities to the residents and have a range of activities that can be adapted to each person.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?


With artists working mostly from the outside of the care home, Care staff were often the eyes and ears for artists on how activities were going with residents, meaning the need for them to be equally valued for their specialist knowledge and skills was even more important.


Basing the project around identifying a central question and creating creative activities and solutions from this, meant the project was flexible and adapted to each home's needs their COVID response.

Supporting care staff with set up and access to technology so that communication with artists, project staff and residents' family was possible.


Making music an integral part of dementia care

Music for Dementia, The Utley Foundation

 www.musicfordementia.org.uk

 @MusicforDemUK

 MusicforDementia

 @musicfordementiaUK

Outline of project

The Music for Dementia campaign was set up in response to the ILC-UK Commission report, the first of its kind, investigating the role of music in dementia care. It highlighted that whilst there was some excellent provision available, it wasn't available at scale, services were patchy and fragmented, and music had an image problem – people weren't aware of the power of music for people living with dementia.

By convening a group of cross sector experts and leaders across the political, care, musical services delivery and research sphere, we could begin to identify challenges and areas of progress, where existing partnerships already existed and who we could count on to support and champion the role of music in dementia care.

This exercise was instrumental in building early buy-in, engagement and interest from a wide group of stakeholders (over 1,500 contributed). This rigorous approach provided a great deal of credibility, opened doors and established early partnership that have been essential to our own going work.

The publication of the 'What Would Life Be Without A Song and A Dance' report and launch in the House of Lords, was a watershed moment. The report set out a compelling argument for the power of music for people living with dementia – the latest evidence, a baseline, the backing of wide range of potentially influential allies, and critically, a set of clear recommendations for a path forward. It also helped to clarify our role in this ecosystem - not only to fund front-line services, but to champion the cause and to keep the agenda in the spotlight so that we could work towards systemic change.

As a philanthropic foundation, we wanted to provide more than just money. One of the most value-add roles we took one was that of unifying and mobilising a disjointed ecosystem. Through this act we have created a common purpose, language and messaging around the power of music for people with dementia and, as an alliance, we have been a much more visible and powerful agent for change.

This linking together of organisations has enabled the sharing and co-creation of resources for care settings, carers, social workers, GPs and health services. Partnership working across sectors has been essential in building momentum around the campaign. The cross-fertilisation of ideas, experiences and skills from the different sectors has informed our strategic priorities.

Like everyone else, we did not anticipate COVID and the impacts it would have and continue to have. We were no different to others in pivoting and reassessing how we could continue to support during a period of intense uncertainty and anxiety. At the beginning of 2020, we did not anticipate that we would be delivering an online music service in the form of m4dradio.com, nor did expect to be gifted £500,000 which we disseminated into the ecosystem in May 2021. This has been given a further boost through an additional £100,000 from the National Academy for Social Prescribing.

As we begin to recover and rehabilitate from the pandemic, we will continue to support organisations wanted to embed music into the care they provide and support those providing musical services, influence and lobby, alongside continuing to promote the benefits of music for people living with dementia.

Summary of outcomes

Commissioned the ILC-UK report resulting in:

- More coherence in the music and dementia space
- Greater partnership working towards a common purpose, language and messaging around the power of music for people living with dementia
- Formed the Music for Dementia campaign

Activity of the campaign has resulted in:

- Greater awareness around the power of music for people living with dementia through media activity, campaigns and social media
- The issue being picked up by the BBC – music and dementia was the focus for BBC Music Day 2019, Our Dementia Choir and the creation of BBC Music Memories resource
- More services being supported through funding from The Utley Foundation and through the campaign's Paul and Nick Harvey Fund resulting in more people having access to music
- Delivery of the m4dradio.com
- Creation of the first ever Musical Map for Dementia
- Creation of an Information hub in the Music for Dementia website
- A suite of resources and guides including DHSC endorsed Social Worker's guide
- Inclusion of music in the COVID dementia strategy
- A range of strategic partnerships across sectors – health, care, music industry, dementia
- MP Champions for the campaign
- Recognition of the campaign by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
- Unlocked £100,000 of funding from the National Academy for Social Prescribing for the Paul and Nick Harvey Fund taking the total amount disseminated to the sector from the Fund to £600,000. This is addition to the last seven years of funding from The Utley Foundation to organisations working in the music and dementia space.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

Specifically relating to music, (but applies to all arts) a commitment from care providers of all sizes that they will make music an integral part of the care they provide. There needs to be a commitment to culture and behaviour change, workforce development and funding. Staff need to be supported, encouraged and celebrated for embedding music into care.

This commitment needs to be top down and in doing so it creates and gives permission for people to bring the arts and creativity into the care they provide.

Staff need to be enabled – they need to feel they have permission, confidence and creativity to incorporate music and the arts into the care they provide because it is valued and recognised as integral to good care.

It begins with a very public declaration from senior leaders from across the care sector that they value music and the arts and that they are making a commitment to embedding it into the care they provide by leading culture and behaviour change and investing in workforce development and provision of specialist music / arts services as needed.

Ideally, in the future, care settings, become cultural hubs in our communities. They celebrate life through the arts and culture, supporting connections, creating places and spaces people want to work and live in, and create social value around what it means to be part of the caring professions.

What are the barriers?

Lack of:

- Awareness and understanding
- Valuing of music and the arts
- Leadership on the role of music and the arts in care
- Skills - training and ongoing support for carers in using music and the arts as part of care
- Culture and behaviour – perceptions around music and the arts being a ‘nice to have’ rather than a ‘necessity’
- Sustained commitment from the sector to use music and the arts to deliver personalised care

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?


- Focused on supporting delivery organisations through the creation of the Paul and Nick Harvey Fund
- Creation and delivery of m4dradio.com
- Transformed the Musical Map into a directory of online and digital musical services
- Developed COVID specific guides and resources to help people use music
- Convened the Musical Care Taskforce online

TOP TIP


To remember that we are all musical beings and that we can all make the music happen at any moment – from knowing when to put on a favourite song or piece of music, to singing when delivering personal care, using music to create a sense of community, to requesting support from musical services.


Archives; how we can inspire, enthuse and promote wellbeing in care homes.

The National Archives

 www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

 [Twitter.com/UKNatArchives](https://twitter.com/UKNatArchives)

 The National Archives

 The National Archives/The National Archives Education Service

Outline of project

One striking thing about the COVID lockdowns was how they both united and isolated people. We saw wonderful local initiatives but also the impact on mental health. We became more aware of our vulnerability, of the importance of social contact and our reliance on the digital, whether for shopping or culture. It was far worse for those lacking familiar ways to socialise; we learned how isolation affects people every day.

When Arts in Care Homes started their Pen Pals initiative [The National Archives' Outreach service](#) jumped on board. The simple act of writing regularly to care home residents helped us to feel useful. Eighteen months and two dozen letters later, I continue to write, pleased to hear the residents enjoy learning about our varied collections.

“Betty really appreciates the Egyptians info and remembers about the exhibit. Her children were young at the time and unfortunately she didn't make it there. She said by the sound of the queue she's glad now... We chatted about the Pharaohs and then the discussion on films started. Do you have anything on the movie industry?”

Letters on subjects ranging from Irish pirates to Spring cleaning are emailed and printed for residents. I use material from our website, with lots of visuals and devise snippets and short quizzes for those who want less. I answer questions and include personal anecdotes or photographs taken on trips out. Although writing on behalf of the Archives, these letters are personal, not corporate.

In May 2020 during Mental Health Awareness week, we wrote a blog “[The Art of Kindness](#)”, which combined colouring activities with mindfulness prompts. The feedback inspired us to create [Five Photos](#), a downloadable resource with audio recordings, discussion prompts and a guide to associated multi-sensory activities. Our aim was to provide mindful activity using diverse material; a photograph from Botswana sits side by side with one from Ayrshire or Barbados, connected by common themes such as markets or street life. We wanted people to travel in their minds, engage with different worlds and continue to learn.

Archives have worked for years with people in care settings. Some offer resources that can be downloaded or loaned, others reminiscence sessions on site or in homes. Increasingly, as a sector, we use creative practice to enhance access to our collections. Art, writing or performance offer opportunities for socialisation, skills development or a sense of common purpose, seen here in our [Stories from the Streets](#) project.

Our latest project united young and older women living with dementia. [Connecting with Collections](#) involved a series of online workshops exploring historic collections via ink drawing and collage. The resulting discussions were honest and moving; the connections between participants surprisingly powerful. Art helped to provide that coming together and engagement that allowed us to bring relevance and understanding to people's lives. The stories that people share as a result is how we all learn and grow. History needn't be restricted to facts and figures. It's mainly about the stories.

Key findings

- Archives have been contributing to the wellbeing and socialisation of older communities for years through the personal, local and national collections we hold and the services that enable people to connect with and contextualise the past.
- Archive collections are often mysterious; they're not on show as in a museum, so archive professionals have to bring them to life through interpretation and creativity. Done well, this develops curiosity and connection with the histories within.
- Archival staff should feel confident that our collections are relevant to creative practitioners and audiences of all ages. We need to seek innovative ways that encourage reflection, learning and social interaction in our audiences.



The residents really enjoy hearing from you so we would love to carry on. People like Betty who prefer their own company it's really helped them connect with the outside world through the pandemic.

Activity coordinator, Pen Pal programme, 2020

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

Archives offer a variety of opportunities for the care sector. Material such as maps, photographs, film, artwork, documents, packaging, sound files and textiles can be 'packaged' and presented in various ways to add meaning, value and fun to people's lives. Understanding [what archives offer](#) is the first step: Care homes - build links with your local archive!

Archives often undertake meaningful community work to engage local audiences of all ages and there is [guidance](#) available for this. There is huge opportunity to extend this work, involving creative practitioners to bring health and educational opportunities as well as a sense of common purpose through Arts and Crafts, Performance, Music and creative writing. Archives need to be bold and open to the innovative but they need help through voluntary and paid resource and for hooking up with locally funded initiatives.

We need to harness the talent and support that exists within our local communities. Coming together with local charities, volunteers with fundraising experience, local historians and artists. Growing a network that can support opportunities for creativity in care homes would provide opportunities for sustainability and build communities beneficial to all.

What are the barriers?

- Lack of awareness that archives are accessible, interesting and generally free of charge. We have a variety of interesting collections and staff who are happy to help.
- Funding and capacity are significant challenges for archive services. Working with partners and volunteers can harness skills, tap into funded initiatives and build capacity to deliver projects which open doors to care providers and help the busy archivist do more!
- Technology can be a serious barrier to finding and understanding collections and many people prefer face to face interaction. However, technology can bring records to life to far wider audiences. They can offer a social and intellectual lifeline for people shielding or living with conditions that makes experiencing culture challenging.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

Our audiences include people who are vulnerable and when COVID-19 broke, we weren't sure how we could offer meaningful services or complete projects that were planned to be delivered face to face. COVID 19 has changed the way we work.

We have an even firmer commitment now to the importance of wellbeing within our projects.

Our **early colouring blog** was popular largely because it was a warm Spring and we were all stuck at home. We learned that you can capture the public mood through topical images and tapping into contemporary feelings. This May the blog had another surge in interest, a year later. Online content is flexible, it can be revisited and re-marketed.

It is okay to try new things and to learn from the process. Creativity and innovation can come out of difficult situations. Creating a mindfulness resource required a bold attitude, as well as the re-purposing of material in keeping with the current fashion for up-cycling. Archives and mindfulness aren't obvious bedfellows but it's good to question traditional roles in the effort to connect and help. Archives should celebrate that our collections can engage people emotionally and experientially, not just intellectually.

The Connecting through Collections Arts project proved that being in the same room is only one way of connecting people. The regional spread brought a novelty we hadn't anticipated and trialling an inter-generational mix whilst combining art and collections online took a lot of planning. However, the support that people showed for each other on this project amazed me. Creating art together, where there was both similarity in gender as well as differences in age and disability resulted in meaningful interaction that rivalled on-site engagement. Creative practice feeds this, it provides a 'safe' space and common purpose.

Finally, engagement doesn't need to be big and showy. Simply sending a letter with a funny or beautiful photograph, a historical snippet or an anecdote works. People love to learn and develop themselves, they want to interact with the cultural world in a way that suits their needs.


The kindness of our approach, the innovation and creativity we bring helps us to engage new audiences and find what is best in ourselves – our need to connect.

TOP TIP

Open your mind to new possibilities; don't be scared to blend the traditional and the contemporary, the known and the unknown

Museum Health and Social Care Resources – Supporting health and social care professionals to use museums as part of a care practice when working with older people

Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

 www.twmuseums.org.uk/museums-health-and-social-care-service

 twitter.com/TWAMmuseums

Outline of project

The new Museums Health and Social Care resource, (MHSC) created by Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) and Northumbria University, aims to support health and social care professionals to use museums as part of a care practice when working with older people. They include activities such as Art Appreciation, Colour and Mood, The Roman Herb Garden, Food in Tudor times and Cosmetics through the Ages.

We wanted to cross reference specific cultural activities that the museum's Culture, Health and Communities team were delivering to participants with specific clinical outcomes that can be attributed to those kinds of activities. In doing this we aim to help health and social care professionals make the connections to the outcomes for their patients.

Through developing a strong partnership between Tyne & Wear Archive & Museums and Northumbria Universities' Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, we created a steering group whose role was to oversee this project. The group was made up of a multi-disciplinary team of health and social care practitioners and academics (occupational therapists, physiotherapists, mental health nurses, social worker, and older people's nurses).

The ultimate aim of the project is to use museum resources and collections to support quality of life improvements for older people. Our progress so far has led to the development of this set of activities that will support health and social care professionals to use TWAM's collection to support a range of healthy ageing and rehabilitation needs.

The MHSCS resource is unique, in that it is searchable through the quick reference section identifying clinical and care outcomes. It suggests activities and identifies how these activities could specifically support health and wellbeing, for example: pain management, speech, cognitive stimulation, mental health, social interaction, etc. The clinical and care outcomes have been coded to categories: Physical/Mobility, Social, Cognitive/ knowledge/Learning and Mindful/Emotional.

Alongside the resource we are currently developing short films that can be used to support staff leading their own facilitated heritage workshops with patients, service users and clients. We are also developing other training opportunities for health and social care professionals to build confidence in using museums and galleries, together with a set of loans boxes that can be used outside the museum to try out activities. As well as supporting the existing professionals, we are also working with the up and coming workforce as the resource will be used as part of nurse education at Northumbria University.



We see these resources as a living collection of useful ideas that will be added to and adapted, so keep in touch by looking on the TWAM website and signing up to our mail out for news about new activities, upcoming films, activity boxes and training opportunities.

Key findings

Health and social care professionals have been encouraged to support the quality of life improvements for the older people they work with by making connections to the resources. As a result staff have thought differently about how to create positive health and social outcomes for their patients.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

A mutual and clear understanding of aims and outcomes from both the cultural and care staff.

Promote the benefits of the activities in the resource and share lessons learned with other professionals.

Keep an open mind – what new ideas can be added to the ongoing activities and outcomes

What are the barriers?

Finding staff that understand what we are trying to achieve by embedding cultural activities into care. Most care staff we work with are enthusiastic, however this way of working can be new to them and creating the time away from their care duties can be a factor.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

During lockdown, when museum staff couldn't enter care homes we made the Museums Health and Social Care resources accessible to care staff to use with participants. The staff were very grateful to receive such resources when they couldn't get residents out and about and no friends or family could visit.

As well as the resources, we sent over 600 postcards showing artworks from our galleries to care home residents in Tyneside. We asked residents what they thought about the artwork illustrated. This led to a pen pal project during lockdown. We set up a free-post address, so residents could write back to us.



The museum activities are something to look forward to when working through my stress and loneliness.

Participant from South Shields

TOP TIP

Promote the potential health benefits from the activities from the beginning to encourage staff to make the activities part of their care plan.

Everyday Creativity – creating meaningful in the moment connections

Everyday Creativity

✉ everydaycreativitycare@gmail.com

📷 @_everydaycreativity

Summary of project

The Everyday Creativity Care project was commissioned by East Sussex Public Health and Sussex based Arts Organisation, Culture Shift. Local artists, Sarah Bryant, Marisa Gardner and Lucy Groenewoud, all with experience of working creatively in care homes, explored the impact of creative activities during lockdown in nine care homes within Sussex.

Lucy, Sarah and Marisa say:

The Everyday Creativity Care Project was designed as “COVID proof”. We began the project in lockdown and hoped by the end of the six months we would be facilitating session in care homes; however, the entire project was conducted remotely.

We started with a consultation development period, working with family members of residents and Activity Coordinators (AC’s). Many AC’s told us that they had felt isolated during the pandemic, and some said they felt “Stale” - desperately in need of inspiration for creative activities and connection. In response we set up a support Whatsapp group and weekly Zoom sessions for AC’s. This created a space for AC’s to network with local peers, share ideas and benefit from our creative support as artists. The AC’s took part in gentle creative activities in the Zoom sessions, an opportunity for them to creatively express themselves in a safe, peer supported space.

The focus of the Everyday Creativity Care Project was to encourage “in the moment”

creative interactions between care staff and residents. We consulted with dementia experts to create multi-sensory dementia friendly materials, resources and evaluation tools. We were mindful that the resources needed to be portable and minimise any creative “mess”. Printed resources needed to be wipe-able and any documentation that was needed was simple and to the point, conscious of the increased paperwork all care staff were subjected to during the pandemic. The key component of the project was a selection of Creative Cards co-designed by artists and Activity Coordinators along with quality art and multi sensory materials. The Creative Cards offered a selection of topics that would appeal to the residents, as well as having multi layered options, so they could be used in different settings. They can be used for short interactions or for group activities. Crucially they can be used in a more person centred, one to one style that is more suited to residents that do not normally wish to participate in communal activities, those that are non-verbal, have visual impairments, or those that are isolating or confined to their beds. There is something for everyone to engage with. We also encouraged the use of technology, with many AC’s saying their technology use and skills had greatly improved over the project duration. Residents were encouraged to use technology for example taking photographs or virtually visiting art galleries around the world.

The project measured the impact that these interactions have on the well-being of residents over the course of the pilot project. The officially recognised Canterbury Wellbeing Scale was used, which was devised to evaluate the effects of “in the moment” art-based interventions for those living with Dementia.





After a session they are a lot more relaxed and a lot more at ease, more tired, but that's a good thing, it's from doing something not from boredom.

Tracy AC

Summary of outcomes

We were keen to stress to the Activity Coordinators that the cards were a great springboard to a conversation with the residents and that enjoying the creative process was more important than striving for a finished article!

- Many AC's reported that a card on a particular subject could veer off onto many other topics of conversations, revealing much more about the individual resident than they previously knew
- Evaluating the creative sessions helped to illustrate to the AC's the impact their work has on the residents and boosted confidence in the importance of their role.
- Residents enjoyed the multi-sensory cards, i.e., Tea Tasting or "portable seaside" with sand and shells, these activities also piqued the interest of many other care staff within the homes.
- The 121 sessions gave them a greater understanding of the residents as individuals which helped them devise future sessions with them in mind
- One home is now looking to change the title of Activity Coordinator to Wellbeing Coordinator.
- Most homes intend to roll out the program with the rest of their residents as well as continue to use the wellbeing scales to monitor the feelings of their residents.
- Residents showed a marked improvement to their feelings of happiness and wellbeing and expressed more interest in the activities.

Over the 134 sessions delivered over the 8 home the results were as follows:

- 77% of participants reported an Increase in their feeling of Happiness.
- 54% of participants reported an Increase in their feeling of Wellness.
- 78% of participants reported an Increase in their feelings of being Interested.
- 70% of participants reported an Increase in feeling Confident.
- 64% of participants reported an Increase in Optimism.

These were a wonderful insight into how the residents were responding to the project, and the final results of the pilot scheme has been labelled as "impressive" by East Sussex Public Health.

- Some residents that normally spend much of their time in their rooms, were now staying in the lounge after lunch, as they had a greater interest in the creative cards.
- ACs feel that the project has given them new and interesting ways of working, with materials that they can use to engage all residents regardless of their abilities.
- The project encouraged the homes to share photos and videos of their residents using the cards, trying new things, giving their opinions, or telling their stories. These were shared on the @everydaycreativitycare Instagram page which had great engagement from family members and other care home staff keen to try out creative ideas and questions. One Activity Coordinator felt that using one of the cards meant she got to really know a new resident after her only being there for 2 weeks. Another felt honoured that a normally shy resident opened up to her more.

Key findings

- Evaluation Scales were more popular than anticipated – AC like to see the impact they are having.
- Person centred approach offers meaningful opportunity for reflection and improves the happiness and wellbeing of residents.
- Using technology, i.e., Tablets was a surprise welcome to the AC's, all said that they would like to continue to use them in their roles on a regular basis.

TOP TIP

Embed creative, sense-based questions and actions into everyday conversations!

In your view, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

- Thinking about embedding creative activity into everyday interactions - as small sensory based moments and conversations that can be conducted at the same time as everyday activities. For example, washing - i.e., feel of water or smell of soap; dressing – favourite colours, feel of clothes and textures.
- AC have expressed they can feel undervalued and that their time isn't protected, often pulled away to do other tasks.
- Managers need to get behind creative interactions and encourage all home staff to engage in creative conversations.
- That creative engagement is recognised as a valuable tool in boosting the wellbeing of residents and could improve the harmony of a care home.
- Regular interactions with outside artists, with or without the Activity Coordinators involvement, network bolster the confidence in the AC's and gives them ideas to implement within the home. Refreshes their knowledge.

What are the barriers?


- Time – need to ensure that enough hours are put in place for “creativity”
- Expected outcomes of the manager/home – i.e., “activities are not just about producing a finished article.” Many AC feel pressured to get as many residents as possible around a table doing a set activity to produce something. The ECC project is person centred and flexible and is complementary to any existing activities schedule.


How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

As the project was devised with COVID restrictions in mind, it is already tailored with isolation in mind, as it's flexible and complements and existing activity. However, as restrictions ease, the project hopes that family members will get involved and use the resources to enjoy with their loved ones during their visits.

Collections in Care Homes

Manchester Museum

 www.museum.manchester.ac.uk
www.mmfromhome.com
www.mmfromhome.com/resources-for-carers

 @McrMuseum
 @MM_Connects
 @MM_Families

Manchester Museum has many years' experience of working with older adults, developing age friendly programmes with older people as participants, artists or activists, sharing our ambition to be the most inclusive, caring and imaginative museum. The Museum is host to the 'Creative Ageing Development Agency' (CADA), a national organisation advocating for and supporting the culture sector to be more age friendly.

As part of our Age Friendly work the Museum leads the city's Culture Champion programme, a cultural activism and leadership scheme for people aged 50 and over. The programme builds upon Manchester's citizen-based approach to ageing. This long-standing approach seeks to improve the quality of life for older people and make the city a better place to grow older.

The ethos of the Culture Champions programme is to work "with and for, not to" local people. This champions agency, active participation and work led by older people themselves. This long-standing approach seeks to improve the quality of life for older people and make the city-region a better place to grow older. We do this by working with a wide range of partners such as housing providers, voluntary and community organisations and care communities as well as with a wide number of cultural organisations across Greater Manchester.

As our work with older people has evolved we have developed a number of resources, inspired by the collection, which can be accessed in the museum or in care settings through our website. The resources range from bespoke online programmes tailor made to the interest of the participants to a Cultural First Aid kit packed with creative activities. The Museum worked with culture partners across the city to develop a Creative Care Kit that can be downloaded by individuals or care home staff and to use in their own setting. The Creative Care Kit has creative activities, from colouring sheets, inspired by museum collections, to creative writing resources: www.mmfromhome.com/resources-for-carers

In addition to online resources the Museum is working in partnership with Anchor Hanover Group to develop a This is my Life! Museum of life programme. Based in two of their local care settings the participants have been able to engage in some initial befriending creative activities using the museum collections. Our preliminary activities have enabled the residents to share stories, and experience from every aspect of their, life from child-hood through to their senior years. All our sessions have enabled discussion, conversation, reminiscence through creativity activity inspired by Museum collections. As the programme develops we will share learning through a tool kit developed for care settings and cultural organisation collaborations.

Key findings

Keep the activities simple and sensory. Allow time for conversation. Run the activities at the same time and same day of the week.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

Key contacts within care settings and cultural organisations who are engaged and willing to develop a partnership. Give time to get to know each other partnerships don't develop overnight, you need to work on developing relationships and trust.

What are the barriers?

Staffing resources.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

At Manchester Museum we placed are resources online and continued developing engagement projects which ran via zoom.



We are communicating aren't we Karen!


Wellington Lodge


TOP TIP


Keep activities simple and have resources readily available so participants can continue at own pace when facilitator isn't there.

Love through double glazing and joy in a box – finding new ways to connect with care homes in COVID Times

Vamos Theatre

 www.vamostheatre.co.uk

 twitter.com/vamostheatre

 www.instagram.com/VamosTheatre

 www.facebook.com/VamosTheatre

Outline of project

Established in 2006, led by Artistic Director Rachael Savage, Vamos Theatre is the UK's leading full mask theatre company. Since 12-13 our work has reached 183,600+ people, including over 165,000 audiences, and more than 18,500 through our learning & participation programmes, including through digital means and innovative performance methods as we have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Vamos Theatre was awarded grants for work in 2020 on a remount of *Sharing Joy*, a production created for people living with dementia, which takes place inside care homes. When lockdown restrictions came into place in March 2020, it became clear that going into care homes and hospices was not going to be possible for the foreseeable future, so we devised an alternative project in order to be able to connect with and have a positive impact on the wellbeing of residents and staff.

The revised activity included: *Love Through Double Glazing*, a new COVID-safe performance responding to the corona virus pandemic to take place outside and in the grounds of residential care settings, and *Joy In A Box*, a sensory-activity Advent Calendar.

Both projects were aimed at delivering joy, music and laughter; a much-needed boost after an incredibly challenging six months of lockdown.

Funding was from a range of sources, including Worcestershire and Warwickshire County Councillors, The Sir Barry Jackson Trust, Warwickshire County Councillors, Richard Cadbury, The Glencora Fund, Creative Scotland and Prime Foundation to remodel our activities to meet current need and circumstances, and supported more widely by our 2018-22 funding through Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation. Due to a number of barriers encountered engaging with hospice settings during this time (due to the nature of the settings and many being in crisis-management mode), we had to refocus the project to engage with a wider range of care settings than originally envisaged. Alongside care-homes, additional settings instead included Gloucestershire and Herefordshire residential settings for young adults with learning disabilities, *Sense in Birmingham* (adults and children who are deaf-blind, have sensory impairments or complex needs), a hospice and a dementia-focused hospital ward in Wolverhampton. *Love Through Double Glazing* was created especially for care homes, day centres and other settings where residents have needed to stay isolated. The show is staged entirely outside (with windows closed), but viewed from the inside where it's warm, cosy and, most importantly, safe. Funny, cheeky and unashamedly silly, *Love Through Double*

Glazing brings clowning, music, food fights, bubbles and ballet, even a real-life dog, creating the ultimate armchair enjoyment – all from the safety of a window seat.

Joy in a Box is an Activity Advent Calendar - open up the big, red box and inside there are twenty-four activities for residents and staff, one for each day running up to Christmas. Joy in a Box was sent to fifty care homes, hospices and day centres ahead of 1st December – distributed free of charge to recipients in 2020. The box included activities and sensory games, especially created music play lists, giant balloons, elastics and scarves, plus digital access to some of our performances and short films suitable for people living with Dementia. There were also guides on creative play and ideas for interactive and communal events, including a family disco and a carol service, to help support staff over the festive period.



You captured the heart of everyone here. To see everyone laughing was priceless, it meant the world to us

Staff member, Red House Care Home

Summary of outcomes

Funding allowed us to test the production through a series of 6 pilot performances at settings in Worcestershire and Warwickshire in November 2020, reaching approximately 172 residents. Following the successful pilot, the production was re-

Rehearsed and toured for 22 performances at settings in Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and West Sussex as detailed below, reaching approximately 564 residents in May 2021. Funding allowed us to provide 50 Joy In A Box packages to 49 settings, including

Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Birmingham, Wolverhampton and in Scotland, reaching approximately 1396 residents (based on an estimate of 50% of residents engaging).

What steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

In many ways they already are – keep making them affordable, durable and inclusive, find your champion in an organisation and then there is no stopping you.

What are the barriers?

Be fearless and remember how willing care homes are to embrace arts and creativity.

Believing things are possible

Limited funds for care homes to spend on creativity and arts.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

Love Through Double Glazing and Joy In A Box were specifically created as a result of COVID and the limitations and changes it imposed on us.


We devised this production during Autumn 2020, with Artistic Director Rachael Savage and Vamos Theatre collaborator Sean Kempton (Cirque du Soleil) working together across Zoom to create material, before socially distanced rehearsals together in Worcester.


TOP TIP

Consult and involve people living in any care provision they will know what they want and like, be daring and work and collaborate in partnership with care providers.

The Home: creating an experience of residential care using theatre and digital gaming.

Christopher Green

 thedigitalhome.org
www.christophergreen.net

 [@entelechyarts](https://twitter.com/entelechyarts)
[@kit_green](https://twitter.com/kit_green)
[@thealbanyse8](https://twitter.com/thealbanyse8)

Outline of project

My work with Entelechy has been going on for over 10 years. I'm an Artistic Associate there. I've been involved in the tea dances, I started by hosting them and me as my character Ida Barr and now as myself. The Home was an idea I had five years ago – we did 3 years of R&D and that came out of work I had been doing going into care homes, both for Entelechy and an Ida Barr project I did. One of the other sides of my work was making immersive shows and it seemed an obvious thing to make an immersive show about a care home, a really hardcore theatrical offer to say 'come and live in my care home' and really experience it with your body. The live show invited a core audience to come for 48 hours and have their accommodation, food, entertainment and care provided. There was also a chance for a much larger audience to join at various times during the 48 hours. It was all about examining the balance between care and control. And care and capitalism.

We use our brains and we go 'ooh residential care – it's this, it's that' but it's not until our parent or grand parent goes in or we ourselves have to that we really think about them... almost until it's too late. If experiential theatre is good for anything, it's to put us into that space and play – that's what theatre is – let's play with our fears, let's play with what it might be like its so the show is both dystopian and utopian, there's elements of both and so over the 48 hours it offers both and I think needs to push both. It was an ambitious idea and I'm proud to say that the response was amazing. The participants found it to be an intense, rewarding experience. The Guardian said "Logistically, The Home is remarkable: the level of control even when we thought we had agency; the intricacy of planning and stage management; the intense periods of improvisation from all cast and crew. It rings us out emotionally, too. The Home is neither a blanket celebration nor critique of the care sector, but a demonstration of how complicated and difficult it is. By making us genuinely vulnerable, The Home forces us to directly address the care industry"

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

We were supposed to perform the live show in Japan at the time of the Olympics but because of COVID this was cancelled so instead I came up with the idea of The Digital Home a game which will be launched in September and there is actually much greater opportunity for people to engage in the game.

HOME – the game

Its online as a simple accessible game – you can do it through a website, where you choose your adventure and access all the content there or you can download it as a game on your phone, tablet or computer. You make an avatar of yourself and you move the avatar into a fictional care home and you potter around and interact with the residents and the staff, who are the characters who were in the theatre show and you watch a short film of them and learn about them. And then you go into different rooms, the common room where you can play silly games and watch films – there's one about how care is funded you can watch in the manager's office and they'll also try and get you sign up to private health ad get private insurance! And there's a friendship room and it takes you through a portal into the Japanese home we were going to do

the performance in, it has the whole layout of the home and the Japanese team, so you can see how care is done in Japan. It has come together really well and exists and will stay for years to come and we're also talking about adding in other countries so it's a worldwide snapshot of care. In a way this is better than the show would have been.

This is about entertainment, talking about these important issues that no one wants to talk about in a fun and slightly silly way. So a way into that is to create this fictional care home 'The Home', a firmly capitalist care home, set up by a venture capitalist seeing a gap in the market. They talk in great detail about CQC and the five aspects of care but what they provide is up for debate. It's a piece of theatre, its nuanced.

I would love residents and staff to look at the game together – it's deliberately made to be very accessible. You don't need a lot of technical knowledge to play it. I would love staff to say to residents 'we're going to move into this fake care home' and imagine that. A way of discussing difficult things in a fun way on an equal footing – it's play, but around something serious.

Alongside it we did an R&D alongside it, the 'Home' road show. I wanted, in the pandemic to not just make it digital. So there's a half hour show which we toured to a bunch of care homes and its using the same playful format but in it the home organisation is doing their recruitment road show by going to other care homes, with all the brochures and banners and so fun. Staff watching say 'I'll come' and residents are saying 'move me in' and it's so fun because everyone knows its fake, it's a performance. It's very theatrical and playful.

Anecdotes

I think we often underestimate the capacity of care home residents to play. In my experience, residents and staff relish the idea of black humour, being silly with serious subjects and skirting near the edge – as long as the edge is defined by them. I am passionate in my belief that staff and residents have creative skills. They can be entertained or challenged or guided by visiting artists, but they have all the capacity themselves.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

I think there should be some kind of national framework, not too prescriptive, maybe a regular thing that Activity Co-ordinators can sign up to like 'the provocation of the week' and its basically here's an idea for this week – make a resident into the care home manager. Every week there's something subversive, something playful ie every draw what they want to eat this week instead of describing it.

What are the barriers?


I think having artist in care settings is very valuable but it's also expensive. I think it should continue but I think it's not the only answer. In my experience a lot of it is about empowering those really good activity co-ordinators and saying 'you already have the skills, because they do. And they are often really connected to the residents. What I often see is that staff have low self-esteem and say 'I can't sing, I can't paint' but they are doing it, they're making a fun atmosphere. You need artists to bring in, maybe a whiff of glamour, or subversion, or fresh ideas but it's totally about balance. Permission too is a part of it I think, for staff, self permission and hierarchy permission to be creative and expressive and have fun, that is part of the job. And for those that don't feel they have the skills or artistic knowledge, they have the guidance of knowing where to look, so every week they get this email with three ideas for things to try. My biggest thing is that being an artist is not a mystery. That everyday creative stuff is so important and staff can do it. Three or four minutes of playfulness every day seems much better than someone doing a singsong every three months – that's going to nurture you much more. Not that I'm knocking that at all but you still need nurturing and nourishment every day.


TOP TIP


Believe in the people who are already there and provide regular tools for them to flourish, instead of an occasional visit.

Opus Music: Making Music with and for care settings

OPUS Music CIC

 www.opusmusic.org

 facebook.com/opusmusic.org

 twitter.com/music_health

Summary of project

Healthcare Musicians from OPUS make music for, and with residents and care staff. Music making is responsive and interactive, often taking place in small groups or one-to-one. Activity focusses on increased wellbeing through listening to, and engaging in music-making. Resident's own musical interests (where known) are acknowledged and incorporated into practice. This practice has developed through European partnerships with organisations such as Musique et Sante in France, and Royal Northern College of Music in the UK. OPUS has been at the centre of developments in the practice within the UK for the past 12 years.

OPUS' work is all around access to music-making in health and social care. We work across many age groups in many settings, including care homes and hospitals, including specialist units such as intensive care and mental health facilities.

OPUS also works to advocate for practice, and provides internationally acclaimed training for musicians and for healthcare staff on the use of music within their own scopes of practice. OPUS works with other organisations nationally and internationally to build communities of practice and learning. We are currently working with Nottingham University Institute of Mental Health on a UK network of practice and have presented at numerous national conferences to this growing community.

What do you see as the main benefits of having arts and cultural activities in care settings?

A cultural, holistic offer which enhances wellness rather than solely diminish illness. Music and music-making reaches to people's identities, to their cultural backgrounds and deeply into memories, providing crucial moments of 'aliveness'.

Music-making alongside a trained musician facilitates a close connection, enabling the participant to contribute meaningfully and proudly to a cultural engagement.

Barriers

The main issue is one of funding. To deliver a high quality, affective and safe practice, musicians need to be well trained both musically, and with specialist training for this scope of practice. Unfortunately funding available to most care settings for 'entertainment' is neither appropriate, nor sufficient to deliver this role.

Music needs to be seen as part of care practice, not a 'nice thing to have'.

Sustainability is the key issue. Funding always seems to be for limited programmes, and as such hellos and inevitable goodbyes take up too much time from programmes. It doesn't allow for music (and other arts) to become truly embedded within the care practices.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

1. Commitment from the Managers of care settings towards sustainable arts activities as part of healthcare. This needs to be led from the top in order to unlock the potential of this practice.
2. Training (such as that we offer through our Music Care training programme) to enable care staff to use music and music-making within their daily care practice. This includes using music for care, musicking together, and engaging with professionals to get the most from these partnerships.
3. Training for community organisations/artists to ensure that care settings have access to well-trained providers within their own communities.

Do you think it is necessary and feasible for care settings to work towards a daily relevant offer of creativity and culture for every resident?

Yes, very much so. We must provide training to care staff (such as Music Care Training we have developed in partnership with international partners) to enable them to use music as part of their daily care practices. Professional musicians still have a role to play in supporting and inspiring this, alongside community resources such as local choirs, schools etc.. Training for care staff allows them to recognise and make best use of a large array of resources, including themselves, to provide music as part of daily care practice.




I want to thank you for yesterday. You played beautiful songs and my Mum sang, smiled and loved it. Mum passed away early this morning. We are devastated, but remembering the smile on her face whilst watching you will stay with me always! The happiest I had seen her for days. Thank you again!

TOP TIP

Buy-in to long-term partnerships. Training for staff, supported by managers. Ensuring that partnerships are well conceived, and that longevity of impact is drawn out of these, rather than focussing on initial cost/value.

Music and words: promoting intergenerational encounters between nursing home residents and music conservatoire students

Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana (Lugano, Switzerland)

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Outline of project

Music and Words is a project involving nursing home residents and music conservatoire students. It is inspired by research findings on the positive impact of music on the health and wellbeing of older adults, and originates from a research programme carried out in 2015-2017 by the Department of Research and Development of the Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana (CSI, Lugano, Switzerland), the Department of Business Economics, Health and Social Care, University of Applied Sciences, Arts of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI, Manno, Switzerland) and the Royal College of Music (London). Music and Words focuses on receptive engagement with music and provides events in which a conservatoire student, accompanied by the project leader, performs live music in a nursing home and interacts with the audience of residents.

Students participate in the project as part of an elective seminar, and receive training which prepares them to engage effectively with nursing home residents. This training is provided by an interdisciplinary team consisting of the project leader (PhD candidate, double bassist, teacher of history of music, CSI), and two lecturers from SUPSI (sociology and nursing care) and involves four hours of group lessons and four hours of individual tutoring.

Each student took part in Music and Words as a solo performer and was supported by the project leader to create a programme combining well-known pieces with works that the residents would most likely be hearing for the first time. An inclusive approach and a vocabulary avoiding musical jargon were used to introduce each piece, as well as to share interesting anecdotes about the works performed and to talk informally about the daily challenges experienced by conservatoire students. Images, videos and recorded music were also used to stimulate the imagination and memories of the residents. Residents were also invited, in between performances, to ask questions, express their opinions and to share any emotions and memories aroused by the music.

Seven institutions located in different areas of Southern Switzerland have been involved since 2018, and residents have had the opportunity to listen to piano, violin, viola, cello and saxophone students performing works by Bach, Paganini, Brahms, Britten, Ravel, Schumann, and many others. Due to the diverse geographical origins of the students, and to the musical preferences of each, the programmes offered by Music and Words have also included traditional songs from Switzerland, Italy, China, Spain and Brazil, along with jazz standards, famous film soundtracks, and pop songs linked to the residents' youths. In spring 2020, during the first COVID-19 lockdown in Switzerland, one nursing home hosted a Music and Words programme online. In 2020-2021, we involved two nursing homes via Zoom, which was utilised in several ways: providing each resident involved with a tablet, using a maxi-screen in the hall of the nursing home, or, using a hybrid approach, hosting the leader of the project in the building and the student online.

Key findings

The residents and students involved in Music and Words reported mutual benefits.

Anticipation of the events and long-lasting memory of the contents were observed by the nursing home staff. Running the programme online can offer significant additional benefits such as engaging bed bound residents and involving musicians living abroad.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

1. Provision of interdisciplinary training for both artists and carers, tailored to address both students and practitioners.
2. Development of further research in the field of arts, health and wellbeing.

What are the barriers?

3. The sustainability of long-lasting programmes due to lack of funding
4. Engaging groups of nursing home residents which are heterogeneous in terms of cognitive health
5. Widespread misconceptions about older adults, who actually may have a great interest in music, and about “excellence” in music, which can also be expressed outside stages and concert halls

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

We implemented Zoom quite easily in collaboration with two nursing homes. Nevertheless, due to staff workload and technical issues, as well as to some preconceptions held by both musicians and carers about online resources, it remains challenging to run Music and Words programmes online.



I understand very little about these things, but I appreciate these moments very much because it's like a bouquet of roses, like many small beautiful roses put together.


Male, 90 years old

TOP TIP

Building bridges between care settings and arts universities can facilitate access to the arts for nursing home residents.

House of Memories On The Road – when you can't get to the museum, this museum comes to you

House of Memories (National Museums Liverpool)

 www.houseofmemories.co.uk

 [@house_memories](https://twitter.com/house_memories)

 facebook.com/thehouseofmemories

Outline of project

House of Memories On The Road is National Museums Liverpool's new touring 30 metre square mobile museum that opens up into an immersive cinema and activity space.

The first-ever immersive mobile museum experience in the UK, it has been designed to create memorable experiences for vulnerable and socially isolated people and people living with dementia. The vehicle meets people in their neighbourhoods - at settings such as care homes, community centres or even local shopping car parks.

Using digital technology, House of Memories On The Road recreates the sights, sounds and smells of the past through a virtual 'front door'. Experiences will range from a trip on Liverpool's Overhead Railway and a visit to a 1950s grocery store to a virtual day out at the seaside or a forest.

Transported on a specially constructed vehicle, House of Memories On The Road drives into communities and is conveniently placed on a car park, taking up just three spaces for the mobile unit and one space for the van.

Small groups of up to six people can enjoy a magical experience in a safe and intimate way, exploring memories of the past and bringing joy to the present. House of Memories On The Road visits a single location each day, offering multiple sessions, to accommodate a larger number of visitors from each care setting.

Our aim is to:

- Engage young and older residents to create a shared digital experience with the potential to target hard to reach and disadvantaged children, young people, elders and families.
- Co-create the design with peer-led communities of practice (e.g. people living with dementia).
- Position the programme as a valuable community asset that encourages shared histories and understanding of cultural diversity.
- Empower people living with dementia to recognise their continued contribution to society.
- Secure alternative funding streams via commercial enterprise, private sponsorship, and social enterprise models.
- Utilise effective research and evidence to create strategic influence and promote cross-sector collaborative advantage.

Key findings

We appreciate that the need for House of Memories On The Road has become more apparent with COVID-19. Co-creating and consulting has been a challenge regarding restrictions, but we are pleased to have produced a wonderful end result and look forward to taking On The Road out to elders across the Liverpool City Region. Some findings from the project include:

- The benefit of co-creation and connecting with your audiences, both physically and virtually, to enable the successful fruition of the project.
- The value of building strong relationships with internal teams, to underpin the program with expertise and best practice.
- The willingness to go out on a limb and try something completely new in order to achieve something exceptional.

Anecdotes

Gina Shaw, who has been diagnosed with early-onset dementia and who co-chairs the SURF group alongside Hilary, says House of Memories On The Road could be a “brilliant” lifeline for people with dementia and could represent another way to reinforce personal memories and connect with family, friends and carers.

“The House of Memories app is fantastic,” Gina says, “so taking the idea On The Road and going out to talk about things in Liverpool sounds brilliant. I want to show people that a diagnosis of dementia is not the end. It does seem it sometimes, but you’re not just going to go and sit on the sofa and do nothing, you’re still the person you were before, you like the same music you did before. If you didn’t like basket weaving craft activities before you got dementia, you’re not necessarily going to like it afterwards! It’s very important to know that it affects all ages.

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

At National Museums Liverpool, our mission is “to create memorable experiences, for everyone, challenging expectations.” This is a good starting point to also consider what excellence in care could look like – with access to culture, art and creativity considered as an automatic entitlement that is essential to wellbeing, and also to individual expression.

A person-centred approach to care is central to the House of Memories’ approach, recognising that a person’s individual histories, memories, likes and dislikes can be valuable in forging connections and enhancing communication through meaningful activities. We offer training, access to resources, and museum-based activities to enable carers to provide person-centred care for people living with dementia.

By inviting members of the workforce into a museum space, many of whom have not visited before, we can open people’s eyes to new possibilities and new ways of working. This is a tangible and practical way in which we can support a positive change within the care sector.

However, there also needs to be shift at policy level to ensure that all people can access cultural resources and experience creativity, rather than it being perceived as a ‘nice to have.’

What are the barriers?

The pressures within the health and social care system are well-documented and include being under-resourced, under-staffed, under-pressure and short of time, alongside the range of problems that the recent pandemic has brought to the forefront. Care provision varies enormously across the sector, as does the appetite to try something different.

Not all those working in the care sector have experienced arts or culture themselves and may see it as outside their comfort zone or scope of experience. For example, some will not be comfortable with using digital devices such as an app and will favour more traditional activities such as bingo or quizzes. Those that do access and enjoy the arts might not have considered it in a professional context. Therefore, upskilling the workforce and giving people the confidence and opportunity to enjoy cultural activities is key to encouraging that shift.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

COVID-19 has meant we have needed to adapt our work patterns in a number of ways, including the following:

- The importance of detailed project planning and contingency planning, particularly in the light of high impact occurrences such as COVID-19 and disruptions to supply chains.
- Maintaining the importance of holding the end user in mind throughout the procurement and product development process.
- The need for early and frequent testing of the product during development so that decisions regarding a change of approach can be made in a timely fashion and issues are resolved quickly.
- The value of encouraging and empowering staff to develop their skills in new areas.
- The importance of clear and detailed project briefs when collaborating with external suppliers to ensure project takes place within agreed time frames.







It's not the end of the world. In a nutshell, life doesn't stop and you can still enjoy life

TOP TIP

Download the My House of Memories app for a portable and accessible way to visit a museum from the comfort of your armchair. The app is filled with objects and memories from across the decades, brought to life by music and sound effects, and is a brilliant way to stimulate minds and encourage conversation.

How cultural organisations can build relationships and be responsive to support creativity and culture in care provision

Open Eye Gallery

-  www.openeye.org.uk
-  twitter.com/OpenEyeGallery
-  www.instagram.com/openeyegallery/
-  www.facebook.com/OpenEyeGallery

Outline of project

We believe that photography has the power to bring people together and make meaningful connections. We are committed to sharing the experience of our exhibitions in different ways, and encouraging participants to share their own stories. Using the Celebrating Age Loneliness funding, Open Eye Gallery has made two portable versions of their recent exhibition, L - A City Through Its People that will be shared, with residents in local care homes and to individuals who live alone.

L— A City Through Its People brings together three distinct local archives that, combined cover a time period of Liverpool from the 1950s to the present day. Spanning evolutions in industry, society, and leisure at a time of rapid change and challenge, they share unique approaches and perspectives in telling a story about Liverpool, its people, and the ideals that lend the city charm and a distinct personality.

With contributions from [The Red Archive](#), [Scottie Press](#) and [Tell It Like It Is](#), residents are encouraged to explore their own and shared histories through their photographs of loved ones, their memories and experiences through a series of prompts and activities.

Our first pack, our 'Exhibition in a Box' is for Liverpool residents who are or living alone or to be enjoyed within a care home's communal area. The pack includes elements from each local archive including a newspaper, postcards, a fold out map, stories and photos along with an audio CD and some creative activities that can be done individually or as a group. Beautifully designed in a self contained pocket, it gives local residents an opportunity to enjoy and engage with our exhibition from the comfort of their own home.

Our second, 'The Reminiscence box' shares fifteen of our favourite images from all three projects along with invitations and prompts for conversation. Grab a brew, get together and use the images from our exhibition in a group setting to explore memories and local stories from in and around Liverpool. The box itself is a piece of art for the residential home to keep and is designed to be durable with large print and large photographs to be used again and again.

With both our boxes we hope that the contents within will evoke memories, inspire sharing and conversation and create opportunities to be creative using photography, storytelling and art.

As an extension of the project we are offering in person workshops. Our Artist in Residence will come along to run a session, sharing a virtual tour of the exhibition and to facilitate some of the creative activities within the pack.

You can view our L - A City Through Its People exhibition virtually on our website – www.openeye.org.uk/whatson/vr-l-a-city-through-its-people

In your view, based on your own work/experience, what steps are needed to embed art and creativity into care provision?

For us it's about building those relationships and partnerships, having conversations and understanding how we can best serve care settings. How can we ensure we are actively welcoming the care community to our space and to our events... but also, how can we reach out more and bring our work to them.

What are the barriers?

Our own barriers tend to be capacity (particularly as we are a small team) and sometimes assumptions or lack of knowledge.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

We have extended our reach during COVID-19 to include more ways to take our exhibitions and events out into our communities. Our Exhibition In A Box is one example of this.

Top tip: We offer many resource packs (particularly around photography). Once a relationship has been established and we know what a particular group's needs are, we can offer a variety of creative activities – resource packs, workshops, virtual tours, invites to the gallery etc. We like to work in a responsive way, building relationships and responding to a communities' specific needs. This also allows an organic process where we respond to interest and can grow engagement accordingly.

TOP TIP

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Appendix 2 – Artist sessions

As part of this consultation, NAPA invited five artists working in this field to do art sessions in care settings, using different art forms and mediums and share their views. The aims of the art sessions were to:

- Help demonstrate the benefits of arts and creative engagement in care settings
- Allow another way for residents and staff to share their views about the issue of a ‘daily offer’
- Allow artists and residents, including people living with dementia, to share their lived experiences and views

Due to COVID-19 restrictions unfortunately two of these sessions could not take place, so we have just shared views of one of the artists.

Coral Creations

Organisation: Creative Paths (EM) CIC

www.creativepaths.org.uk

Art form

Watercolours and Mixed Media, Discussion and Visual prompts, handouts, Kindles with PowerPoint uploaded, a large interactive table (The Care Homes) playing video and music.

Themes discussed

Discussion on what creative activities participating individuals enjoyed. We identified and discussed different participatory arts and cultural activities that brings passive enjoyment. We shared the benefits and changes to mood art can bring, and some barriers they must accessing art and culture. Most of the participants had dementia, some with moderate dementia, concepts and questioning were kept simple and on a one-to-one basis, printed visual prompts were used to provoke discussion.

Description of session

The Session ran for 2.5 hours and was delivered by artist Chris Boote and Karyn Stavert. The aim was to provide an arts session that was fun, engaging and led to a group outcome, within the session we discussed the themes of creativity and culture. The theme for the session was Coral, this was chosen as it is a popular inspiration for a lot of visual artists, because of its colour, texture, and abundance. We shared the work of artists inspired by coral and the ocean that use the mediums of dance, clay, textiles, jewellery, knitting, printmaking, film, and music. This helped us to bring in and stimulate discussion on other types of art and cultural themes which were not being physically delivered in the session.



The creative aim was to use watercolour and collage to create a group coral scene. We used paint palettes in tins rather than tubes of paint as this provided the participants with greater independence. Participants chose and mixed their own colours. We prepared pre-printed watercolour fish and other marine life and provided templates for coral and fish for those that felt confident creating their own designs. The materials allowed complete self-direction in the creative process. We provided visual references, and support to those that seemed a little stuck or unsure.

Eleven residents joined the session, most stayed for the full time at the table painting. Some moved to a comfy seat to look at the resources but remained active in the session. To aid ambience we played a filmed 'coral scene' on the large TV tablet which gave the appearance of giant aquarium in the room, and towards the end of the session some of the ladies were discussing Andre Rieu so we played the video of 'The Beautiful Blue Danube'. This led to discussion of when he will next be touring, as many of the residents were big fans. When we googled this, we found it was in April 2022, but tickets for Nottingham were currently £500. There was a hopeful discussion on whether he may pop in and sing for them in the care home when he visits!

The session was busy, and the residents gave a lot of energy to their painting, discussing the work and themes and enjoying general chit chat with each other. All the residents painted their coral and fish, they also contributed to the layout and decoration of the final artwork helping myself and Chris to embellish and stick down the individual artworks. The residents were happy with the final outcomes, and expressed how much they had enjoyed the session, they were keen for the artwork to be hung in the care home so it could be enjoyed by everyone.

How often do you experience culture activity?

"On a weekly basis" Betty

"Most weeks and sometimes I ask to get things printed for my room" Maureen

How does it make you feel?

"It makes me calm and relaxes me very its therapeutic" Gloria

"I love getting involved, it brings back memories of when I used to paint" Margarete "I love it, it makes me happy, marvellous" Iris

Why is access to creativity and culture important?

"It keeps me mentally stimulated" Gloria

"It brings us all together; group sessions are great for provoking conversation" Jayne "I look forward to creative sessions because I get to chat with my friends" Margarete

What kind of creative culture activities would you like to do?

"I enjoy singing in a choir, and knitting" Gladys

"I'd love to go to a concert" Ken

Views shared

It was an activity that took their minds off worries, it made them feel they could achieve. One participant said at first, she didn't think she would be able to do anything, but at the end she was incredibly pleased with her paintings, and the fact that she felt she had contributed something.

Another participant on arrival at the table was very anxious and shaky, to the point that the Activity Coordinator offered to help her back to her room, I sat with her one to one for 10

minutes and showed her the PowerPoint on the tablet, photos and chatted, her demeanour changed she relaxed and went on to spend the rest of the whole session painting independently, right up to the very end.

Link to film of session: www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPgoMeyeU

Summary of outcomes

Participants enjoyed the opportunity to create and talk about art, creativity, and culture. They had a sense of pride and achievement and enjoyed the social time with their peers.

All participants expressed an interest or enjoyment in the session content, and this was evidenced by them staying for quite a long session.

What are your suggested steps for embedding creativity into care settings, based on your own work/experience?

We have tried to develop partnerships with care homes, we find when the care staff engage with us that this builds an increased culture of creativity in the home. We encourage them to celebrate the work achieved by displaying it, and to build anticipation by promoting sessions. We also encourage that they make use of the additional free ideas and resources that we provide for extension activities that they can carry out. This shows that creativity is valued and not just an add on activity or planner filler.

The care home we worked in for these sessions has a dedicated activity team and lead, and has always been highly active in seeking, promoting, and providing arts, creativity, and culture for their residents. This in our experience is not the case with some other care homes we have worked in. Free activity is accepted; however, they are not willing or able to contribute sufficient resources, labour, or money to support creative activity. Ultimately care home management and staff are the gate keepers to the degree of creativity and culture available in a care home. If there is no value in its merit from management then it is unlikely that the care home residents will gain quality access to arts and culture.

There needs to be a more robust consequences for not providing creative provision. The most influential change would be if the fundamental standards in care included access to a creative and cultural life as a right and a quality measure. Other quality marks or incentives that are recognised as a means of marketing a care home may also promote greater buy in from care providers.

What are the current barriers?

Limited money, time or resources can inhibit creative and cultural activities, making it less likely that their full needs will be met. There is still prejudice that those with dementia are no longer capable of enjoying and creating art and culture. Staff require the skill set and understanding to provide person led creative activity.

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

We have adapted our work to include Zoom sessions, online downloads, and eLearning activities.

Top Tip:

A holistic everyday approach, where creativity and culture are embedded into the resident's experience This can be achieved by inspiring displays, varied programmes of practical activity in and out of house. Cultural enrichment through partnerships with the education/participation departments of local museums, galleries, and theatres. For care staff quality training in arts and creativity provision, training in cultural references, training in creative thinking skills.

Capturing the magic using images

Sally Knocker and Nancy Cunningham (Meaningful Care Matters)

www.meaningfulcarematters.com

Art form

Photography was the central focus, but we also used paintings (done by artists living in the home) poetry, sculpture, typewriters, and other objects connected to the arts.

Themes discussed

Sharing arts and cultural activities we have enjoyed in our lives and how we might like to continue them.

Description of session

Morning:

Interview filmed between Adele, a woman living in the home who was a professional photographer in the 70s-90s and Charlie, the homeowner who is a keen amateur photographer. Nancy was filming.

Afternoon:

We set up the dining room with tables staged to represent different art and culture – a music table with vinyl records, a trombone, a recorder, song sheets and ballet shoes and programmes, a literature table with a typewriter, poetry books etc, a theatre table with hats, feather boas etc and an art table with paintings, brushes, and pallets etc.

People were invited to share what arts they enjoyed in their pasts. The group included someone who had been a professional photographer and a woman who had been a model. Several people were experienced artists and had brought along some of their work to share.

The magic started to happen when people were invited to explore the room and find objects or images that they found interesting. One woman sat at a table talking about her paintings with another woman. The Polaroid camera and two disposable cameras provided a great focus for connection and fun, with people being invited to take photos of things in the room. One person was fascinated by a sculpture of two cats and said it had inspired her to use clay to recreate this. A woman living with dementia who had entered the session somewhat reluctantly came to life with the camera, insisting that outside was where the best images could be taken. She took off with her walking frame assisted by a care worker and became extremely animated about choosing the right perspective for a photo of a tree and the blue skies above it. Another participant enjoyed Sally playing a piece of country music on her phone with her and sharing a story of receiving a Sonnet from her first boyfriend. “I wrote a Sonnet too, but it was about a flower, not the boyfriend!”

We ended the session by using a large frame behind which people could ‘pose’ for a photograph – a simple technique for inviting playfulness and creating a sense of occasion! This included one woman reciting two poems with great animation with Sally in a performance using different voices for the dialogue. The woman who had been a model enjoyed wearing a hat and a feather boa for the picture. Other participants posed with paintings and a book they had created.



We intended the session to last only an hour, but it was still going strong after nearly two hours. The energy and laughter in the room was a joy, and the support and involvement of the care team helped make it a great success. “It was important for me that the team members were as much participants as the people living in the home, so that there was a real sense of us sharing as people, as equals, not separated as ‘staff’ and ‘residents.’” Sally

Anecdotes

Adele, the photographer was particularly animated about this project in the lead up to the event and on the day. She felt good to be regarded as an expert and for her opinions to be sought and valued. Though she has dementia, when she met with Charlie, the Homeowner, she remembered the event was coming up and enjoyed getting all her paintings, linocuts, pottery and photographs out in preparation for the event. She dressed up on the day and loved talking to Nancy about the camera she was using and discussing the different lenses etc. In the film, she showed and talked about lots of her images with Charlie. When Charlie said he had been inspired by her to starting to take different photographs, she seemed very proud and pleased. We shared lunch together in the garden after the filming and she had a real sense of being a ‘VIP for the day.’ “This was lovely. It was like having lunch out with friends.” Adele invited Nancy to come and work with her in her studio (no longer there, but very much still there in her mind) at a future date. Adele, Charlie, and Nancy were meeting as professional and amateur photographers with a shared passion.

Adele – “You do live a life with a camera, because it gets you places you wouldn’t normally get to.” “It leads you into different places. You’re never static. You’re always going off on location or something’s happening. I don’t think I’d be at a desk. They wouldn’t have me anyway!” Adele went to Medway Art School and loves photography and art. She is proud of her work with a well-known photographer in Chelsea as it was “rare to have girls in studios at that time.” She has done some teaching in the past and enjoyed talking about some of the techniques she used to create a painting with several other participants. She felt that “It really isn’t very difficult to get people interested in having a go. Just put things out on tables and give some encouragement.” “Get some paper, get some paint. ... Maybe they’ve been told off at school or by their mum that they are no good at it. They’ve got this big thing they can’t do it. But they CAN! Maybe we will just take a bit of paint and do some lines and squiggles, stripes, and spots to make some patterns so they can see the paint taking shape. They can all do it...” “You could take some simple, childlike images that have lots of colour and shapes, using Picasso pictures or similar and they can copy it.” “They can do it; you just have to introduce the idea.” “We could have a club maybe. We could do light collage – where we put objects on a developing paper and shine a light on it and you’ve made it patterns with bits of rope, old film, stones etc... It’s very simple, it’s just light and shape. The simplest things are often the best.”

“Maybe we could encourage local artists to exhibit here, so we could have our own art gallery?”

“There are so many possibilities out there. We’ve only just begun you know!”

- Lady S – Enjoys all art, she likes to scribble drawings and sketch/paint anything to do with nature. “I don’t need others to enjoy these things. Much of it is still in my mind and my imagination.”
- Jessica (a member of the care team) – very much enjoys sculpting and photography.
- Mrs M – Liked visiting art galleries all over the world wherever she travelled, she prefers modern art. “Could we have more Art books on display for us to look at?”

- Jane, a care team member – “I have a love of photography, since working here at the home, I have found that taking photos of hands is something that bring warmth into the photo.”
- Elizabeth – Is very fond of Maggie Hambling, sculpture, and painting.
- Lesley – a model, likes being in front of the camera - “I don’t take the photo; I AM the photo”.
- Charlie, homeowner – has a love of photography, but has been doing less recently. He says that meeting Adele has re-inspired him to take more photographs again. “I feel like you are now mentoring me. You’re rekindling my photography career.”
- Sally (MCM and group facilitator) “Taking a photograph can be a simple but powerful moment of making a choice, having autonomy, and making it your own. Almost anyone can do it, if they have the use of their eyes and their hands – and with the right support.”

Why does being creative feed our spirit?

“It’s real satisfaction. You’ve made something that didn’t exist before. You’ve formed something. It’s totally your idea. It’s your hands that have made it and nobody can take that away from you.” Adele

“It takes a brave person to put more informal arts on the curriculum. People expect the set ideas. Certain subjects have to be covered to the letter. But with photography, it’s all about light and shadow. Some people just know that. It’s a great enthusiastic area. You don’t have to be professional. They can play, can’t they? You could combine painting with photography. I paint on photographs sometimes. Over to you, you can launch it for the whole of the British Isles!” Adele

Charlie, the Homeowner responded, “We can start small first!” “We’ve got lots of different talent here. There’s a lace maker, an artist, a photographer maybe we can collaborate on something.”

Summary of outcomes

“Just simply a beautiful, emotional time, sharing us with you.” Jane one of the Huntington and Langham team

Charlie, the Homeowner and four of his team were very engaged with the session making it possible to do lots of one-to-one interactions. This will be important for ensuring that some of the ideas will continue to be developed by the Team.

We left the disposable camera with one of the care workers and encouraged her to do some more photography with Molly.

Charlie fed back:

“It was such a fun afternoon, and it has stimulated a few things subsequently. Lady S has asked us to source some colouring pencils for her to start drawing again. Adele has kindly donated us a print of her stunning zebra to display on the wall somewhere in HH. And several people have shown an interest in booking a potter to come and do some demos with a portable wheel – does anyone know of anyone who does this?!”

What are your suggested steps for embedding creativity into care settings, based on your own work/experience?

- Be curious and appreciative of the talent which exists in your care home – people living and working there are likely to have interests and experiences in relation to the arts and culture, which have sometimes been forgotten.
- Creating themed tables/areas to prompt people to talk about, touch and explore different images, objects etc.
- Leaving out paper, pens, and colouring pencils on tables to encourage more writing and drawing.
- I gathered many of the objects through doing a ‘call out’ on my local neighbourhood Facebook group who offered musical instruments, an old typewriter, ballet programmes, song sheets etc. They were very happy to share these either as loans or gifts. This involved some time, but no financial cost.
- Purchasing a polaroid camera and/or disposable cameras or cheap digital cameras to invite people take pictures inside and outside the home.
- Thanks to phones with cameras and digital photography, many people now enjoy taking pictures, which makes it a very accessible art form.
- My own experience of culture change in care homes is that you need to do work with staff teams first to break down the focus on task orientation and to enable them to experience the joy of creative expression for themselves, so they are more likely to get involved and encourage others.

What are the current barriers?

- There is a continuing danger that art and cultural activities are seen as something that are just occasional offers often by external providers or as a time-limited project.
- Care workers might put judgements on themselves as “not being artistic.” But as we discovered in our session, the staff involved all had an interest in talking about the paintings, taking photographs etc.
- Health and safety particularly in the context of COVID 19 has made it harder to place lots of items in the environment to stimulate engagement.

Top tip

Every shift in a care setting, nominate one person (a rotating role not just the Activity Coordinator) as the Creative Champion/media monitor for the day to a) set up tables with invitations of pictures and objects to prompt engagement b) ensure that the use of music and other media is varied and relevant to people’s interests and/or c) choose an arts theme for the day to generate conversation, fun and involvement e.g. “Comic poems”, “Favourite artists” “View from our window” “Desert Island Discs” etc.

Capturing Creativity in Self Portraits

Sarah Fenner - Creative Minds

www.creativeminds.art

Art form

Visual Arts

Themes discussed

Discussion range was vast, encompassing all creative activities past and present. Their joys, passions and what they miss. Moments in their lives, hidden stories, unexpected memories. Art opens for opportunities to speak and listen.

Description of session

Despite approaching this as a visual art form, the awareness of all art forms and alternative creativity were very much at the heart of my sessions.

Participants were invited to create 'Self Portraits' using a huge variety of images from a wide range of creativity and cultural activities and inspiration. There were paint pens, words, and phrases to choose from to create the backdrop or frame for a photo of themselves. A way to capture what mattered to them in a creative self-portrait mood board.

We were able to extend the self-portraits, capturing them each on camera about all the creative things that matter to them; books, CD's, paints, sewing.

“When I'm painting, I get to leave my dementia behind”

“I loved my kitchen table, so much would happen there, sewing, puzzles, family and even writing poetry”

“Favourite spaces matter, I brought my favourite reading chair with me”

“The only time I can subdue my PTSD is whilst I'm creating”

“I wish I had met Sarah 30 years ago but at least I've discovered charcoal now at the age of 94”

Views shared

Everyone had something to share regarding creativity from favourite movies to favourite knitting patterns, dance forms, love of music and a variety of visual art mediums. They still want it to be a big part of their lives.

“I love listening to music, but I hate it when all we hear is Vera Lynn expecting us all to enjoy it. I love classical music and some modern music but struggle to find ways to listen to it”

“I wish everyone would just have a go even if they don't think they are creative. We all need it”

“I love the art sessions, but they are over too quickly”

“My family know I love sewing but I never have the opportunity now”



Summary of outcomes

Creativity is loved and appreciated by everyone I engaged with, not only the participants but others unable to leave their rooms and join group sessions. Staff love creative activities but felt they couldn't contribute as already too busy!

There is an acceptance that some activities can no longer be accessed in the same way they once were, particularly dance. But they want to participate in creative activities both alone and in social groups. The visual arts especially seemed to be something they enjoyed in groups but poetry writing, reading, and listening to music were much more personal, an activity to do alone or with a facilitator: reading, helping with creative writing, and supporting access to music.

They all love the opportunities to try new things, discover new artists and experiment with a variety of mediums, old and new, but these occasions are sadly few and far between.

Suggested Steps

Having had the privilege to be involved with the creating of the Art Studio space at Appleby House and seeing its success, I know this model works and would most definitely advocate for something similar in all care settings.

The overriding desire I discovered, during this consultation process, was the want of a kitchen table. That space we all use for multiple activities; a space we can leave an ongoing project and return to, a space we feel safe, inspired, comfortable. A studio type space facilitated by creatives where residents can write, paint, sew, create.

Current barriers?

- Care setting staff not understanding the importance of quality creative opportunities
- Understanding
- Space
- Costs
- Time

How have you adapted during COVID-19?

We moved from in person art sessions to Art Activity Boxes as well as zoom sessions.

Top Tip

Help the care sector understand and embrace the power of creativity

Your Perfect Day in Clay

Emily Chilvers, Nightingale Hammerson

www.emilychilvers.co.uk

www.nightingalehammerson.org

Art form

Pottery

Themes discussed

What makes for a perfect day in your eyes? Exploring what makes that experience perfect through the senses.

Description of session

'Your Perfect Day' and centred around a creative, collaborative conversation between pairs consisting of a resident and their supporting partner; a staff member, relative or volunteer. Each pair worked together to create a clay flower that represented the residents' idea of their perfect day. Each petal represented one of the five senses with an extra petal for activity-based ideas.

The session was 1-1 so that sharing, conversation and working together creatively was made easy. It also meant I could oversee the session and nurture the creativity of the group, empowering each pair to take the lead of the activity. The workshop provided ways for residents to engage on all levels as their partner who could respond to their needs. Some residents needed minimal guidance with the clay activity while they chatted together, and others preferred to talk and oversee their partner making the flower for them.

I was keen to generate a clay activity that could be dissected in this way to demonstrate how accessible it could become in a setting with limited resources. The activity could be broken down into several ways to deliver effectively, e.g., simply using the topic for a discussion or as a group flower making exercise, making the flower in paper instead of clay/ adapting the clay type to suit a setting (air dry or salt dough).

We are incredibly lucky to have a very strong network of volunteer and relative support too at Nightingale which helps us to deliver effective engagement. Over the 2 sessions I ran for this study I had the support of 5 volunteers, 2 relatives and 10 members of staff from 4 different departments within the home.

Each pair was provided with a workstation with all the relevant tools and materials and a worksheet that began with a poem I'd written that they could read together, opening the discussion of what you need to feel fulfilled, engaged, and happy in your day. They then worked through creating their clay flower together adding pattern and colour to the surface while filling out their worksheet as they conversed.

Once fired, a group of volunteers helped me to transfer the resident's Perfect Day words onto the flowers which allowed for further discussion around the elements that residents had mentioned and how we could feed this into life at Nightingale. The flowers are going to be 'planted' on the National Day of Arts in Care Homes in the Nightingale Garden to be enjoyed by everyone.



As mentioned above, aside from the use of the kiln which we are very fortunate to have at Nightingale, this activity could be easily adapted in several ways to suit other care settings.

‘What a lovely idea to talk about and create together’

‘I’ve loved your company’

‘Well, this is the first time I’ve done something like this with you mum and I’ve really enjoyed it’

"Yours looks like an egg cup! Shall we make some for the breakfast table? They’d make a jolly addition to waking up in the morning wouldn’t they!

‘It’s amazing really, you don’t quite know when you start where it’s going to end up but that’s the fun of it, and look, I’m quite pleased with that.... And once the colours are on it’ll look even better!’

‘I really enjoyed sharing this time with you, it’s been a lovely morning’

‘Oh, look at yours, that’s so nice, the patterns and colours you’ve chosen, it’s so different to mine, I guess that’s the point isn’t it really, we’re all different!’

‘Wow your perfect day sounds lovely, I want to be there’

‘Gosh it was nice to remember that day, wasn’t it? We had such a lot of fun’

‘Wow I can’t believe that he’s made that!’

"Thank you for working with me, you’ve been so kind, I’ve enjoyed it’ Partner replied:
‘Thank you for sharing with me and letting me help you make your flower. I feel I know you better now"

"Will I see you here next time?"

" Would love to! So, I think I will see if my manager will let me come again, if I get my work done!"

‘I’ve loved working with you, it’s been so much fun talking to you!’

‘It was nice to be together with mum in this way’

Views shared

- It was nice to be together with mum in this way
- Great for staff to take a break from their regular work
- To sit and listen to a resident share their life, learn about their past, for staff that wouldn’t otherwise do so was really
- To capture this idea in clay and have it on display will be a great legacy
- Personalised artwork that connects/responds to the residents and shares with the wider community
- Talking while working was lovely

What are your suggested steps for embedding creativity into care settings, based on your own work/experience?

We are encouraged as a team to be what I describe as ‘fluid’; we support each other’s sessions or integrate into the wider programme being offered at the home. We share lunch with the residents, dance our way into a concert, have spontaneous ‘tea on the patio’ parties in the sun. Even though my role is to provide clay engagement I feel part of general ‘life’ at Nightingale, and I think that is what should be encouraged.

We've had multicultural weeks in the past where staff and residents have worn their national dress and organised food and music from their countries. I remember one resident who could speak very little English but spoke better in her native Hungarian. It was difficult for staff to understand her but a staff member from another department spoke Hungarian so would come over to comfort her and talk to her regularly.

Sessions have always been multi sensory and multi-levelled. We can have more intimate sessions or focus on smaller clay projects where the process is more important than the product and we enjoy being together and chatting as we create. I also work at bedside, 1-1 with residents and over the years have really found this so rewarding to bring life to a resident's room, helping them adorn their walls with artwork and things they've made with me. This more personal way of working was how we worked through the height of the pandemic being able to maintain connection with those who covet their creative time with me. It was so important to give them that time, to know they were being valued in keeping that creative outlet going for them.

The act of creating and the environment in which we do so becomes a very sensory experience. Clay alone is such a tactile material, but all the senses come into play when ensuring you can be your most creative. Nightingale offers such a wonderful space to do this, which is rare given the many settings I've worked across that are either restricted by multi-purpose spaces or lack of a set activity space. An activity like pottery can certainly be adapted to suit these smaller spaces but there are still key elements to ensuring a positive experience, good light, calmness, little background noise, tea! Just a feeling not to be rushed, that you are being given time to explore something in a group or 1-1.

How we can encourage the chance for creativity, the joy in the everyday and essentially create a more inclusive culture; engagement is a collaborative effort, not just the role of the activity team. It's about giving ownership to the whole care team so it's not a specific role that someone must come in and provide the activity for the day. That is one element to it, but activity is everyday so make all day fun. And part of our role is to nurture staff and volunteers in realising the importance of that. We have almost become ambassadors in 'creative care', because to understand a resident's needs creatively can really open a wonderful world that we can all share in.

What are the current barriers?

Funding and misconception. Somehow the division of roles gets in the way of seeing engagement as everyone's responsibility. But I think that's to do with the stereotypes of what it means to offer engagement, that it must be 'something' that's planned, rather than encouraging the simple ways to implement creativity and culture into all aspects of a day. At Nightingale I think we demonstrate well that there is a balance between what our engagement team oversee within the wider programme of engagement as well as the staff and volunteer led engagement that compliments that.

I also think it has a lot to do oddly with nature vs nurture and the idea of transferable skills. Staff might be being asked to engage in ways they wouldn't even do so for themselves. So, there is an importance in nurturing staff to feel confident, to integrate their own skills and interests into their role, to ensure the culture of a care setting is enhanced by the collective spirit, but can you teach creativity? Can you teach staff to deliver a way of working that doesn't come naturally?

How have you adapted your work during COVID-19?

We focused on smaller tasks and sessions for residents that were either 1-1 or in small groups mainly on the households at first. This kept a focus on what we were doing and dissected my clay skills even further so that everyone could participate with minimal tools and achieve something tangible. Sessions were a lot more discussion based and focused on the need for social interaction, being together and maintaining regular connection.

Top tip

Changing the culture around what being creative means and who should deliver it; we all have something to offer so it's having the space and confidence to offer that within all caring roles.

Artist – Josephine Hepplewhite

Josephine.h@outlook.com

Art form

I am a dance practitioner working with creative and improvised movement, mainly with groups in education, theatre, the community, health, and care settings. In care settings I deliver creative dance sessions, movement for wellbeing and falls prevention dance programmes as a Postural Stability Instructor.

What do you see as the main benefits of having arts and cultural activities in care settings?

An opportunity to commune in an alternative way; a time for residents and staff to relax, have fun and enjoy being together in a creative environment. To find moments of self-expression, to engage with imagination and to connect with ourselves. Engaging in arts and cultural activities can offer a way to communicate, without the confines of language or other social norms. Exercising creativity can offer an experience of autonomy and agency, something that is so integral within care settings. Arts and cultural activities should not be exclusive, all people should have access, and this certainly should not exclude those living and working in care settings.

Memories of sessions/some taken from journal entries.

I see bodies change, from tight and huddled in chairs to stretching, unfurling opening out into the room. Looking around now, seeing, listening, smiling!

Graceful, strong, supple. Small movements at the fingertips progress to swooping arms and punching fists.

We are sharing stories of dances from our lives. A few individuals have been engaged, whilst some have been withdrawn and uninterested. I am surprised when one of these participants volunteers to share a dance from his life. He stands tall next to his chair and speaks of his time as a soldier. His body becomes so straight, seems to grow as he marches with pride. His body engaged in this steady rhythm. Another participant begins to slowly Waltz as he shares the first dance that him and his future wife had together. Another asks if I can play Bob Marley and shares how she danced with her friends at parties, her body swaying and arms swinging.

For you to develop more work in care settings, what needs to happen?

For many of my sessions it feels that a lot of participants benefit most from one-to-one interactions – being able to respond intimately to their movements and encourage them. This can be difficult in group settings when I am the only facilitator, relying on staff members who may not be comfortable with dance sessions themselves. Finding more opportunity for these one-to-one interactions could be of great value. Being able to spend longer in settings (rather than just an hour's session for example) to be understand individuals needs and interests and to be able to tailor sessions, potentially having smaller group numbers over longer periods of time.

Please suggest ways in which partnerships between community organisations/artists and care settings can become more sustainable and embedded into daily care provision.

There is so much relying on support from staff members, who may not have the time or resources to be able to engage in sessions. I think being able to spend more time with staff,

sharing skills and being able to discuss the ways in which we can support each other during arts sessions to ensure activity is as accessible and inclusive as it can be.

Please outline issues that you have encountered when working in care settings that have proved problematic.

Space can be an issue, whether the space that sessions are allocated to are not appropriate for activities, sometimes with other activities taking place or plans may change.

My work in care settings is through arts organisations and is dependent on funding/availability of resources from care settings themselves or arts organisation. Projects are usually finite, perhaps a block of sessions or one offs. This means that it is difficult to build relationships with individuals, and care settings. Building these relationships takes time and resources that I do not currently have as a freelance artist.

Do you think it is necessary and feasible for care settings to work towards a daily relevant offer of creativity and culture for every resident?

Yes. I think a daily creative offer could take many forms, and in working towards this there may be important discoveries on what this could be. I think central to this is agency and autonomy, that residents and staff can choose to engage in an activity that is of quality, is relevant and accessible. I believe that access to quality creative and cultural activity should be available to all and by no means should this exclude those living in care settings. What's more I believe that these offers could create more bridges between care settings and the community/artists/organisations – decreasing isolation and encouraging learning between these groups.

Top tip

Make sure it is visible and celebrated. Develop ways of creating time for artists, staff, and residents to learn from each other in how best to support arts and cultural activity.

Appendix 3 – Resident portraits

Case Study – Music

Background

- Bill has spent his professional life as a priest moving around the UK.
- Bill now requires full time care due to living with dementia and finds verbal communication difficult.
- Bill can often become distressed and upset looking for his wife Irene, who passed away six years ago.
- Bill and Irene's adoptive daughter Jenny visits when she can but lives two hours away from the home.

Obstacle

- Bill spends his days writing sermons in his room and becomes distressed by late afternoon, looking for Irene.
- Bill has no desire to join in the afternoon group sessions that take place in the home.
- The frustration that Bill feels is increasing his challenging behaviour and becoming difficult for staff to manage.

Support

During a recent visit from a local priest, staff noticed Bill's behaviour changed when the priest gave a blessing and sang hymns. Staff met with Jenny on her next visit and reflected on ways to help Bill.

- Using Bill and Irenes' hymn books that Jenny had kept, they noted the hymns they liked, as these had writing next to them.
- The Activity team contacted the priest and arranged a regular afternoon service once a week, reading Bill's sermons whenever he was able to.
- The Priest also arranged for church volunteers to come and sit with Bill and read The Bible with him
- Jenny bought her Dad Bill an Alexa and built him a play list of hymns and relaxing church chants for the staff to play for him.

Result

Staff quickly noted an overall improvement in Bill's wellbeing. This was a combined effort from the staff, family, and local church. Community in the care home had created a person-centred experience. It was also reported that Bill had put on weight and seemed happier. In the afternoon when Bill became distressed, staff would put his music on for half an hour and noted that less intervention was needed by them as a result. Jenny was delighted to see her Dad's wellbeing improving by the use of the hymns.

Case Study – Technology

Background

- Derick is registered blind and lives with diabetes.
- Derick was an independent individual who enjoyed creative writing, taking part in his local book club and poetry group before his vision became impaired.
- Derick has become isolated and feels frustrated due to losing his eyesight.

Obstacle

- Derick feels he has lost his independence and needs support to maintain contact with his friends, clubs and groups.
- He does not understand how he can continue to write and be creative without being able to see the words on the page.
- Derick feels embarrassed to ask for support to take part in his hobbies of poetry, reading and creative writing.
- Derick's family are concerned with his depression and lack of motivation due to the loss of his independence.

Support

Activity staff reflected and talked to Derick about how best to progress using a group of aids that could help Derick to become more independent:

- The Activity team would support Derick to meet with RNIB, who provided information on software support, Braille classes and support groups with other sight loss individuals.
- A staff member would support Derick to attend the Braille classes and support group.
- A discussion with Derick and his family led to purchase of software for Derick to write and listen to his stories.
- Communication of the new device was shared in all meetings and handovers in order to encourage Derick to use and promote his independence.
- Staff were given some training for sight impairment from the RNIB and range of aids were made available.

Result

Derick quickly took to using the new technology with just his voice. Derick found by using the software he could independently start his creative writing again. This led to a rise in Derick's confidence and a new book club forming in the home, led by Derick and supported by the activity team. Derick also enjoyed attending his monthly support group and asked the home manager if they could host a meeting in the care home. This developed into a strong community connection for the support group and individuals of the home. The family reported that they had seen a new found independence in their Dad and were happy to see the improvement in his wellbeing without the use of medication as an intervention.

Case Study – Cultural Identity

Background

- Hannah lives in a residential care home. She has reduced mobility and Vascular dementia following a series of strokes.
- Hannah was born in Germany and moved to England when she married her husband Ted in 1952.
- Hannah has three children who she is close to and sees regularly.

Obstacle

- Hannah speaks German, she can understand English and speaks a few words.
- Hannah's children visit often but do not speak German.
- Hannah finds it difficult to make connections with other residents and believes this is due to the language barrier.
- Hannah finds the meals and activities bland and meaningless. She is not eating well and is spending long periods of time in her room
- Hannah's family are concerned that she is lonely. They wonder whether it was the right decision to support their Mum to move into a care setting.

Support

Activity and care staff discussed how best to progress, and agreed to try the following:

- Discussing with Hannah's children which meals they would have eaten at home. Hannah's daughter had a book of Hannah's recipes and gave copies to the kitchen team.
- The Activities team researched national days in the German calendar and began incorporating them into the activity planner.
- For Hannah's birthday, the home choir learned to sing a verse of 'Happy Birthday' in German and handmade birthday cards written in German were made for her in the craft club.
- The activity team found a free app to communicate with Hannah in German.

Result

The staff reported a swift improvement in Hannah's wellbeing and mood. Twice a week the kitchen team were including some of Hannah's classic German meals into the menu and found it had encouraged conversation at mealtimes with all the residents. The activity team introduced traditional German games like Topfschlagen (Hit the Pot) into the lounge area and noticed Hannah explaining the history and rules of the game when people showed interest. The family and Hannah were delighted when the home choir surprised Hannah singing 'Alles Gute zum Geburtstag' on her birthday. The introduction of the app also encouraged staff to pick up on simple words like "bathroom" (badezimmer). The combined effort of the whole care home demonstrated to Hannah that she and her culture had a place in her new home.

Case Study – Dance

Background

- John has spent his professional life performing and dancing around the world.
- John was involved in a road traffic accident and now requires full time care due to paralysis of his left side.
- John identifies as a gay man who is ageing without children. His partner Glen died two years ago, and he misses him greatly.
- After they retired, John and Glen ran a local dance group in the community centre.
- John says there is no point in living without Glen as he has no means to dance and feel close to him.

Obstacle

- John spends his day sitting in his wheelchair. He needs equipment to transfer, which causes a challenge when leaving the care home.
- John has no family or friends to help him live the life he would have chosen before his accident.
- The frustration that John feels is resulting in weight loss and lack of motivation.

Support

During a recent online NAPA reflective practice session, the Activity Provider talked about how best to progress. It was suggested that they introduce live performances in the home and connect with local dance groups.

- Subtle changes around the home were also suggested, including a dance corner with costumes, objects, images and music to listen to.
- Using Google and You Tube, staff researched languages, music, and traditional dress and national dances from the places John and Glen had visited.

Result

At the next reflective practice session, the Activity Provider shared that she had observed an overall improvement in John's wellbeing. A combined effort from all the departments in the care home had created a person-centred experience. It was also reported that John was talking more about Glen, had put on weight, and seemed happier. John had begun sharing and teaching the staff about different dance routines and the cultures of places he had visited. John held his first 'Let's dance' session in the home. The advice and guidance given to the activity provider enabled John to connect with his memories and life with Glen.



Portraits and self-portraits created by residents from Tregolls Manor Care Home with Ruth Purdy, Mitber CIC and by members of the Galanos House Monday Art Group (Bob, Cyril, Ken, Hilda and Geoffrey) with Sarah Cunningham.

Appendix 4 – Art Is – Dementia Craftivist Discussion

Conversation, facilitated with Philly Hare from Innovations in Care
www.dementiacreatives.org.uk/dementia-craftivists

Introduction

We are pleased to provide notes and suggestions drawn from two ZOOM discussions that involved five people living with dementia in their own homes – George Rook, Keith Oliver, Agnes Houston, Frances Isaacs and Chris Maddocks. The ‘Craftivists’ have also worked with people in care homes, so have included their observations and reflections about what might work well in that setting.

See Poem on page 82 which articulates the group’s views through art.

See Film: www.youtube.com/watch?v=wpVVkNiYrCQ&t=1s

What type of creative activities do you like doing?

- Water-colours
- Woodwork
- Crochet
- Painted pebbles
- Creative writing
- Writing poetry

Frances: *“Art does it for me. I’ve never been that good at it but I get a fantastic amount of pleasure from it.”*

Does engaging in cultural and creative activities help you achieve quality of life? If so, how?

What do you most enjoy about creative and arts activities? In what ways are creative and arts activities helpful for you?

- It lifts mood
- It keeps your brain busy and engaged
- You produce something at the end
- It gives me exercise e.g. my hands
- It lets me express myself
- I can forget everything else - escapism
- It helps me relax and sleep
- You can pass on your skills to others

- It gives us a purpose in life
- You can learn new skills – and show people
- It's something to look forward to
- It releases endorphins and makes you feel better
- You can do stuff whatever the weather
- It's the process
- A sense of achievement – it makes me feel so proud
- It evokes lots of memories for me
- Gives pleasure to others
- It gives me joy
- I like flicking through what I've done in the past
- A feeling of well-being
- It breeds resilience, sticking at something, patience
- It opens my eyes and transforms how I see things
- Decreases anxiety

Chris: *"We all need a purpose in life... Art gives me that. You can learn new things when you have dementia... I'm part of a project where we go into the woods – it releases the endorphins and makes you feel better. I've learnt wood-crafting, watercolour, card-making"*

Chris: *"I love passing the skillset onto other people. With the care home we made 'A Little Book of Me'. Suddenly they were discussing things! It was the most heart-warming thing. They said people had gone out of the session and were showing their books to the others. This one activity made such a difference to them. The carers also found out things about them that they have never ever known."*

Agnes: *"Crafting lifts my mood. I needed something during COVID to get me 'doing'. I need different things for different moods. I've now created a safe space, "Yogi's Den". I can go into it and do anything creative – the weather doesn't matter. Sometimes my care worker suggests we go there. I just lose myself in the moment – it's almost like a prescriptive medicine."*

Chris: *"It engages my brain more than say just watching TV, you're concentrating and following processes. And at the end you get something really nice – you've done that, you've made that. It can also be a form of exercise. It enables you to express yourself."*

Frances: *"Even when I produce something that's rubbish, I just start again. It never bothers me. You can never get things right first time – we learn from our mistakes."*

Agnes: *"There comes a time when you can't do many things – ride a bike, even watch telly – but art, it's the way it makes me feel."*

Frances: *"If I had to go into a home, I'd need to have all my things there. My drawing takes me to another place. You can forget everything else."*

Agnes: *"Getting people to draw or make helps with sleep too. It stops me feeling anxious about not being asleep. Even if they're not ready to go to bed, they can sit there and enjoy it."*

What is particularly meaningful to you in being part of a Craftivist group?

- Laughing together
- Companionship
- Giving time to others
- Gives me confidence
- Motivates and encourages me to try
- I have time to process each stage

Agnes: *“It’s the laughter – even over mistakes we make. Even my mistakes bring great memories of great times – it’s what you get out of the process.”*

Agnes: *“It’s companionship too. The medium helps you get to know each other.”*

When, where and with who do you feel most creative?

- When I’m creating with someone else
- Learning from You Tube videos
- When I’ve got all the craft stuff ready and waiting
- In the right environment – with a slow relaxed pace
- When I’m outside
- When my mind has been stimulated e.g. by poetry, beautiful images or music
- When there’s no pressure

Chris: *“I never feel creative when I’m alone – it’s better when someone is alongside me, or motivating me or showing me. It’s lack of confidence. Though Gail’s You Tube videos are just amazing.”*

George: *“I learnt how to paint a rose by using a You Tube film. I tried a few times, then I got it.”*

Chris: *“It helps to have kits sent to us, it makes it easier.”*

Agnes: *“I have trouble motivating myself – so I often leave my craft stuff ready in the living room. I often go on You Tube and sometimes just watch people crafting, not do.”*

Frances: *“I’m most creative when I’m outside. I can’t stop looking and staring at everything. Also I’m no good with pressure. So sessions often need to start with poetry, because that brings new images.”*

What are you most proud of recently?

George: *“The wood carving...I love the end result because it’s difficult to do. I’ve got my carvings on the windowsill where I sit, so I can look at them – and that gives me great pleasure. But now I’m obsessed with painting. My greyhound water colour painting... I’m so proud of it that I couldn’t sleep last night.”*

Chris: *“Cross stitch scene – without a pattern. I used to love it and would like to do it again. I also made a woven fish.”*

Agnes: *“I thought I’d lost the ability to crochet and the confidence – but then I found You Tube and made a baby blanket, bootees and a hat. I was so proud because my daughter was premature – it was like giving back. It makes me feel how wonderful. I rediscovered a skill 14 years after my diagnosis. I might need help but I can still do it. Don’t ever give in. It’s even more than achievement - it makes me emotional and evokes lots of different memories.”*

Chris: *“It’s about the giving back, I like doing things for other people and giving pleasure to someone else from something I’ve done. The pebbles with poppies we painted.”*

Agnes: *“The labels make me feel so proud! Don’t write us off.”*

Frances: *“A pen and ink drawing of a castle in Cardiff. The trees are influenced by William Morris. It took me days. It was joyful to do – it made me feel so good.”*

Agnes: *“That’s what I want, I want to feel joyful!!!”*

What do you like to do with your art when it’s finished?

Frances: *“I’ve stopped selling because it doesn’t give me too much pleasure. I like flicking through my sketchbooks that I’ve been keeping for years – I know when and why I did them. And I like to share my skills with other people. I frame some and hang them up – and change them from time to time... but most sit around in piles.”*

Agnes: *“I’m going to do that too. I’m going to date them to remind me. I just need to find a place. And I love people sharing their skills because it sparks something in you and encourages you.”*

Chris: *“All my art is in the conservatory. I’m going to choose the best and find somewhere to display them. I’ve also got things that the others sent me.”*

What are your childhood experiences of being arty – and who inspired you?

- Some negative ones of parents or teachers discouraging

Chris: *“My father used to say I was bloody useless and it’s always been in my mind. What your parents to say about you sticks with you. The negativity from my father is still very much there.”*

George: *“Several art teachers told me to do something decent. I was never told how to do anything. Maybe I was always able to, but I never did because I always felt I had to copy others.”*

Chris: *“I did cookery at school and the end results were good. Cooking can be an art form.”*

Agnes: *“Educators have a terrible way of criticising and dis-empowering.”*

What words do you associate with creativity?

| | |
|------------|------------------|
| Relaxing | Sense of purpose |
| Soothing | Achievement |
| Enjoyment | Joy |
| Fulfilment | |

What colour is creative?

| | |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| Rainbow | Orange |
| Yellow | “Colours swirling in my mind” |

Noise you associate with creativity?

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Silence | Birdsong |
| Sound of the sea | Quiet (not silent) |
| Wind | Soothing music |
| Rain falling | Laughter – it’s infectious |

If you were running a care home, how would you go about ensuring that everyone had regular creative and cultural opportunities?

- Slow pace and safe, relaxing environment
- Stimulate ideas through music, poetry, pictures
- Get people outside – or bring the outside in – sand, shells, leaves etc...
- Borrow scenes from libraries
- Leave creative things around (paper, crayons...) so they can be picked up any time
- Don't just have set sessions, but an area people can go any time
- Give the staff confidence first through starter sessions
- Enable creativity in the very widest sense in every opportunity – e.g. in preparing food, choosing what to wear
- Do with, not to

Chris: “ *Or hand exercises or stretching or collecting leaves.*”

Agnes: “*You can also bring the outdoors in – bring sand, shells to touch and smell. Play birdsong!*”

Frances: “*My local libraries have scenes on loan e.g. beaches, mountains, sunrises.*”

George: “*We need to make an effort to get people out. Places have sensory gardens and people can be pushed out, even in bed, feel the weather.*”

Agnes: “*The delivery - right pace and speed and clarity of speech - is very important. Give people time to process what you've just said before you move on. We need to create the right environment, make it special. Be flexible and relaxed. It's about the enjoyment of the participation. If everyone is having fun, go with the flow.*”

Chris: “*The giving of time is so important. To do things together. If we are also living with dementia, they maybe feel they can connect with us better? Did we just give them time? Ask them questions?*”

Ages: “*Memories might be tearful, so someone to hold your hand is good.*”

The benefits for people living in care homes

- It evokes conversations and memories through making things
- It brings the residents to life for others – so it's about looking after 'real people'
- It helps people sleep – or gives them something to do if they can't (whatever time of day or night)
- It exercises hands etc – maintains dexterity and reduces pain
- It stimulates conversation (even for those just watching)
- It brings strangers together and connects them through a shared experience
- It reduces 'distressed behaviour' and need for medication
- It allows the staff to get beyond the mechanics of caring – and to really understand the people they support
- It brings staff and residents together through shared enjoyment
- It fills time constructively

Frances: “Crafts help people to talk more and to sleep better. They also have something to look forward to. Serving tea in nice cups made them feel they are at home, it takes them back and makes you feel normal again.”

Agnes: “It’s the creative side. The medium doesn’t matter. It’s about creating a safe space so they can get as much out of it as they can.”

Poem written by group as part of this discussion by George Rook, Keith Oliver, Agnes Houston, Frances Isaacs and Chris Maddocks.

Art

Yellow, orange

All colours of a rainbow

Glowing, gloriously, brightly

Soothing as the sounds of sea

Waving at us, returning, flowing, flinging

Ideas, pictures, colours, patterns

Pebbles on our beaches.

Brush strokes flowing with ripples

Settling here and there in pools of beauty.

This magic medicine

Art

Lightening dark moments

Lifts us to the hill tops...

We can see the sun through misty rain

Rainbows above our thoughts

A sky to aspire, to inspire

A pastoral symphony of summer song.

Art

Colours dance and sway and dissolve

Shade into dark

Illuminate our sleeping minds

Awaken a kaleidoscope of possibilities.

Sleep arranges patterns, images, strokes

And in the morning we hurry to our work.

*Art is the thing.
Art makes sense of life.
Art is a different place -
In the old woods
Nestled in my garden
Leaning on an old family table...
Art is another place
Where missing memories return
Lost skills, crossed stitches
Emotions
(What is life without emotion?)*

*Lost in art.
Yes, that's where we want to be
Lost and found, or
No longer lost but found
In our safe place
In spite of everything
Rain, storm, ice, cold
Safe, away, from the
Barbs and curses of that world
Out there.
Art...doing what makes me...
ME.*

*Art
Murmurations of swooping sweeping sounds
Self soothing
The whole greater than the parts
Immersed in calm, we are
Lost without art
Lost in art.*

Art

There are no rules

No simple follow me's

No rutted paths to tread along

Frightening freedom to go

Wherever, whenever, whyever

You wish.

And suddenly the world is awake

Fresh and alive, new and overpoweringly

Achingly

Vibrant.

Art

Refreshing, regrouping, recreating our selves

Finding things you did not know you know

Lying quietly waiting, hoping you'd see them.

Learning what we can do, learning

There is no ceiling in our space

So high we cannot reach.

When we are down, or when we are high

Asleep or awake, dark or light

Dreaming, listening, seeing...

Art.

Art?

You know, you can.

We can. Really. We can.

We can, on our own, or beside someone

Art is what we really can do.

We don't seek instant pleasure, blinding flashes...

Art is our satisfaction, our learning

From mistakes, from ourselves

From me, from you...

Giving, giving, giving

Art is...

A huge, colourful, glowing wonder.

The Baring Foundation

