

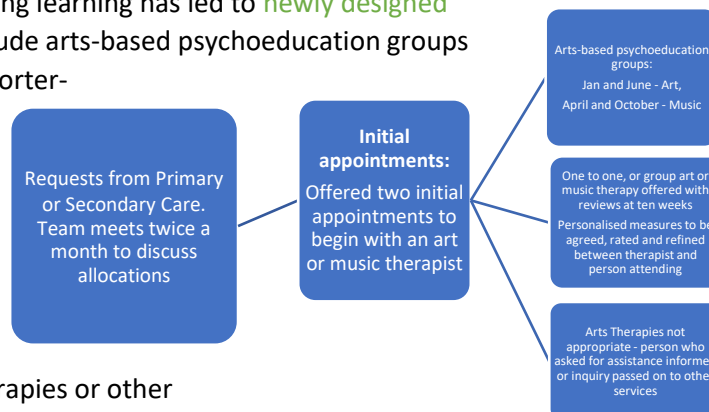
Community Arts Therapies Team: Quarterly Report Feb 2023

Statistics: Between Oct and Dec 22 there were 436 attendances at community arts therapies services, 72 cancellations and 66 non-attendances.

CARE Measure and Patient Experiences: In this quarter 31 responses demonstrated an average 4.7 out of 5 rating of arts therapists within the community team. Improvements on last quarter noticed in explaining things clearly. We have now added additional sections to this form to capture qualitative feedback on experiences of the arts therapies.

Pilot Projects: Over the last year, the Community Team has been exploring tests of change working more closely with Psychology Matrix 4, Perinatal Mental Health and Primary Care, which has generated increased understanding of ongoing learning and unlearning.

Improving access to the Arts Therapies in East Lothian JMHT: Following a one-year pilot Action 15 funding has now been granted on a permanent basis to bring Art Therapy alongside the well-established Music Therapy service enabling increased choice and access to persons across primary and secondary alleviating pressure on wider services. Ongoing learning has led to **newly designed pathways**, which include arts-based psychoeducation groups which aim to offer shorter-term group options to support emotional stability as either a standalone intervention or as preparation for mid to long-term arts therapies or other psychological therapies.



Matrix 4 - Psychology: A 12-month secondment providing art therapy as a treatment option as part of the Matrix 4 Psychological Therapies Service pathway has now come to an end. Preliminary feedback from those who attended suggested **art therapy can be an effective approach in working with people with complex trauma when it is difficult to articulate thoughts, feelings, and experiences verbally**, which echoes lived experience research (Chilvers et al. 2021). Ongoing learning demonstrated that the use of personalised measures enables a collaborative approach in the art therapy sessions, supporting improved communication, shared understanding, and trust in the therapeutic relationship. The use of a rating scale (with a range of 1-10 with 10 being the highest) demonstrated increased mastery and confidence in personal outcomes. Ongoing learning will help the team to reflect on how additional self-report measures, including GAD-7, PHQ-9, WEMWBS and CORE, which suggested that art therapy contributed to positive changes in mood and well-being, might be useful alongside co-shaped measures.

NHS Lothian Perinatal Community Mental Health team:

Offering Art and Music Therapy included the introduction of an **Art at the Start group**. The data from which has been included in a larger research project. The group seeks to create moments of connection between babies and their grown-ups through art making. Such moments are the key building blocks of strong relationships and self-esteem.

[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)

Group facilitators also made weekly observation notes on infant activity, specifically looking at agency, engagement, relationships, and development. Over the eight week blocks three dyads attended regularly, with the range of infant ages at their first sessions ranging from 9 weeks to 14 months. Activities included making a mark (with paints), hand and foot-prints, mixing colours (in a zip-lock bag), sensory play, shaving foam marbling, and playing with salt-dough clay. The comparison of the questionnaires from start to end, including complete the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) and a Mothers Object Relations Scale (MORS), saw positive results; including improvements in parental well-being and increases in behaviours that promote positive attachments. Observation notes captured an increase in shared goals, infant-directed communication, connection, and engagement. These findings have provided ongoing learning to prepare for a second Art at the Start group in West Lothian in January/February 2023.



It became clear in the first session that Baby A enjoys experiencing novel textures using their feet. On a weekly basis we witnessed them lying on a mat, sharing mutual gaze with mum, smiling and continuously moving/stomping their feet and increasing the pace when they come in contact with the paints or noisy, textured materials. Over the course of the group, this dyad missed a session to attend a family occasion, but on their return, mum showed the facilitators a family photo including Baby A with painting done during that time, demonstrating a positive experience they were able to share with their wider family members.

Outcomes: Increased attentiveness and responsiveness to baby by Mum. Improved confidence of parenting. Using experience from therapy successfully in family life.

The Art at the Start project is a collaboration between art therapist Vicky Armstrong and experimental psychologist Dr Josephine Ross. They are interested in the impact participation in art can have upon the social well-being of young children and how shared art experiences may help to build strong attachment relationships

Project website: <https://sites.dundee.ac.uk/artatthestart/>

Twitter: @ArtattheStart1

<https://discovery.dundee.ac.uk/en/persons/vicky-armstrong/publications/>

Research: Catherine Chalmers, Art Therapist was successful in her application to join the **Steps to Research** programme. She will spend 12 days this year learning alongside members of the Psychological Interventions for Complex PTSD And Schizophrenia-Spectrum disOrder (PICASSO) with mentoring from Professor Thanos Karatzias, Professor of Mental Health.

Training: On January 18th Catherine Chalmers contributed to the **NHS Lothian AHP Practice Education Lunch and Learn Sessions** on the theme of 'Thinking about ways to reduce distress'. One of the most attended sessions in the series, she explored thinking about trauma in arts therapies across different clinical settings, and the ways we might encounter distress in those attending appointments. It explored ways of supporting distressed persons and the role art making in art can play to support this. Attendees were guided through a simple breathing technique which could be applied across a range of clinical areas. The session can be found through this link:

<https://staff.nhslothian.scot/ahp/ahp-practice-education-lunch-and-learn-sessions/>

Student placements: We continue to host QMU level 1 (Music Therapy) and level 2 (Art Psychotherapy) learners across the community team. These learners bring additional clinical hours and a breadth of learner for all our practice educators.

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.