Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPATORY ARTS IN HEALTH FOR BHSCT STAFF

BHSCT ARTS IN HEALTH APRIL 2021

BETTER HEALTH AND WELLBEING THROUGH ACCESS TO THE ARTS

INTRODUCTION

WHO IS THIS RESOURCE FOR?

The purpose of this resource is to support staff across Belfast Trust who are interested in developing participatory arts and creative activity within their role or service area.

This is one of several initiatives in response to the staff consultation process to develop the Trust's Arts in Health Strategy Arts in Health: The Next Chapter 2019-24. A range of training activities will also be made available to staff.
The Arts in Health Programme in Belfast Trust's largest area of delivery is through the Arts Care Artist in Residence Programme involving 5 visual artists, a musician and a dancer. Activity is also delivered on a project basis by other organisations and individual artists. We are keen to support Trust staff who deliver creative activity as part of their ongoing role and staff interested in developing creative activity for the first time, whether or not this more specialist input is available to them.

The basic information provided in the resource should help services to plan activity led by their own staff and volunteers and/or support services to make the most of any activity led by Arts Care Artists in Residence or other visiting artists.

The term 'participants' is used throughout the document to cover anyone that may be involved including patients, service users, staff and families.

Do not hesitate to contact Paula McHugh, Arts in Health Manager
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for further advice or information.

WHY ARTS IN HEALTH?

The field of Arts in Health is developing significantly locally, nationally and internationally due to the increasing evidence to support the benefits listed below:

- Relief of Boredom
- Improved Communication
- Staff morale and retention
- Improved staff/client patient relationships
- Improved wellbeing through tapping into creativity
- Stress reduction
- Group working, social connection and conversation
- Improved mental health
- Supporting Rehabilitation
- Supporting Recovery.

You can find out more about Arts in Health in Belfast Trust by reading the Trusts Arts in Health Strategy – Arts in Health the Next Steps

You can learn about examples of Arts in Health Activity in Belfast Trust in the Arts in Health Annual Review 2019/20

PARTICIPATORY ARTS ACTIVITY AND FIVE STEPS TO WELLBEING

01

Be active – any amount of physical activity is good for you

In some cases that may be getting out of a bed to sit and participate in, or even to watch an activity. In other cases, it may involve dance or a movement session. Plan activity to encourage an appropriate level of physical activity.

02

Connect – with the people around you, friends or colleagues

Whatever the art form, participation should be facilitated in a way that helps people to relax and enjoy themselves, allowing them to communicate more freely and connect with each other.

03

Keep learning – don't be afraid to try something new.

Activities should offer an opportunity to learn something new, no matter how small. Other activities delivered on an ongoing basis may provide participants with a significant level of skill.

04

Take notice – be aware of the world around you

Draw on the world around us for inspiration and ideas.

05

Give – volunteer your time. Thank someone. Smile

A well run activity will be one where participants and facilitators all support each other. Projects may produce work that can be given to someone as a gift, performed, displayed, exhibited or shared for others to enjoy.

PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITY

01

Participants – a person centred approach

The wellbeing of participants is the priority. Activity should aim to engage with each individual, draw out their abilities and promote their achievements. The activity should aim to inspire, motivate and challenge participants and offer participants a sense of achievement, yet be realistic in its expectations. Participants should feel welcome, safe, valued and comfortable to work and enjoy the social aspect of any group activity.

02

A Flexible Approach

Plans should allow for flexibility and offer the participants a role in shaping the project within agreed boundaries, through feedback and group discussion.

03

Quality of Experience

To offer the best possible experience for participants, activity should be led by an arts in health facilitator, however as this is not always possible, with careful planning and preparation, a staff member or volunteer with some expertise in the area can deliver activities that will offer many benefits.

Remember that an activity does not need to result in a piece of artwork that can be exhibited or performed to an audience, unless that is your intention at the outset.

The creative process of making art/music/dance and enjoying that experience is more important than the end-product itself.

GETTING STARTED

01

What improvement or change do you hope to make through the activity? eg.

- Improved wellbeing for patients in hospital wards
- Increased physical activity for older people in a residential home or day centre
- To create a more welcoming less clinical environment for patients/staff in a clinic
- Engage service users from a hard to reach group to build positive relationships
- Staff Team Building and wellbeing

02

Involve and Engage

Let people know that you are considering planning an Arts in Health intervention to address a specific issue or improve experience for staff/patients. Gather ideas, concerns from a range of people (staff, patients/service users/ families) that will help inform your plans. You may discover that you have colleagues/ patients/service users that have skills, experience or interest in the arts.

03

Choose an art form that best fits your plans

- Visual Arts
- Music
- Dance/Drama/Movement
- Photography/Film
- Reading /Writing/Drama

This resource will not go into any detail on the suitability of specific art forms/ activities for particular participant groups but you should consider carefully what will work for your particular setting.

FACILITATION

Most of us have benefited from the skills of a healthcare professional but not many have worked with an artist/musician/dancer. Do not be afraid ask questions and expect them to have questions too.

Artists regularly working in projects within health should have experience and or training to prepare them, along with good communication/ listening skills, and an ability to work sensitively with a range of people. If the facilitator is a member of staff used to working with a particular group they should also have these skills.

The Arts Care Artist in Residence Programme is delivered across Belfast Trust and offers professional facilitation by a team of 5 visual artists, a musician and a dancer. If your activity can be programmed and delivered under the Artist in Residence Programme then you do not pay artist fees but may need to cover some costs eg. materials /framing. The programme has a limited capacity but it is worth checking with the Arts in Health Manager whether this might be an option for your service. Get in touch at the very earliest stage of your planning. See further information and contact details at the end of the document.

If the facilitator is a volunteer they may need some basic training, or to work closely alongside staff members who know the participants and the challenges they face. Volunteers should be registered with the Belfast Trust Volunteer Service.

In light of COVID-19 you may need to consider:

- Remote facilitation via MS Teams or Zoom
- Use of pre recorded video workshops (see Resources Section at end of document)

MAKING PLANS

Successful projects will be the ones that staff plan with the artists and where the staff can be flexible in their approach to accommodate the workshop or performance.

Who will be involved as participants?

Participants – service users, staff, families, visitors

Who will deliver the activity?

Staff already working in the area (eg.an Activity Worker/and Occupational Therapist/Healthcare Assistant), an Arts Care Artist in Residence, another visiting artist or facilitator or a volunteer.
If you intend to engage an external professional facilitator you will need:

- A letter of agreement or contract – what is the artist's insurance position, when and how much will they be paid etc?
- depending on the nature of the activity, to carry out any necessary checks eg. Access NI
- Evidence in relation to skills, training, experience

Will staff/volunteers be needed to support participants' involvement in the activity?

Consider what support would help to maximise the benefits of the activity for participants, by helping them to feel safe and secure. This can include knowing that they can leave the session. If facilitation is being provided remotely eg. via MS Teams or Zoom, you will need to ensure there are enough staff/volunteers to support the participants in the room.

How long will sessions be?

Allow time for set up/preparation of the area. Consider how long it will take if participants need support from staff to come into a session.

What day of the week and time is the best time for the session?

Avoid clashes with visiting times unless you actively encourage involvement of visitors.

Agree a schedule of dates and times for sessions

Consider programming a workshop session for staff to introduce the project and to allow the artist to get to know staff working in the area. This will give the staff a better understanding of what will happen, and an insight into the benefits of the activity for the participants.

MAKING PLANS (CONTINUED)

At the start of the project

- A Facilitator should have an induction to the area they are working in including confidentiality and infection control – similar to any new member of staff
- They should wear an identification badge
- An introduction to their key contact for the project any debriefing or addressing any issues that may arise
- Introduction to the other staff working in the area/ward
- Introduction to the participants
- Consider programming a workshop session for staff to introduce the project and to allow the artist to get to know staff working in the area. This will give the staff a better understanding of what will happen, and an insight into the benefits of the activity for the participants.

During the project

- Ensure that the staff in the ward/area know when the artist is coming and if the key contact is not on duty that another staff member takes on that role
- Enlist help to move patients, if needed – this could be done ready for the artist to arrive
- Talk to the participants about the art project and how they enjoyed it and feed this back to the artist, so that they can respond well to participants needs. Good ongoing communication between Artist, healthcare professionals and the participants will help any project reach its desired outcomes.

Project Budget

- Artists Fees (check re travel & parking)
- Arts Care Artists in Residence in Belfast Trust are covered under a contract with the Trust but they may still need you to cover some additional costs such as materials/equipment/framing
- Materials
- Framing
- Sound Recording
- Photography /Video

Possible Sources of Funding may include:

- Partnership working with an organisation with funding in place
- Charitable Funds
- Service Budget

MAKING PLANS (CONTINUED)

Resources, materials, equipment

Good quality and appropriate materials and equipment will enhance the experience for all involved. Do some research, try out what works best for your participants. Whether playing an instrument or painting - it will be frustrating for all if the equipment is not appropriate or ineffective.

Placing an order through the Trust e-procurement system can take several weeks for delivery. The Arts in Health Manager can provide information on suppliers already on the Trust system that have worked well: Specialist Crafts, Great Art, Thomann Music, London Music Supplies, Jabadao for dance and movement props.

Infection Control

Normal Infection Control Procedures should apply – consider your activity along with your artist/facilitator and if you have any concerns check with your Line Manager or Infection Control Lead.

Marketing/Promotion

Once confirmed, share plans and gain support and awareness of the activity and why you are doing it to encourage buy in and involvement of participants.

- Recruitment of participants – talk to patients/staff/clients
- Posters on notice boards
- Take photographs of activity underway – useful to share within your service and beyond e.g. Trust intranet, in newsletters, in your area for families and other staff to see (check permissions)
- Take photographs of the work produced
- Service newsletters
- Corporate Communications may be able to include on the Trust intranet or social media

Plans for Artwork Produced

Consider your plans for any artwork/music produced

- Participant keeps the artwork/ recording to use/gift/share as they like
- Work is displayed in the service area
- Performance at an event or informal sharing for other patients/service users/staff or families
- Work is exhibited on display boards or a gallery area
- Recording/video produced and shared to a wider audience.

MAKING PLANS (CONTINUED)

Evaluation

Quantitative Evaluation

Quantitative Evaluation involves numerical data gathered often through questionnaires, asking participants to what extent the project achieved its aims. It may be carried out in a range of ways, including at the beginning and end of a project or before and after a session.

Qualitative Evaluation

Qualitative Evaluation can include interviews, observations, focus groups and project journals that record quotes and informal feedback. This allow for key areas to be addressed but also opens up a wider conversation which can raise important issues which may not have been anticipated, whether positive or negative. Any artwork or performance created, documentation or recording of artworks or performances forms part of the Qualitative Evaluation.

BHSCT is developing specific guidance on Evaluation of Arts in Health activity currently, which will be available in addition to this document.

BRIEF INFORMATION ON ART FORMS

The intention of any Arts in Health Activity is to bring opportunities for creativity and expression to the participants. Particular art forms may offer specific benefits, which may help you to decide what will work best for your participants and setting. We have provided some brief information below.

VISUAL ARTS

Visual Art includes many techniques and is widely used in healthcare

- Painting
- Printing
- Collage
- Working with Clay
- Wool Felting
- Drawing
- Photography

Particular benefits

- Most activity results in a tangible end-product for the individual themselves to keep, or to give to someone else, or a group artwork to display in an area.

- Provides visible/tangible evidence of achievement, persistence and concentration to complete a task.

- Participants tend to chat while they work on visual arts activity, and in a relaxed fashion may express themselves more freely than in a direct conversation about an issue. Skilled facilitators or staff and can pick up cues and gently explore an issue within the session.

- Improved Manual Dexterity

- Using equipment and materials and in some cases finding adaptations that work for individuals to enable to them to use the equipment and materials.

BRIEF INFORMATION ON ART FORMS
(CONTINUED)

MUSIC

Music offers many routes to engage with participants whether on a one to one basis or as a group. Recent studies have demonstrated the social benefits of group singing and music making, while the physical benefit of singing has much to offer those less active or with limited mobility.

- Singing
- Playing instruments - Drum circles/Small percussion/keyboard
- Listening to live or recorded music or playlists.

Particular Benefits

- Singing is good exercise, especially for those with limited mobility – improved breathing and posture can be developed over time
- People with dementia respond well to music, it can help them communicate more freely.
- People with communication difficulties, aphasia or speech impediments often sing with greater ease than speaking. Non-verbal participants can express themselves through playing music.
- Participation in music and singing supports early years' development, language and communication.
- Working as a group, or on a 1 to 1 basis with a facilitator, song-writing offers a way of expressing feelings and exploring themes and ideas.
- Supporting participants to explore and identify music they enjoy can help to 'get to know' the person and be used to connect.
- Listening to music as a group or as an individual can help to manage behaviour – calming, energising, uplifting and support dance and movement activity.

BRIEF INFORMATION ON ART FORMS
(CONTINUED)

DANCE/MOVEMENT

Dance and Movement offer a highly expressive way of working and as such, are an effective way of engaging participants in creativity through physical activity. Movement can be tailored to the individuals' own level of mobility and dances choreographed to involve a range of abilities into one beautiful work. In addition the health benefits include:

- Dance and movement will help to improve the condition of your heart and lungs.
- Dance and movement activity may result in increased muscular strength & tone, improved endurance and fitness
- Dance and movement activity may help with weight management
- Dance and movement activity helps to build stronger bones and may reduce the risk of osteoporosis
- Better coordination, mobility, agility and flexibility can be developed through dance and movement delivered in a creative person centred way
- Dance and Movement can contribute to falls prevention programmes. Evidence has shown that dance activity helps to keep participants engaged and interested in such programmes.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN THE ARTS CARE ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAMME IN BELFAST TRUST

The Arts Care Artist in Residence Programme in Belfast Trust offers participatory, creative activity for patients, service users, staff, visitors and families across the Trust. The Artists in Residence are part times roles based and work across a range of Trust sites and services.

Artist in Residence (AIR)	Artform	Base	
Anne Quail	Visual Arts	91 Lisburn Road	City Hospital
Grainne Kielty	Visual Arts	Arts Care Studio MPH	Musgrave Park Hospital
Beth McComish	Visual Arts	Fairview 1, Mater Hospital	Mater Hospital
Frank Holmes	Visual Arts	Moyola Daycare	Muckamore Abbey Hospital
Helen Shields	Visual Arts	Arts Care Studio, KHCP	Knockbracken and Community
Brendan Popplestone	Music	Arts Care Studio, KHCP	Knockbracken and Community
Carmel Garvey	Dance	N/A	Knockbracken and Community

NB: Currently there isn't an Arts Care Artist in Residence role at the RVH site, artists are engaged on a project basis, please contact Paula McHugh, BHSCT Arts in Health Manager for further information.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Documents

- Arts in Health Strategy – Arts in Health the Next Steps Belfast Trust Arts in Health Strategy 2019-24
- Arts in Health Annual Review 2019/20

Links to further information and resources

Info:

- Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing July 2017, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing Inquiry

- What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being in the WHO European Region?(2019) WHO/Europe | Behavioural and cultural insights for health - Fact sheet

- Arts in Health Newsletter - Through this quarterly publication, the Arts Steering Group aim to promote the benefits of Arts in Health activity across the Trust, provide information and support for staff and celebrate a selection of the wide variety of activity that the programme includes. To sign up to the Arts in Health Quarterly Newsletter email: Eithne.currie@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Resources:

- Arts Care4U Youtube Channel
- Live Music Now Videos for Care Homes
- Baring Foundation Treasury of Activities for Older People.

BHSCT Arts in Health is within the Planning, Performance and Informatics Directorate, under Public Health, Further information is available from:

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