

## Case studies: How have culture and creativity been supporting people in health, care and other institutions during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Project: Artfelt Anywhere

Organisation: Artfelt, Sheffield Children's Hospital Charity

Region: Yorkshire & Humber



“The patient packs ...have been an incredible addition to our work. They look very professional and are far more entertaining than anything we had hoped for! Most importantly, the children are thoroughly enjoying using them and receiving age-appropriate packs unique to them.”  
Shabnam Ahmed, Play Team Leader

Staff Creativity Pack provided to staff at Sheffield Children's Hospital. Photo: Artfelt

### Introduction

Artfelt is The Children's Hospital Charity's arts programme. It is funded by them to use art and design to transform the walls and spaces of Sheffield Children's Hospital, helping children recover in an environment tailored to them. The programme also puts on workshops for youngsters to provide distraction during anxious moments – such as before an operation, and to break up long stays on the wards.

When access to the inpatient wards at Sheffield Children's Hospital was paused as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we responded with **Artfelt Anywhere**; devising a way to provide high quality art experiences, even though we couldn't facilitate them ourselves.

Designed by professional artists and musicians from our workshop programme, these self-contained activities allow patients and their families to guide their own creative sessions whilst Artfelt is unable to be there in person. Six art packs are complemented by virtual music lessons and performances on our You Tube channel; with musical instruments and iPads for children to play along at the bedside.

As well as packs for patients, Artfelt Anywhere also saw staff packs rolled out and hosted online, so staff at Sheffield Children's can access them wherever they are. These resources have been created to provide relaxation and mindfulness activities for the staff supporting patients and their families at a challenging time. They include yoga, mindful colouring and our pick of the best online arts and culture during lockdown.

## Funders

The Children's Hospital Charity, National Lottery Community Fund, Sheffield Town Trust, Youth Music

## Who is it for?

Inpatients across our medical, surgical, oncology, and critical care wards aged 0-16 years. Plus, staff across all our Trust sites.

## Are these people you have worked with before, or new participants?

Both

## How many people took/are taking part?

In total, we are likely to reach 3,000 children, young people and staff.

## Where is it happening?

Sheffield, South Yorkshire

## For how long has it been happening?

The art packs and instruments were distributed in July 2020. A re-print of the current packs will be rolled out in November 2020 and a new version commissioned for spring 2021. We have recently created 5 further music videos, with more planned for the New Year.

It is anticipated that our workshop programme will need to function in this way until at least March 2021.

## What outcomes were/are you aiming for?

To offer distraction for patients and perhaps spark an interest in art or music which they can take forwards when they leave hospital. The staff packs were developed to support staff health and wellbeing during a particularly difficult time.

## Have you adapted existing work to make this happen? If so, how?

All the packs and music videos are new content, however they were devised using existing artists and musicians from our programme. The music offer was adapted from an ongoing funding stream to provide music in the hospital.

## Does your work support people who identify with one or more of the protected characteristics<sup>1</sup>?

The community at Sheffield Children's Hospital sees families and staff from a wide demographic. Whilst our project did not target any particular group, it was devised to ensure it was as inclusive as possible in terms of language and accessibility.

## Evaluation & Feedback

"The patient packs for us to use during the Covid-19 pandemic have been an incredible addition to our work. They look very professional and are far more entertaining than anything we had hoped for! Most importantly, the children are thoroughly enjoying using them and receiving age appropriate packs unique to them. From an infection control perspective, they are easy to roll-out quickly and can be updated/replaced with ease. We look forward to using them into the long-term" Shabnam Ahmed, Play Team Leader

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<sup>1</sup>Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation (Equalities Act 2010).

Whilst we are not able to access the hospital, we are receiving feedback from the Play Team. We are also inviting patients and staff to contact us on social media. We have devised a Survey Monkey form which is included in the music packs.

So far it has been challenging to collect feedback as the Play Team are incredibly busy. This also prohibits them from pushing the online survey. From conversations we have had, they are very grateful for the packs and have only asked that the ones which require larger (box) packaging be made more compact.

### What is your own impression of how it has worked? What have been the challenges and successes for you?

We kept to our vision of providing a high-quality art experience. As a result, we have tailor-made, bespoke content which is appropriate to our audience and can be used in months to come or whenever we're not around.

The challenges have been in relation to working from home and not having the usual contact with the hospital. As our colleagues there were busy responding to the pandemic, we were mindful of not putting too much on them. This has also extended into feedback, which can be difficult to glean.

The Play Team have also asked for some further training to help them use the music technology so, as this project will be ongoing for a while, we are happily in a position to provide this as our virtual offer evolves.

### Are you reaching more people/fewer people/different people?

We have engaged with more staff than we might normally.

### What new skills have you or your colleagues had to develop to deliver this work?

The online music videos required a level of video editing that I had not undertaken before.

### What would you say has made this project possible?

The project has been made possible by the enthusiasm of the artists, musicians and team who understood the necessity of ensuring children and staff had access to art and culture at this time. Sheffield Children's Hospital were also supportive of us continuing our work, which could not have been rolled out without the engagement of their Play Team. We were also fortunate to have existing platforms to host video content (e.g. YouTube) so could keep things simple and responsive.

### What would have made it easier?

In the reactive nature of the early pandemic, it would have been helpful to have a clearer funding stream so we could have responded sooner. However, this forced us to spend longer planning the project and I feel we ended up with a higher quality, less knee-jerk outcome as a result. In response to the urgency, we launched a public campaign, which was enough to get us started and this was followed by longer term funders.

### Further information

[Patient Content](#)

[Staff Content](#)

[Music Videos](#)