



The Community Team in Sept 2022 comprises of 5.5wte (including 2.2wte practice placements).

Community Arts Therapies Team: Quarterly Report Oct 2022

CARE (Consultation and Relational Empathy) measures: In September we invited persons using the Arts Therapies to complete a CARE measure, to find out how well we are creating empathy within therapeutic relationships. We received 25 responses across primary care, secondary care, and specialist services with an average outcome of 4.8 out of 5. Comments included:

"This is the first time I've felt completely safe and comfortable to share how I feel and go into harder topics"

"I was very afraid to express myself using music but eventually found that I enjoyed it, and it allowed me to explore some concepts/experiences which couldn't be expressed in words"

Areas to work on within the next quarter are explaining things clearly and making a plan of action.

Explaining things clearly - Arts-Based Psychoeducation: Our team away afternoon focused on Arts-based Psychoeducation. We have started to offer this as a brief option, which is particularly useful in primary care. Psychoeducation emphasises learning and maintaining emotional stability when it is hard to identify and manage emotions. Experiencing the materials in a group through the arts offers a different, less cognitive, way of experiencing the materials. The hope is that arts-based psychoeducation can offer a briefer intervention which contributes to gaining skills and building a shared understanding of ongoing psychological needs to plan next steps within statutory services or voluntary/third sector provisions. Preliminary findings from implementing this model within East Lothian (funded by Action 15 to extend access to the Arts Therapies to Primary Care) have demonstrated the importance of develop tasting sessions and/or having a minimum of two initial appointments to ensure readiness for a group psychoeducation setting.

Explaining things clearly Single-session assessment model: In West Lothian an art therapy pilot adapted practice to fit the ACAST single-session assessment model. Findings were that the assessment enabled staff to have a better understanding of patient needs, art therapy helped patients identify, communicate, and manage their needs better encouraging increased patient engagement with other services.

Making a plan of action - Personalised Measures: We continue to explore co-shaping personal outcomes in therapy, helping to actively link therapeutic formulations with ongoing personal changes. The measures can build on insight, demonstrating what happens outside the therapy room. Within longer-term trauma-based work funded by Future Pathways* we can see the insight gained, *"attending art therapy for the last 21 months has helped you think about why you have a particular relating style, what you have lived through, and what its effect is. Sometimes we don't realise stuff until we put it into images and talk it through and realize we can change."* The personalised measures, written in a shared language, add depth understanding active changes, such as:

- working on self-esteem and self-worth' (increasing from 1/10 to 5/10),
- being more honest with myself and others', (increasing from 1/10 to 8/10)
- being able to speak to someone without having to worry about what they will say or think', (increasing from 0/10 to 5/10).

* The Arts Therapies usually offer short to mid-term support with transitions to community-based support thought about as part of the pathway.

[East Lothian Joint Mental Health Team \(Primary and Secondary Care\):](#)
Art and Music

[Edinburgh North East/North West Community Mental Health Teams:](#)
Art (Supervised Practice Education) and Music

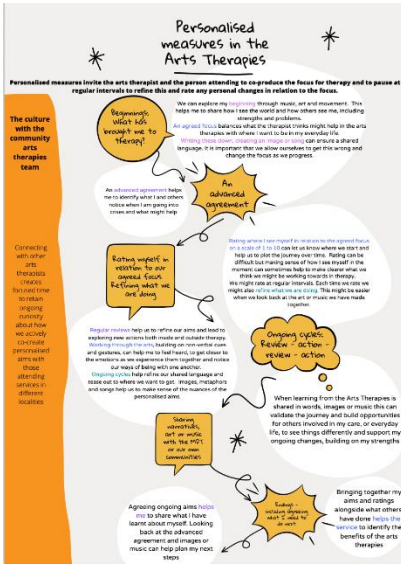
[Edinburgh South East/South West](#)
Art (Supervised Practice Education)

[Matrix 4: Psychology:](#)
Art (Pilot Project)

[Lothian Eating Disorder Service:](#)
Art

[FAST Learning Disability:](#)
Art Therapy

[Perinatal Services:](#)
Music and Art (Pilot)



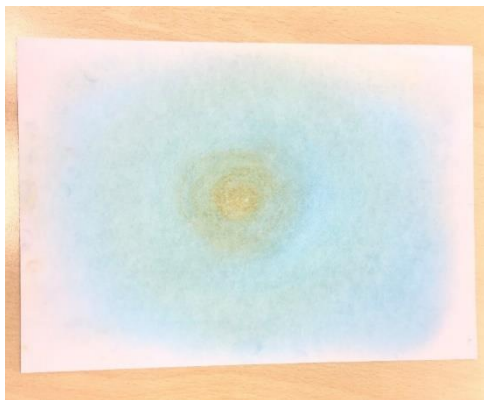
Practice Development Groups to strengthen Personalised Measures: Using an action inquiry evaluation, three members of the community team began strengthening our approach to personalising measures in 2021/22.

The framework was shared with the arts therapies empowerment group, which includes experts by experience. They commented that the process felt kind and flexible. The lack of a quick form ensures that the therapist and person attending reach a shared understanding of what is manageable and what participating in the arts therapies is all about.

The advance in practice was successfully submitted as part of a ProfDoc within the Person-Centred Research Centre at QMU. A research phase will now be planned involving persons who have used the arts therapies to create the conditions for co-shaping meaningful and measurable action plans in the Arts Therapies.

Art Psychotherapy in Collaboration with Psychology (Matrix 4): A 12-month pilot project is currently exploring the potential for art therapy to be offered as part of the Matrix 4 pathway for trauma. The aim is to provide time-limited individual art therapy using a trauma informed approach and 10-week Arts-Based 'Learning to Mentalize' psycho education groups. Art therapy can be helpful for those who might feel disconnected or overwhelmed by their thoughts and emotions as a consequence of their traumatic experiences, enabling exploration of these through art making in a safe, manageable way. This can promote increased curiosity in self and our relationships with others, as well as the opportunity to connect to the physical self in a different way.

Vignette: Individual Art therapy, Matrix 4 trauma service: Psychoeducation materials can provide resources for ongoing therapy as outlined in this vignette of short-term individual Art Therapy.



“Cindy had recently experienced a panic attack, ‘forgetting’ in the moment what could help her to feel better. In response, I offered empathic validation, acknowledging how frightening and overwhelming the experience sounded. I introduced the ‘Window of Tolerance’, a helpful visual resource which can support increased awareness and understanding of overwhelming emotional experiences. This encouraged Cindy to make an image of their ‘safe place’ - associated with happy, peaceful, and contented memories, describing the art making as a soothing and calming experience. They also noticed how the sensory qualities of the chalk pastels also connected them to their ‘safe place’. Alongside Cindy, I made a creative response image (see beside), also using chalk pastels. I used a pompom to smooth the chalk and shared my surprise at how much physical effort I had to put into creating something that created a similar sense of calm. This made us wonder about the conscious effort needed to create and nurture ‘safe spaces’ and how this might be something we need to practice.”

What next: Continuing to develop and evaluate pathways in different community arts therapies localities and specialist services. Connecting arts therapies provisions within acute, psychological, primary care services and third sector providers to build smoother transitions.