

## Case studies: How can the arts and creativity support people who are shielding or vulnerable during Covid-19?

Project: The One project  
Organisation: Escape Arts  
Region: West Midlands

### Introduction

The One project is a creative pack which has lots of creative inspiration for all ages aimed to connect people and spread a positive message of friendship and hope. The pack will be



distributed across Warwickshire through hospital discharge teams and through partnership groups supporting our shielded communities. The project will also work closely with George Eliot Hospital in Nuneaton and Warwick Hospital to provide resources for patients and staff teams. To capture this moment in time, those taking part will be invited to share their work which will then be collated and will contribute to public artwork in our hospitals.

The publication will frame uplifting engagement activities, accessible to all, which promote positive wellbeing messages of hope, community, friendship and resilience, with a focus on world friendship day on 30 July and our planned international exchange. The activities will act as a positive focus but also a creative capture of people's stories and experiences during lockdown.

The publication will be printed on bond paper to effectively create an activity pack in its own right. The publication will include:

- Spiral Waves – meaning, guidance, ideas board, how to share;
- Pandemic Pals Postcard – templates, which can be cut out and decorated, one self-addressed to us which we will collate the other to be used to send to friends, family, patients. Part of this initiative involves creating messages of thanks and good will to the NHS staff and wider keyworkers;
- A range of accessible creative activities to capture the Covid-19 experience, to enable documentation and expression of feeling and emotion.

**Social Media** – the project will be delivered and co-hosted through established Sitting Rooms of Culture Facebook site and all Escape Arts social media and web platforms.

## **Funders**

Warwickshire County Council

### ***Who is it for?***

We are hoping to reach those who have been shielded for a range of reason such as underlying health conditions. Also those most at risk of isolation including supporting those with mental ill-health, bereaved, those in care, homeless and young people.

### ***What outcomes were/are you aiming for?***

- Reduce beneficiary isolation and loneliness for the most vulnerable beneficiaries across a six-month period of self-isolation and social distancing through the provision of creative health interventions providing accessible online community and home activities, with access to Escapes wider mental health forum and one-to-one support.
- Promote place making, connecting communities during this period of national emergency creating a sense of belonging through local ownership, community street challenges and people and places pledges.
- Increase opportunities for skill development and longer-term health and wellbeing through the development of activity blogs, creative videos and sharing of resources.
- Increase capacity of our local third sector providers by sharing expertise, resources, effecting signposting and strategic advocacy.

### ***Where is it happening?***

Warwickshire – Stratford District, Nuneaton and Bedworth

### ***Are you working in partnership?***

Commissioned by Warwickshire County Council and Coventry and Warwickshire Creative Health Alliance (CWCHA).

We are working with both George Eliot and Warwick Hospital, with NHS Hospital Discharge Teams to distribute to patients and staff. We are working with Public Health and WCC to support distribution coordination for the pamphlets across the County. Direct partner distribution include Springfield MIND, Lifespace, Bedworth High School, Foodbanks, St Basils, P3, Shakespeare Hospice, Targeted Youth.

*Hospital Interventions* – we will work with Kirsty who is a Covid-19 nurse at Warwick Hospital to introduce the publications across key hospital wards. She will also produce an arts resource box to accompany this so patients can take part, a welcome focus and distraction. Kirsty has a wealth of experience with patients on these wards and the isolation they inevitably experience due to the nature of the infection. She has consulted with SWFT COE Glen Burley on the project and we will follow up with Sophie Gilks and Liz Walters. Glen is also CEO at George Eliot and both him and Daljit Athwal (Director of Nursing) are supportive of the project being delivered there using the same framework. It is hoped the final vinyl artwork would be installed at Warwick and George Eliot hospital, building the portfolio of transformative hospital artwork Escape has instigated already at Warwick.

Kirsty is a huge arts and health advocate and has been consulting across clinical practises to scale the project and has involved Coventry University and the nursing students in terms of promotion and advocacy. Escape will share the project with Emma Linnane to see if the work

could be further scaled to the wider University Hospitals. We will also link in with Age UK Hospital Social Prescribers (HSP) so patients leaving hospital will have the resource to take home and to reflect on their experience.

In addition to the project being delivered within wards, people will be encouraged to send their postcards to patients and staff. Kirsty has been consulting with **Post for Patients** who are supportive of the project and have volunteers will to help at the front-line in terms of forwarding emailed responses to Escape and printing and delivering to staff and patients.

*Wider Circulation* – the programme will form part of Escape Recovery Wellbeing Academy Profile so individuals can access the information and get involved there and we will promote through alongside strategic advocacy networks, such as the CWCHA, Warwickshire CAVA, Private, Third and Public Sector Group. Kirsty has also undertaken consultation with Coventry Crisis Team, City of Culture, Laura Hyde Foundation and mutual aid groups so we have circulation contact advocates access across Coventry.

***How many people took/are taking part?*** We have a distribution of 10k

***For how long has it been happening?*** Distribution started in the first week of July; work will be collated by end-August with artwork developed in the autumn.

***What were/are the main outputs?***

Distribution of 10k pamphlets. Support video tutorials. One piece of public artwork to be exhibited in two clinical centres.

**Evaluation:** We are collecting case studies, impact statements and using the Happiness Pulse to measure wellbeing.

### **Further information**

For over 20 years Escape has developed a diverse programme of social impact arts and health services and targeted interventions to tackle isolation and reduce health inequalities across Warwickshire. Including:

- integrated participatory arts and health programmes
- the running of two community wellbeing venues
- employment skills training for those in long-term unemployment or not in education and training
- recovery wellbeing academy mental health support, creative, cooking and gardening workshops
- reminiscence brunch clubs for isolated older people
- mental health volunteer shed projects at George Eliot Hospital, including Men in Sheds, Community Shed and Women in Sheds, supporting multiple disadvantage targeted/clinical interventions supporting learning disabilities, bereaved young people, those with acute mental health illness
- targeted volunteer and supported work-experience programme

In 2018 we were awarded the Queens Awards for Volunteering Services, Pride of Stratford Educator of the Year and our work is underpinned by Quality for Health NHS Quality for Health Standards. Escape is a charity employing 12 people. Facebook ONE: Be Creative.