

Derbyshire County Council

Meeting with Cabinet Member, Health and Communities

21 January 2014

Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Communities

ARTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1. Purpose of the report:

To inform the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities of the success of arts:impact, the Pfizer UK Foundation-funded arts in care homes project.

2. Information and analysis

2.1 Background

2.1.1 Following on from the successful programme of arts and health work piloted over the previous two years, the County Council, on behalf of Arts Derbyshire, was successful in applying to the Pfizer UK Foundation for a grant of £29,800 to carry out an arts and health project working with older people, their care workers, and artists. The project has now finished, having been very successful and greatly appreciated by both the older people and care workers.

2.1.2 The project helped to deliver our long-term aim of making participation in the arts equally accessible to all people in Derbyshire living with mental health problems or living in care, and thus to improve quality of life.

2.1.3 arts:impact was set up with six clear objectives:

- Reduce social isolation and promote positive mental health and wellbeing amongst older people in care settings, especially those with specific mental health problems including dementia.
- Enable better access to cultural opportunities for these groups.
- Provide specialist training and development for artists to work with this community, increasing the workforce and also user confidence in that workforce.
- Advocate for the use of arts activity in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for this group, and disseminate information and good practice to provide on-going support.
- Provide training and on-going support and development for workers and carers to increase their confidence and skills in

the arts and in ways to use and access the arts, and therefore to increase use of the arts with older people in care settings. Provide mutual support for workers and carers through the creation of informal networks and communication channels.

- Embed use of the arts with older people in care settings into care settings policy.

2.2 Activities

Twenty-four care homes each received ten workshops in either dance, crafts or creative writing. Six of the care homes are run by Derbyshire County Council; the other eighteen by a range of providers. The sessions were delivered by six artists with experience of working in the field of arts and health. The project had 228 elderly participants, overwhelmingly care home residents with some day centre users. Most were women and over 60% were aged 80 and above. Around half suffered from a long term illness which included (sometimes in combination) dementia, sight and/or hearing impairment, stroke. In addition, 84 other people took part in the project, mostly care workers and activity co-ordinators, plus some family members and volunteers.

2.3 Workforce development

- 2.3.1 Each home agreed to commit two care staff to the project. The staff worked alongside the artist. All the nominated care staff were invited to attend three training sessions which combined practical arts activities with training in running sessions. The sessions covered: crafts and evaluation; dance and how to run an arts workshop; writing and the importance of arts activity. The sessions were repeated in three locations to minimise travel time and had 93% attendance.
- 2.3.2 The project set up a network for care workers called “Caring Creatively”, with online information and resources for carers and a regular newsletter. A Caring Creatively Networking Day held in June was attended by 55 Derbyshire care workers.
- 2.3.3 The project also ran a training and development course for 15 Derbyshire arts and health practitioners in partnership with Staffordshire University who run a Masters module in Arts and Health. In addition, two other artists were offered shadowing places with project artists.

2.4 Ongoing support

The Arts, Health & Wellbeing Co-ordinator (a part-time freelance worker) is in post until March 2015 and will continue to run the Caring Creatively Network and seek funding for further arts work with older people in care, as well as running the Arts & Health

Network (supporting artists and health workers) and other arts and health projects.

2.5 Outcomes

2.5.1 The project was fully evaluated and the reports from that evaluation are available on the artsderbyshire website. (See attached Summary Report.) All participants were invited to fill in questionnaires at the start and the end of the project. Care workers and artists kept diaries of each session. Follow-up questionnaires were sent out six months after the end of the sessions, to care workers and home managers.

2.5.2 Impact on participants

- Group cohesion and increased friendliness
- Increased happiness and contentment
- Increases in confidence
- Improvements in memory
- Improvements in mobility
- Positive changes noted in cases of dementia, even in cases where dementia was quite advanced
- Family members who joined in discovered that they could still share an activity with their relative and were reassured about their wellbeing

2.5.3 Impact on care workers

- Staff gained new insights into the people they care for
- The experience of seeing residents engaged in creative activities changed how staff interacted with them
- Staff learned how creative activities can be organised, gained ideas, and grew in confidence
- Staff began to take the initiative during the project
- Staff were inspired and motivated through the opportunity to meet and network with workers from other care homes via the arts:impact training and Caring Creatively Networking Day

2.5.4 Impact on artists

- The six artists employed by the project gained valuable experience in working in care settings
- Two less experienced artists were able to gain experience through shadowing
- Fifteen Derbyshire artists attended specially designed training sessions and reported increased confidence; feeling part of a cohesive workforce rather than as disparate sole traders; gaining value from the networking opportunities; gaining insight into their sector; developing and extending their practice methods

2.5.5 Benefits of artists and staff working together

- Staff and artist worked as a team with staff providing valuable support for the artist
- Staff background knowledge of participants increased benefits of the activity
- Staff were able to note positive effects that the artist could not, such as increased sociability and improved mobility hours and sometimes days after workshops
- Provided a richer and more rounded experience for participants and greater job satisfaction for staff and artists
- Enabled some homes to continue with arts activities after the end of the project

2.6 **Conclusion**

arts:impact showed clear benefits for both older people and staff, through its integrated approach to arts activities that are coupled with staff training. The project achieved its first five objectives, though gains are fragile and for the benefits to be sustained in the long term further input is needed. The sixth objective still requires more work.

3. **Financial Considerations:**

The project was paid for by funding from the Pfizer UK Foundation grant, with match funding from the County Council and the eight district and borough council through the Arts Derbyshire approved reserves. Further funding applications to local partners and national funding agencies are in process for further arts and health work with older people in care.

4. **Other Considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; financial, legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity; and environmental, health, human resources, property and transport considerations.

5. **Background papers**

Arts, Health and Wellbeing, October 2012
Arts and Health Report to Cabinet, October 2012

6. **Key Decision:**

No

7. Call-in:

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?
No

8. Strategic Director's recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities notes the report.

David Lowe
Strategic Director
Health and Communities