

# Mapping creative activities in Scottish care settings

Summary report: November 2018

## Background and methodology

Luminate wanted to better understand what creative opportunities are currently happening in care settings across Scotland, to enable them to make evidence-based decisions and to guide their future work. Ruthless Research was commissioned to undertake this exercise, which comprised:

- A survey of current creative programming and practice completed by 97 Scottish care settings;
- Setting-specific data transferred into a database for pattern/gap analysis and future use;
- 10 semi-structured telephone depth interviews with artists and care setting staff to explore issues emerging from analysis of the database.

## Understanding current creative provision in Scotland's care settings

Almost all (97%) of the care settings offered creative activities in some form, most often paid for by the core budget of the care service provider (38%) or through fundraising (37%).

Who leads creative provision?:

- Many of the care settings had several people leading creative activities.
- 73% of care settings offered creative activities led by care service staff.
- 42% of the care settings offered creative activities led by amateur or volunteer artists, 26% offered creative activities led by professional artists, and 20% offered creative activities led by registered arts therapists.

Provision of participative creative activities, where the older people join in to create something:

- Almost all (97%) of the care settings offered participative creative activities.
- These were typically offered either daily (52%) or weekly (42%).
- 92% of the care settings offered participative creative activities within the care setting, and 45% offered participative creative activities outside the care setting.
- The activities offered most were craft (90%), music (86%), painting, drawing or sculpture (78%) and shared reading activities (65%) – with an average of 4.8 artforms/different kinds of activity per participating setting.

Provision of audience-based creative activities, where the older people view something created by someone else:

- Almost all (91%) of the care settings offered audience-based creative activities.
- These were most often offered monthly (40%), with 29% offering such events more often than monthly, and 23% less often than monthly.
- 74% of the care settings offered audience-based creative activities within the care setting, and 66% offered audience-based creative activities outside the care setting.
- The activities offered most were musical concerts (66%), theatre performances (49%) and museum or gallery visits (48%) – with an average of 2.5 artforms/different kinds of activity per participating setting.

Geographic patterns in provision:

- Day centres offering creative activities were most often in the central belt and cities, whereas the care homes offering creative activities were distributed more widely.
- The care settings that did not offer any creative activity were in the Glasgow area.
- Professional artists and arts therapists were most often used around the cities, whereas amateur artists were often used both in cities and more rural areas.
- There was no clear geographic pattern in the type or genre of activity offered.

## Key findings from depth interviews with care staff and artists

### Understanding where creativity sits within care settings

Most care settings felt strongly that what they did day-to-day should be meaningful and fulfilling for the older people.

In practice, care settings generally employed members of staff to co-ordinate a daily programme of activities which was planned in advance and evaluated in conjunction with participating older people. A huge variety of activities were typically offered, including creative sessions of all kinds.

Most had core budgets to pay for this programme, although money always limited what could be provided and staff generally took an opportunistic approach by taking advantage of arising offers and opportunities.

Artists working in care settings found the job to be enjoyable and rewarding, although they found it difficult to source opportunities and their work was not always well paid or reliable.

### Benefits of engagement with creative practice in care settings were thought to include:

- Enjoyment
- Improved wellbeing
- Opportunity to socialise
- Keeping the mind active
- Something to do
- Something to talk about
- An outlet for creative expression
- Opportunity to learn or use skills
- Sense of achievement
- Facilitates reminiscence
- Helpful for people with dementia
- Breaking down barriers between carers and clients
- Artists enjoy it

### Barriers to creative practice in care settings were thought to include:

- Cost of providing creative activities
- Lack of training
- Lack of staffing
- Limited funding, specifically for materials and professional fees
- Lack of support for creative activities from care staff and relatives
- Engaging people with dementia
- Varied health and wellbeing needs
- Perceived ability of older people and managing low expectations
- Ability to maintain a consistent programme
- Challenges with transport
- A need to work flexibly
- A need for new ideas

## Developing a model for understanding creativity in care settings

The following model has been proposed as one way to enable Luminate, care settings and other stakeholders to categorise the different types of creative sessions provided.

Category number	Category name	Description	Potential roles for Luminate
1	Creative arts led by non-arts specialists	Creative sessions led by non-arts specialists such as care setting staff or volunteers without an arts background.	Give care settings ideas for easy and impactful creative activities, to make the most of time and resources. CPD for care service staff.
2	Creative arts using resource support	Creative sessions led by non-arts specialists, but based around creative resources designed by arts specialists.	Make care settings aware of the range of available creative resources. CPD for care service staff.
3	Creative arts led by arts specialists	Creative sessions led by arts specialists or volunteers with a professional arts background.	Make links between care settings and professional artists and volunteers with a professional arts background. CPD for artists.
4	Therapeutic intervention	Creative sessions led by trained specialists in the type of therapeutic interventions required by the client group.	Sharing information on artist-led health initiatives.

## Conclusions and next steps

A huge amount of creativity is happening in care settings across Scotland, and it is almost universally acknowledged that this is positive and beneficial.

However, most care settings have limited resources and this can reduce their capacity to include creativity within their programmes. The stakeholders also observed that attitudes differ across individuals and settings. At this time we do not necessarily share a universal language of creativity, and expectations of what can be achieved vary considerably. There is certainly a role for Luminate to play in enabling creativity to flourish in care settings.

Whilst access to finance is certainly a blockage and a wide-spread issue, Luminate is not in the position to act as a Funder. However, Luminate is strongly committed to knowledge exchange, to advocacy, to providing support, and to making connections. It is hoped that Luminate can work in collaboration with artists and care settings to enable older people to benefit from creative opportunities that are both practical and ambitious.

The next step for Luminate will be to consider how they wish to prioritise their resources around enhancing the quantity of provision, the quality of provision, advocacy, training and making connections.