



RUH



NHS

Royal United Hospitals Bath
NHS Foundation Trust

Art at the *Heart* of the RUH pARTicipate

Evaluation Report 22-23



LOTTERY FUNDED



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Above: Combe ward, Dementia Friendly ward - Garden Display & Patient taking part in a workshop
Front Cover Image: Young Patient in front of Children's ward Playroom art display, Artsparks

art at the heart of the RUH



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Support Us



Thank you to all our supporters, volunteers and contributors.
A special thank you to Little Angel Theatre for their visit to the Children's ward & to Yuhan Gu for her student placement.

Art at the Heart Contacts



Jessica Brown
**Participation
& Audience
Development
Coordinator**



Hetty Dupays
**Art & Design
Manager**

Participatory Artists



Charlotte Stowell

Charlotte's background is in design and craft. Her expert knowledge in the use materials and techniques provides patients with an opportunity to explore creative processes and ideas to produce their own imaginative work.



Catherine White

Catherine is an ex paediatric nurse who has recently graduated from the University of the West of England (UWE) with a 1st Class BA Hons Degree in Fine Art. She brings a lively imagination to her workshops on the wards, often spontaneously tailoring activities to patients specific needs.



Edwina Bridgeman

Popular Bath artist Edwina studied at Bath Spa, and has a Masters in Fine Art (MFA) She naturally places the patient at the centre of an experience, respecting them responsibly through exploration and discovery in a supportive and enriching environment.

Introduction

“Creativity is a trait we all possess. To create something is an expression of one’s self. Anyone can create. Creative activities present a window for connections and communications between artist, volunteers and participants.”

Jessica Brown, Participation and Audience Development Coordinator

Throughout our pARTicipate arts programme we create and engage with young and older patients, staff members, volunteers, visitors as well as parents, families and carers. We recognise there are similarities and differences in how an art activity can be received on both the Children’s and Older Patient (OPU) wards and share these findings in our evaluation. We learn so much from each session in how everyone interprets and looks at something from different perspectives.

This report presents the evaluation findings of pARTicipate, Art at the Heart’s participatory art projects at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust. From August 22-23 these art projects have been generously funded by Arts Council England and RUHX charity. The report details our aims and objectives, inputs and outputs, observations and outcomes. We used qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods to review all our participatory art activity at RUH, Bath completed over the past year by our professional artists.

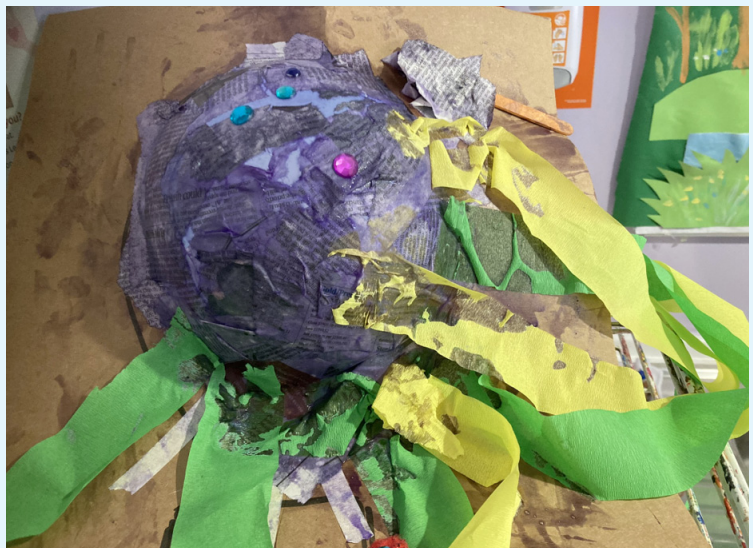


Aims and Objectives

Art at the Heart's Participate 22-23 programme evaluation aims were:

- To gather weekly feedback from staff, volunteers and participants for Artsparks (Creative art workshops for young patients) and Stitch in Time (Creative art workshops for older patients) to demonstrate the importance and impact of these sessions in hospital.
- For participants to learn a new skill and fully engage with the creative process.
- To evaluate the benefit of creative art sessions as well as virtual art workshops and art/activity bags for patients who have a longer stay in hospital.
- To discover the benefit of patients creating work collaboratively to display in the hospital environment for others to enjoy.
- To develop marketing and audiences by sharing 'next workshop date' on the wards weekly, social media, staff e-bulletins, feedback cards and leaflets.

We set out to achieve these five main aims over the course of the year.



pARTicipate: Participatory Art for Patients

Artsparks was first established in 2008. Art workshops for young patients (YPs) and their families/carers makes a real difference to their overall experience and hospital stay; which also supports the clinical teams and in turn reduces pressures across the ward. These sessions are so valuable and make such a difference to a child's experience in hospital. Children often start workshops shy and unsure but leave with huge smiles and an enormous sense of achievement. Inevitably, this makes the whole ward a happier place.

Artsparks workshops run weekly on the RUH Children's ward and over the past year, have been led by artists Charlotte Stowell, Catherine White and Edwina Bridgeman. They take place both in the playroom and by patient bed sides. The intention is to allow children to enjoy the freedom to produce their own artwork in a safe, supportive and non-judgemental setting.

During the pandemic, in-person art sessions were greatly missed and now, more than ever, we are certain there is a need for participatory arts for patients in hospital.



Stitch in Time was set up as part of Art at the Heart's participatory project strand in 2012, providing weekly creative art and reminiscence workshops on the RUH older patients units (OPU) led by professional artists, supported by student placements and volunteers.

Our artists always try to find out as much as possible about patients, so any creative activities can be tailored around the individual. There have been noticeable benefits for some patients who work in a group, with more interaction and improved communication and fine motor skills.

Having interesting activities taking place, such as art or music, gives a patient more incentive and motivation to get up and participate, which can help maintain mobility and independence.



Art and Activity Bags for Patients

We have three new art workshop videos for patients and their families to view so they can take part in a creative activity using the materials provided in the virtual art workshop bag. Six virtual workshop themes, previously tried and tested online during the pandemic with patients at the RUH across all age ranges, can be viewed online and these are accompanied by hand drawn worksheets and free good quality, imaginative art materials provided in a single patient use art bag. These will not only benefit patients and their families directly but can also be used as a training and support tool for medical students including Norland nannies, ward specialists, therapists and volunteers.



Evaluation Process

Evaluation is a key component of all our participatory art projects. It is vitally important when working in close contact with vulnerable patients and family members. The pARTicipate art team keep in contact weekly and have met regularly each month to review progress and discuss high (glow moments) and low points in art workshop sessions. This evaluation is collaborative and on-going as we strive to gain more funding to keep these art sessions running for young and older patients at the RUH.

Inputs

Artists use a wonderful selection of good quality art and craft materials for each workshop. They have been working alternately to bring a variety of styles and techniques to sessions. It has been fantastic to build up these in-person art sessions at the hospital once again since having a long two year break during the pandemic. We believe these sessions are now needed more than ever. The six virtual art workshops and art bags that we created in 2021, funded by the Arts Society and Rotary Bathavon were extremely popular and we are pleased to say that our artists created three new videos and art bags for patients this year thanks to the Arts Council England funding.

Outputs

The outputs were monitored initially by collecting Feedback forms from participants, carers, staff members and supporters. New Feedback cards were created by the Participatory and Audience Development Coordinator during the course of the year for Artsparks, Stitch in Time and the Art & Activity Bags. A new pARTicipate leaflet was also produced to raise awareness of all the participatory art activities taking place at the RUH and to share ways of how people can support us further via the hospital charity RUHX.

The artists kept log books to record their weekly activity and any specialist materials used during each workshop session. Both artists reported their glow moments and any challenges to the Participatory and Audience Development Coordinator.



The artists had an excel template to fill out so numbers of participants at each workshop session could also be monitored to collect quantitative data as well as the qualitative testimonials.

Observations

The best way to see the impact these sessions have on patients and their families is to observe. Artists record their own observations of how patients respond to workshops in their reflective notes. Staff members such as Play Specialists on the Children's ward and the Dayroom to Doorstep facilitator on the OPU ward also make their own observations and witness first-hand how these art sessions make a difference to a patient's time in hospital.

Discussions with clinical staff are also important to see if there are patients they feel would particularly benefit from engaging in art activities. We really value their feedback on what they have observed during patient art sessions. Furthermore, it is helpful to get comments from visitors such as medical students, Norland Nanny's or dementia coordinators if they have seen or taken part in an art session on the wards.



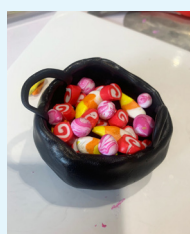
There are challenges in collecting data in a hospital setting such as respecting participant needs, disabilities, dementia awareness, participant engagement in the evaluation process and making sure to collect non-bias data. Making the time for data collection and dissemination as well as resources is also a challenge, but it has been useful to unpick our evaluation findings in more detail. It has been particularly helpful for the Participatory and Audience Development Coordinator to do a Creative Evaluation course with Jane Willis for future development.

“The artist is a great addition and asset to the ward. Her unique ability to create, paint and to set out colourful mediums have always brought such joy to our patients and others involved.” Dayroom to Doorstep Facilitator

Glow Moments

To see the positive benefits that a participatory art session has on a patient during their time in hospital is something quite magical. No one wants to be in hospital but having a positive distraction to create or make something whilst waiting for treatment or diagnosis can really make a big difference to a patient's experience on a ward. Our artists work with patients on a weekly basis on the Children's and Older Patient (OPU) wards.

There are some truly inspirational stories and we highlight a selection of these in this report.



Artsparks

"Two teenage patients have made friends on the ward. They asked about working together for an afternoon session. We set up a separate table where they could chat as they create their work. I showed them a couple of more advanced techniques for clay work which they reproduced choosing their own colours and patterns. By the end of the afternoon they had made an amazing selection of work including a cauldron of magical sweets, a dragon and some swirling patterns."

Charlotte Stowell, Artist



Other patients made Fimo models, making their own designs for zombies and spiders. Parents commented how it's **fun** for their children to have **special creative things** to take away as a **positive memory** from hospital and how it **helped to ease the anxiety** waiting to go into surgery.



"An adolescent has long term health conditions and spends weeks at a time in hospital, they enjoy drawing, painting and other creative work, finding it helpful as a way to relax and try new techniques. They made a beautiful painting of a fox and a skeleton drawing, and looked forward to Artsparks every week, as well as doing their own creative work at other times. The patient's parent also said how much they value the opportunity to take part regularly in something positive. I've been encouraging this patient to try different techniques and materials while they are in hospital and allow extra time for this."

Charlotte Stowell, Artist

"In total I worked with 12 patients over the two days, and with 3 members of family. It was one of the first times post covid that I have been able to work with an entire family, 3 generations all getting involved in the workshop. The grandmother made a model from paper and tape for her grandson, complete with zimmer frame, which was very well received!"

One non-verbal young patient in a wheel chair was able to join in the workshop when I made him some 'magic' glasses. Everyone then made some and wore them and the young patient definitely felt part of the workshop. Peer support in this session was particularly strong.

Earlier in the day I met young patient 'A' who has been receiving treatment for a brain tumour. He had just come in for a check up but is doing very well. His dad stopped me and thanked me for the part that I played in his time in hospital and his subsequent recovery. I was very moved to see 'A' looking so well with all his hair grown back and in school uniform. It is very special to get verbal feedback like this."

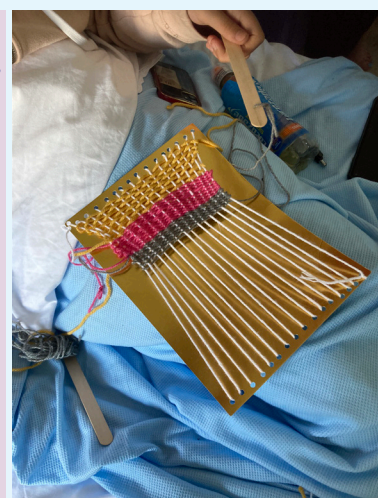
Edwina Bridgeman, Artist

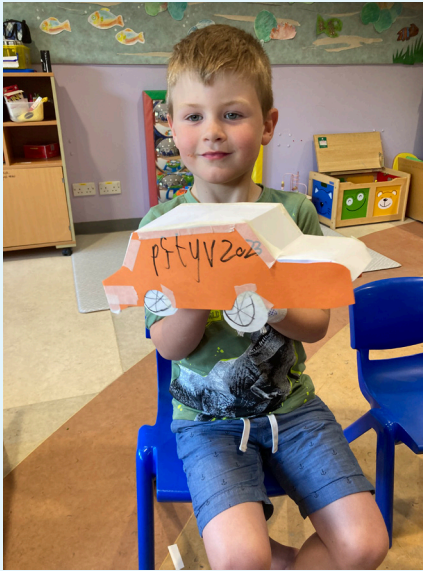


"Today I spent the morning with two boys aged 5 and 10 years. Both boys enjoyed putting together laser cut wooden puppets that I have designed. They both thoroughly enjoyed themselves."

I also supplied a young teenage girl with a pompom making kit, which she sat making with us really beautifully. I offered another teen the opportunity to do some weaving, which she was really pleased with. She said she was very proud of herself because it came out really neatly."

Catherine White, Artist





"The afternoon was spent with the two boys from the morning session who asked me if we could make cars. So we sat together and made 3D cars out of paper, card and masking tape. They had a great afternoon. Both sets of parents were really pleased that their boys had been kept busy and entertained all day. One parent commented that the day had gone more quickly because their son had something to do. It also gave them a rest from keeping their child entertained, which they had found exhausting on top of a sleepless night and juggling work arrangements around whilst in hospital."

Catherine White, Artist

Stitch in Time

"One of the Dementia coordinator's and other OPU staff have commented on how the Combe Day room is looking much more cheerful and brighter with some of the patients work on display. Another member of staff said they felt the day room was coming alive again after the pandemic restrictions, and good to see it being used."

Combe ward staff pop in and out of the day room during the morning, they don't always have time to take part but are always encouraging and say they enjoy seeing what we're doing and have noticed the uplifting and positive feeling on the ward on Friday mornings.

Therapy staff physios and OTs are also supportive as the art activities help towards patients mobilising and having a sense of purpose."

Charlotte Stowell, Artist

"One patient had been a seamstress and although lived with dementia and sometimes found conversation confusing, she was very skilled at cutting out the felt pieces and enjoyed the feel of working with fabric. She wasn't very impressed with my 'safe' scissors! ...luckily I had a sharper pair to use for her to make neat cut outs."

She talked about her work in Leeds and the city's history and connection to textiles. There is a volunteer helping most weeks on Combe, which is useful as most patients need some support with choosing and using materials for their work."

Charlotte Stowell, Artist



The artist did a session on Oasis (a temporary OPU ward) for an RUHX promotional video. As the paper baubles had worked well on Cheselden ward the week before, the artist repeated this for the video with patients on Oasis. Patients worked around a table set up in the middle of the ward space as the RUH Comm's Videographer filmed their hands making decorations.

One patient was unable to come to the table, they worked with materials on an over-bed trolley and said they'd really **enjoyed taking part**, they spoke about struggling with pain and how the **process of making** something during the morning had helped **distract from the discomfort**. The patient mentioned this to a nurse who agreed, it doesn't make the pain disappear but having a **new focus** and something **interesting** to do is **very beneficial**, helping the patients to be **more positive**, which can **help recovery**.

"This morning I was making book marks with the three lovely gentlemen on Chesleden Ward. One of the men was really happy to use large marker pens to create marks on the paper to decorate his book mark. He really tried to draw around the template as well. Once finished we put a message on the back to his wife. Then we laminated it and popped on a ribbon. One of the other patients was really pleased to have someone to talk to and was particularly chuffed to have a heart shaped book mark made for him. We put a message on it for his beloved wife too and he was very excited to give it to his wife when she visited that afternoon.

Having the opportunity to spend time with these men was a privilege. They were so pleased to have someone to talk to who had no medical agenda and was purely there for their entertainment."

Catherine White, Artist

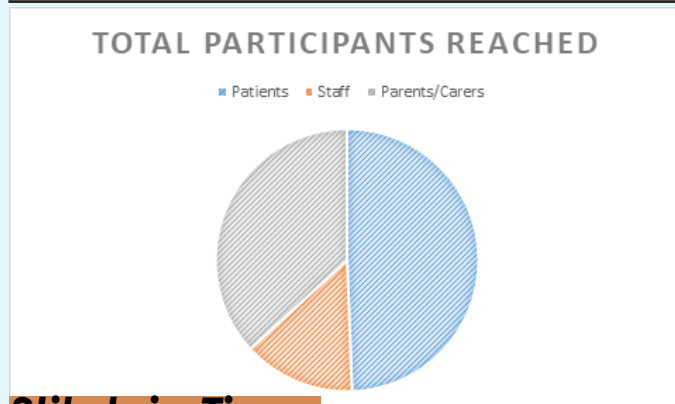


Outcomes

Artsparks *Half Day = 1 Workshop*

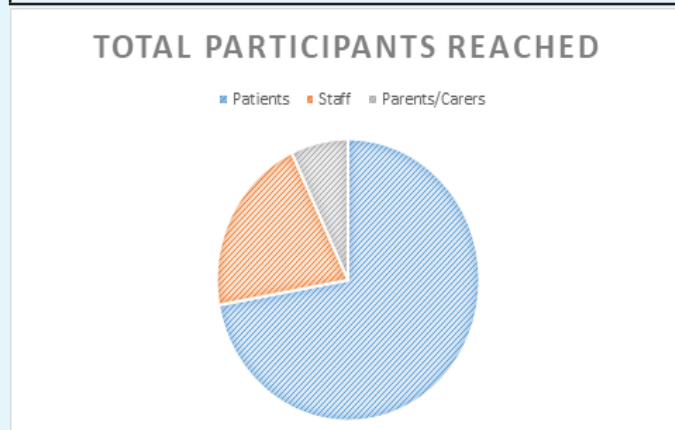
Art Bag assembling & packing	5.5
Artist/workshop prep days	8
Exhibition planning & preparation	4
Total number of workshops	92
Total participants reached	682

Patients	337
Staff	94
Parents/Carers	251



Stitch in Time

Artist/workshop prep days	4
Workshops on new ward areas	8
Total number of workshops	56
Total participants reached	255
Patients	184
Staff	53
Parents/Carers	18



"Excellent, made my child very happy and relaxed. Allowed us to have good memories in the hospital."

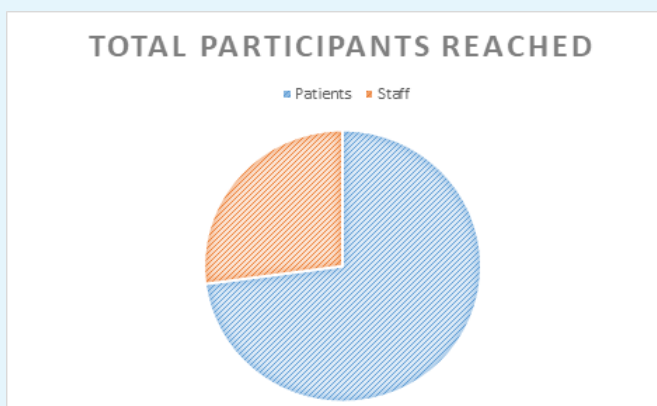
Parent



Mentoring and Trial Workshop sessions: Therapies & OPU

Total number of workshops	12
Total participants reached	107
Patients	78
Staff	29

***"The art session was amazing! Patients, staff and doctors were still talking about it today so thank you so much."** Senior Sister*



Total Workshops: 160

Total Participants: 1044

The artists delivered 92 workshops for Artsparks on the Children's ward and 56 workshops for Stitch in Time on the OPU wards. There were an additional 12 mentoring and trial workshops for staff and patients. There were occasions when certain OPU wards were closed due to an outbreak of norovirus or covid, so in this case, other ward areas were visited or preparation for new workshops and exhibition artwork was planned.

There were other participants that took part in these workshops as well as patients, family members/visitors and staff. These included Norland nannies, Junior Doctors, Medical staff, Therapies staff, Dementia coordinators, carers and volunteers.

ACE 1 Outcome: Creative People

pARTicipate provides a safe, supportive and stimulating environment for patients. Our project strands encourage social interaction, the use of fine motor skills and increase self-esteem and confidence. They are also enjoyable activities undertaken during a period of time that can be very stressful.

The pandemic severely restricted all arts and music activities at the RUH, especially participatory projects on the wards and this has emphasised even more the value of creativity within the hospital culture. pARTicipate activities are offered to all patients on a ward, regardless of their artistic ability and our artists always emphasise the importance of a 'patient-led' approach; so outcomes are not prescriptive and all achievements, no matter how small, are celebrated.

ACE 2 Outcome: Cultural Communities

An NHS hospital never refuses access and treatment to anyone who seeks it, making a hospital like the RUH a very democratic environment. We cover a broad demographic across our area of Bath & North East Somerset, North Wiltshire and South Gloucester, and reach young and older people from all walks of life. Our artists welcome all patients to take part if they would like to and in some cases a patient will discover a new interest, craft or art technique that they can continue to develop when they leave hospital. Staff also see how patients benefit from creative input into their daily routine. We involve staff in everything we do, they are our ward champions. Our commitment towards mentoring and supporting Ward Specialists and Volunteers to make use of our new resources, through training sessions on the Children's ward and OPU's, is something we would love to be able to continue for future sustainability and growth.



Inclusivity and Relevance

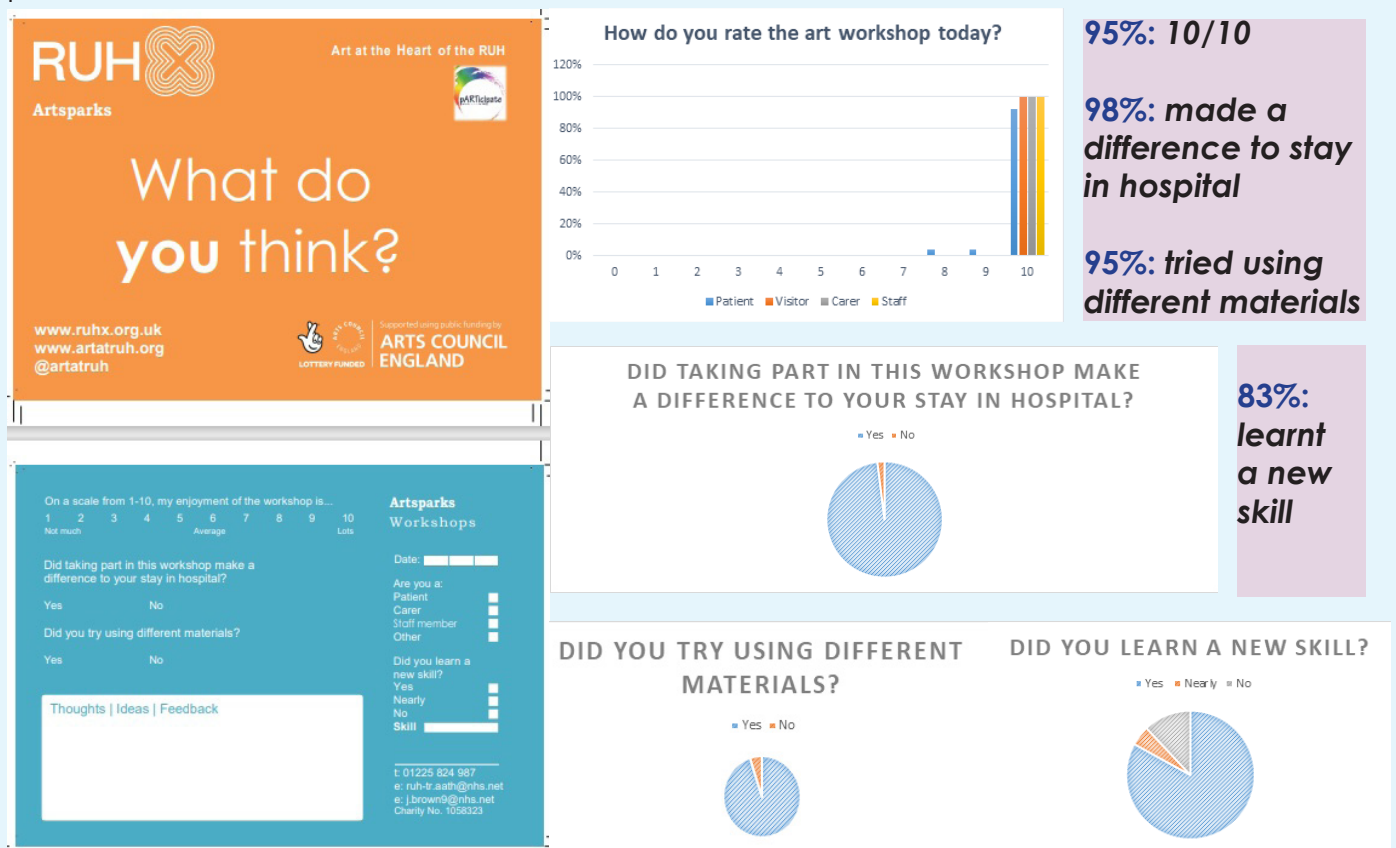
pARTicipate is designed to reach the hospital's most vulnerable patients; identified as those who are under 18 years on the Children's ward and patients over 60 years on OPUs; who will often also have dementia as an underlying condition. We focus towards young patients with life limiting or terminal illness, physical, speech and learning disabilities and mental ill health. Some patients come for treatment that will last for a few days, but will have repeat regular stays on the ward, and others can stay for up to six weeks, these generally include YPs and adolescents, who are referred for treatment through the local Council's Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services. These referrals have been on a sharp increase over the past couple of years and generally range from eating disorders, self-harm and alcohol or drug abuse. This makes it even more important to have the 'safe space' of the Playroom on the Children's ward and Teenage 'Chill out' room where patients can try new craft activities and create with our artists.

For older patients there is a dedicated 'Dementia Friendly Ward', which has a lovely Dayroom, where Stitch in Time takes place, and a Ward coordinator supports the artist and collects patients from their bedside to join in the workshop. These art sessions have been very important over the past twelve months as they encourage socialisation and a break from the monotony of long stays.

Objectives Achieved

All of our colleagues and partners working on this project already work within the RUH setting are already supportive to Art at the Heart and our programme pARTicipate. The RUH is committed to being a listening organisation, patient centred and compassionate.

We have gathered a great deal of **feedback** over the course of the year and we believe this emphasises that these participatory art sessions for patients are even more important post-pandemic, due to not only physical health but mental health reasons. There is a need for these workshops as we have trialled art sessions on other wards including Pierce, Cheselden and Waterhouse ward and also provided **art mentoring sessions for Therapies staff** in the RUH Therapies centre and at Bernard Ireland House. There are now more ward areas asking for our services for their patients.



Traffic Light Questionnaire

Participation and Audience Development Coordinator, Jessica Brown put together a traffic light questionnaire for Artists, Play Specialists, Dayroom to Doorstep facilitator, Volunteers and Contributors to the participatory art sessions. We had a **range of responses** on what was **successful**, what **could be improved** and what was **a challenge**. These responses contain **valuable and helpful feedback** for these workshops going forward.

This word cloud demonstrates words that were frequently used in the responses gathered on how participatory art sessions contribute and make a difference to a patient's time in hospital.



It is important that the workshops are accessible to all patients who would like to take part, whether they are able to participate in a group setting or from their bedside, art activities can be adapted to suit the participants needs. The regular weekly visits from the artists have enabled the team to achieve the original aims and participants have been able to fully engage in the creative process.

Traffic Light Questionnaire Responses

● The things I value most about these art sessions for patients are...

"The calm and relaxing space where all children are welcome and encouraged to 'have a go' at something they love during an often-difficult time. It also allows parents to have a break if they wish or join in (they often do)."

English Teacher, Children's ward


"The time in which we all spend together. I get to learn so much about each individual and their lives." Dayroom to Doorstep Facilitator

"Variety of resources and ideas, inspiring artists and I love the art bags as they are great for evenings and weekends." Play Specialist

"As a freelance artist, I value the way I am made to feel part of a team with AATH and also how hospital staff say they appreciate and support the work we do." Artist

"For Day surgery patients they provide a welcome distraction while the children are waiting. Most of the children don't have time to be anxious on a day when an artist is here. For longer-term patients the art sessions breaks up the day and are something to look forward to." Norland Nanny Student


"You can personalise the session and make a child feel really special. Patients get relief from the boredom of being in hospital, which takes their mind of the pain they are often feeling." Artist

 **The things I notice during these sessions are...**


"Patients on OPUs say they enjoyed taking part in workshops as an opportunity to chat to others and to feel less isolated. They are often surprised by what they can achieve creatively." Artist

"Children are quickly distracted once they start doing a creative activity, (like painting or modelling), they soon forget about the procedure or the thing that was worrying them about being in hospital." Artist

"It can bring families together being creative in a way that they wouldn't normally. Often three generations working together on children's wards. Participants leave with a smile on their face." Artist

 **The things I find difficult during these sessions are...**

"Sometimes it's not as easy to engage older patients in a workshop, they may be more anxious or unsure about taking part in something new or different so it can take a while to get started." Artist

 **I think these sessions are successful because...**

"On OPUs the Therapy OTs + Physios say how these workshops benefit their patients. They can observe and assess patients using and handling materials and see how they interact with others in a workshop setting." Artist

"They are inclusive and adaptable. Participants feel a real buzz of excitement that they have something to do. Children especially are pleased that you have no hidden medical agenda and they can therefore relax with you." Artist

"They are inclusive and adaptable. Participants feel a real buzz of excitement that they have something to do. Children especially are pleased that you have no hidden medical agenda and they can therefore relax with you." Artist

"The activities are well planned and the artist's love for creating is inspiring! It is lovely for children who are ill to have made something that they can be really proud of. It can have a big impact on their emotional well-being." Norland Nanny Student

● I think these sessions could be adapted or improved by...

"Having them more often! A day when no artists, musician or giggle doctor comes in is a boring day for the children." Norland Nanny Student

● I have been challenged during these sessions by...

"Not during these sessions, but there was a time when the art packs weren't available. I know they are dependent on funding and this is a shame that things like this aren't more highly valued. These packs really improve patient experience in the hospital and really helps a patient feel that 'they matter', that they are cared about as a whole person, and not just their medical needs." Family Liaison Facilitator



Other comments:

"We rely and look forward to the Wednesday artist in residence sessions. They make the playroom and ward a better place due to giving the children and young people something to look forward too." Play Specialist

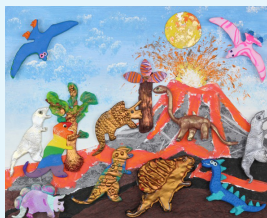
"Hugely important and brilliant provision. Fantastic to see a space being facilitated so well that children LOVE being in; makes a stay in hospital so much nicer. Parents and play workers hugely appreciate this work." English Teacher, Children's ward

"Parents/staff often ask how RUH arts is funded. Regular comments are 'but this is so important', 'we love what you are doing', 'it makes such a difference', 'we need this all the time', 'I thought that's what a hospital charity is for'...." Artist

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working as part of Art at the Heart. It is rather a dream job for me as an ex nurse I can see how this project is so needed across the trust and can be grown. I sincerely hope that funding can be obtained to continue." Artist

Outputs Data

Total number of Art Bags	220
New videos/virtual art workshops	3
Fimo models produced	200
Artwork scenes created & displayed on Children's ward	10
Artworks shown in Artsparks Gallery	20
Artwork displayed on OPU ward	25



Many children like to take their artwork home with them which has value in itself. Patients enjoy creating their artwork in these workshops and want to share what they have done with their families. The participatory art session is an escape from the reason for being in hospital and the artwork made is something positive to take away at what in most cases is a difficult and challenging time.

Older patients who participate in these art sessions enjoy the conversation and reminiscence that certain artwork themes can inspire. We gather verbal feedback in these sessions from carers and ward specialists as it isn't appropriate to use feedback forms. We have now introduced feedback cards for Stitch in Time on OPU wards that patients, carers and staff members can complete like the cards we use for Artsparks on the Children's ward, and also for our Art Bags.

Expenditure

92 Artsparks workshops	£10,900
56 Stitch in Time workshops	£6,760
12 Mentoring & Trial workshops	£1,320
Art Bag assembling & Artist/Workshop prep days	£2,880
Exhibition planning & preparation	£875
Art materials	£4900
New videos & art bag materials	£4000
Meetings, Mentoring, Training & CPD	£4240
Other: Exhibition Frames/Feedback Cards/Leaflets/Reports	£1015.06

Total Spend: £36,890.06

Improving the Hospital Environment

Artsparks

Throughout the Artsparks sessions on the Children's ward over the past year, a beautiful array of artwork has been produced.

Patients worked with artist Charlotte Stowell to create relief models using FIMO polymer clay. Charlotte's experience as an artist and maker has enabled patients to create their own models for these colourful scenes that are now displayed along the Children's ward corridor in narrow 3D box frames.

Our artist also spent a day at a local primary school where pupils contributed to the scenes so the exhibition work has been a great community effort to improve the Children's ward hospital corridor.

FIMO clay is versatile, tactile and colourful. This modelling material is always popular in Children's Ward creative workshops and suits different ages and abilities.

Some artworks made throughout the year with our artists in these participatory sessions are made in to prints and displayed in our Artsparks Gallery (Zone B) for the general public to view along a main hospital corridor with other community based artworks.



Artist, Catherine White and young patients created colourful balloon art scenes for display that fill three large A2 frames.



"The work is a collage of the balloon pictures which children painted using car ice scrapers, slightly bigger than credit card sized. The scraper has a sponge on one edge which can create nice shapes. The waving man wears a shirt decorated by a child using a paint pouring kit. She had a particularly lovely time watching the paint swirl around."

As a Bristol based artist who uses balloons in my own practice, in various ways, a balloon scene felt a fitting stage for the children's work. Children enjoy glitter and colour and so I wanted create something which children can relate to that will give them a sense of what they might get up to in an Artsparks session"

Stitch in Time

Improving the hospital environment for patients, visitors and staff is at the core of what Art at the Heart do for the RUH, Bath, with over 600 artworks on display across the hospital. Good healthcare delivered alongside stimulating art, and environmental design can have a significant effect on medical outcomes. It has been proven to reduce stress and anxiety, improve sleep quality, reduce costs by supporting clinical staff, improve patient and staff satisfaction as well as self-esteem.

Participatory group artwork is displayed in Combe ward dayroom to brighten the walls and 3D artwork such as the growing garden model scene sits along a windowsill.

'Staff on Combe are always interested in what we are doing in these sessions, their working environment is stressful, and they enjoy seeing patients taking part and appreciate the changing display in the day room, which makes a big difference to them. One member of staff said "It always cheers me up in here." '

Charlotte Stowell, Artist



Training, Mentoring and Development

Throughout the year, a total of five volunteers have supported Stitch in Time participatory art workshops alongside our artist. We had another two volunteers start the volunteer set up process but unfortunately they did not complete their training, and although a lot of initial interest and volunteer interviews, it has been a challenge to recruit regular volunteers. Post pandemic, the RUH has generally seen a drop in volunteer numbers across the Trust, but we hope that with more support and by sharing our participatory art projects more widely, numbers will rise again in future.

We arranged for The Little Angel Theatre to visit the Children's ward earlier in the year for a day of incredible puppet theatre performances. The individual shows for young patients are performed by two Performer Facilitators who are experienced in working within hospitals. The patients and family members are able to watch the show in bays or at their bedside, they use an iPad to make their story choices and are encouraged to participate in the experience. The artist's also found these performances very inspiring!



A student studying MAsc Creative Health at University College London has been working with us on placement, gathering data from our participatory art sessions and interviewing our professional artists to gain insight in to the work we do for patients and their families, and has used some of this to inform the basis of her dissertation - *'Creative art space in a paediatric ward: the possibility of alleviating patient loneliness and social isolation through therapeutic creative art making in the context of a tedious medical procedure.'*

The artists have also trialled and visited new ward areas to deliver Stitch in Time sessions for older patients. There is now further demand across the hospital for these participatory art sessions and more funding is desperately needed to continue these services for patients. Team meetings have taken place throughout the project and it has been insightful to visit the artists and staff members on the wards during and after sessions. The artists have found a good de-brief with each other after sessions when working on the same day very helpful. This is even more important post-pandemic for mental health reasons and for the artists to feedback on workshop sessions that have been particularly challenging.

Mentoring

The artists delivered mentoring sessions to Therapies staff to aid their work with patients.

“Two Occupational Therapists (OTs) explained about the patients they work with. Their patients are mainly long-term, they work intensively with patients who have been referred to Therapies, and this may be after some time living with a chronic pain, chronic fatigue, mobility issues plus other associated conditions - anxiety, depression, isolation, low self-esteem.

Some patients stay at Bernard Ireland House, a therapies residential facility at the RUH. OTs felt that taking part in organised creative sessions as a group, or providing art bags as something stimulating to do in the evenings or at weekends, would be very beneficial as it can be lonely for these patients. Motivation and stimulation are important factors when considering this patient group.”

Charlotte Stowell, Artist

“We had a wonderful session with Charlotte here in OT yesterday, thanks so much”
Occupational Therapist

“I was really interested to see how an artistic approach can help in pain therapy. I appreciate that the clinical art needs of OT's, Physiotherapist and psychologists are very different.” Catherine White, Artist

“A massive thank you for giving up your time to come and speak to us last week. It was really great to have some time and space to think about what stops us being creative personally and professionally but also to consider how we could better incorporate it into the work we do here.”

Advanced Practice Physiotherapist & BCPS Therapy Lead



Professional Development

Our professional artists have attended participatory arts related virtual training, including 'Facilitating Mental Health and Wellbeing through Creativity', 'Creativity and Dementia Good Practice', 'Designing Creative Health Activities for Participants with Specific Health Needs' and 'Creative Health Practice in Social Prescribing schemes' courses.

Artist, Charlotte Stowell attended a four session printmaking course at Frome Community Education and afterwards put the new print techniques in to practice, introducing these new print skills and activities to patients.

Participation and Audience Development Coordinator, Jessica Brown attended a three session 'Creative Evaluation Course' with Jane Willis who has many years of experience evaluating in the Arts and Health Sector. Jessica has developed her knowledge in this area which will not only be valuable for future participatory art projects but has helped to form the structure of this ACE Evaluation report. Jessica also attended three CPD virtual training sessions, two with the artists 'Facilitating mental health and wellbeing through Creativity' and 'Creativity and Dementia Good Practice' as well as 'Outcomes and Evaluation' with Jayne Howard, Founder and Managing Director of Arts Well.

Furthermore, the artists spoke to a Safe Guarding Lead member of staff on both the Children's and OPU wards at the beginning of the project where they had the opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns they may have about working on the ward. All of these discussions and training courses have helped the artists to deliver a very successful year programme of participatory art workshops for young and older patients.



Conclusion

The Arts Council England's evidence based Creative Health & Wellbeing ten year plan, 2020-2030, set out their ambitions to work within health and social care and promote collaboration between organisations and practitioners in the creative and health sectors. Their key aim is to include creativity at every stage of life, widening access to creativity and culture in the community so everyone could take part. In order to achieve their ambitions they pledged to support practitioners to learn new skills and grow the idea with the NHS that creativity is good for health.

Art at the Heart are proud of improving the RUH environment and patient experience, and making a positive difference in the hospital for patients, visitors and staff. Over the past year, we have seen a new lease of life as pARTicipate returned to the wards and flourished. This has been very beneficial for a number of our participants as we have detailed in this evaluation report.

To conclude, we have achieved our initial aims and gathered valuable feedback to support our case for participatory art sessions for both young and older patients in hospital. We discovered from our feedback cards that 83% of participants learnt a new skill and an incredible 98% felt that taking part in the art workshop made a difference to their stay in hospital.

Post pandemic, we have re-established weekly art sessions on the ward for patients which has been a real joy to see and experience. It has taken time for the artists to rebuild trust and support with clinical staff and their patients but extremely worthwhile to see what impact these in-person creative art sessions have on certain individuals.

Working in a safe, supportive and relaxed group setting enables social interaction and the artwork themes provide a good conversation starter that have helped friendships to be formed. ***“Art sessions do enable fun, laughter and smiles. It allows our patients as well as staff to have moments to feel settled, calm and have real enjoyment.”*** Dayroom to Doorstep facilitator

“Looking back over the past year, it is heartening to see how much has been achieved and the difference that these creative projects have made to patients, their families and staff. We would like thank our funders for enabling Art at the Heart to re-introduce the projects outlined in this report and move forward with renewed confidence and belief in their impact.” Hetty Dupays, RUH Art & Design Manager



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