

Case studies: How have culture and creativity been supporting people in health, care and other institutions during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Project: Creative Care Homes guide
Organisation: Paintings in Hospitals
Region: England, Wales, Northern Ireland
Designed for: Older people in care homes

"What a fantastic resource! Very keen to share it with our 180 care homes..."

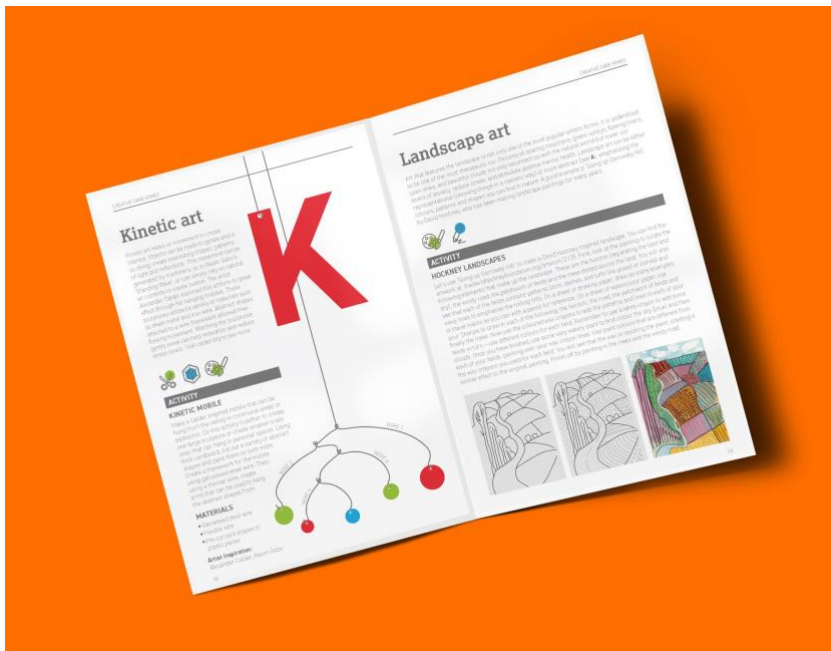


Image credit: Pages from the Creative Care Homes guide by Paintings in Hospitals

Introduction

Paintings in Hospitals is a national charity aiming to transform the UK's health by using world-class art to inspire better health and wellbeing for patients, carers and communities.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many older people in care have endured long periods of loneliness, stress and anxiety. Paintings in Hospitals has been unable to reach most people in this age range directly through our normal work due to shielding restrictions. While we couldn't reach them in person, we still wanted to offer support through art and creativity. To do this, we designed the Creative Care Homes guide based on our considerable experience of working with care home and hospice residents and staff over many years.

The Creative Care Homes guide is a free A-Z of art activities designed to help carers easily develop their current events for care home residents, encouraging engagement, expression, and safe social interaction. The guide features activity plans, inspiration sources, materials lists, helpful contacts, and more. The free 40-page booklet, available online, as a digital download and in a printed hardcopy (by request), launched on 24th September, National Day of Arts in Care Homes 2020.

Funders

The project was funded by the Baring Foundation

Who is it for?

The target audiences for this work were carers and older residents/patients in residential care.

Are these people you have worked with before, or new participants?

Both

How many people took/are taking part?

Difficult to measure how many people are taking part in the resulting activities. However, we have received requests for over 200 hardcopies of the guide. 867 people have viewed the guide online and 359 people have downloaded the PDF booklet from our website. These numbers continue to grow.

Where is it happening?

Nationally

For how long has it been happening?

Since September 2020

What were/are the main outputs?

We are already aware of practical arts engagement workshops taking place (in safe conditions) as a direct result of this guide. We would like to create further case studies of these.

What outcomes were/are you aiming for?

We aimed to support both care staff and residents - combatting boredom, loneliness (from friends and family), anxiety, and supporting general mental wellbeing through creative expression, fun, and communication.

Have you adapted existing work to make this happen? If so, how?

We adapted our existing in-person activity plans for older people as well as creating brand new content aimed at the carer responsible for delivery. Our practical experience of providing this creative engagement over many years has taught us much about what is and what is not practical/enjoyable/possible for the target audiences.

Does your work support people who identify with one or more of the protected characteristics¹?

We used our past evaluation data and the experience of our activity coordinators to specially tailor the content of the guide to be suitable for and sensitive to older people who may have dementia, limited mobility, and/or limited dexterity.

Evaluation & Feedback

We are gathering feedback about the guide online and from direct communication with recipients. We are also remotely gathering feedback from the practical activities taking place. We intend to expand our evaluation of the practical activities with further funding and when it is safe to do so.

"I think the new publication is really one of the best – so well designed and thought through."

"What a fantastic resource! Very keen to share it with our 180 care homes..."

¹Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation (Equalities Act 2010).

"I would love a hard copy of your fabulous new guide. I'd like to give it to the team at the care home where my mother was a resident... Young staff need this kind of support."

What is your own impression of how it has worked? What have been the challenges and successes for you?

The project has worked well so far. We have had many people engage with the guide and offer wonderful feedback. The challenges have been mainly around resources (as always) to ensure we can reach as many people as possible. It is also somewhat difficult to ensure that we are reaching the exact right people when we can't be present in person. We would hope to be able to do more in the near future to provide further supplementary support to the guide.

Are you reaching more people/fewer people/different people?

This is hard to gauge exactly but we are definitely reaching more people remotely than we would usually be able to do in person due the ability to distribute the guide widely and share our knowledge with carers, rather than facilitating all of the creative workshops ourselves with our small team. We are also reaching new people in very remote parts of the country that we have not previously worked with.

What would you say has made this project possible?

This project has been entirely reliant on specific funding. Without this, the time, resources and expertise required are too high for us to be able to offer the guide for free.

Further information

www.paintingsinhospitals.org.uk/creative-care-homes