

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

Organisation: Free Space Project

Region: Greater London

### Introduction

Free Space Project are distributing a number of art boxes to patients that have been shielding during the pandemic. The boxes are full of art materials and creative activities that encourage patients to explore the impact that shielding has had on them. The project is in partnership with clinical leads from the James Wigg GP practice and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. Work collected from the patients will be displayed in a public exhibition in Kentish Town Health Centre.

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### Funders

National Lottery Community Fund.

### Who is it for?

We are working in partnership with the James Wigg GP practice who have identified patients that are shielding. Their reasons for shielding are quite varied: organ transplant, respiratory

problems, older. They also vary in age from 28-85.



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

Providing something collaborative. Reducing feelings of isolation. Helping people that are bored. Encouraging creative expression.

### Where is it happening?

Camden, London

### Are you working in partnership?

Partnership with the James Wigg GP practice, part of Camden & Islington NHS trust.

### How many people took/are taking part?

20-30. Possibly more.

### For how long has it been happening?

We only started on 25 June as had to wait from National Lottery to see if we could divert some designated funds. We are aiming to send out boxes on 17 July and run the project for six

weeks. We expect to have everything back with us in September and can consider an exhibition.

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

Exhibition in the health centre.

**What have been the challenges and successes for you?**

We had a number of responses within a matter of hours of the text messages being sent to patients. The survey results (asking patients to give us 5 words to describe their shielding experience) showed that people were feeling isolated, depressed, anxious and lonely. We hope that we can help change that.

**Further information**

The Free Space Project is a charity supporting arts and community initiatives within Kentish Town Health Centre, Camden. Established in 2010, our aim is to relieve mental and physical suffering through the use of the arts and holistic care in conjunction with the James Wigg GP Practice.

We provide a range of projects to our patients and those in the local community of Kentish Town/Camden. From arts workshops to Dance for Parkinson's, a chronic pain group, and much, much more.

The Free Space Project employs 2 part time staff; one three days a week, the other two days. We also have a roster of freelancers delivering projects — between 5-15 depending on projects.