

Travelling Dementia Suitcase - Year Two



Annual Report 2020

'My dad loves your sessions and so do I'

In this our second year of delivery we continue to build on developments formed during the first year. As you can see from the impact figures, much larger numbers than expected continue to benefit from knowing more about changes in sensory deprivation and taking part in sensory enrichments activities.

We were able to deliver training to those on the waiting list at the end of year one and to partner with more organisation such as the You Trust in Portsmouth to provide additional training for

their volunteers working with people with a dementia.

Measuring Impact

In year one we delivered 54 sensory activity workshops across Southampton, Portsmouth and the IoW reaching a total of 752 people with dementia. In year two this increased to 98 workshops with a reach of 936 individual. The slightly reduced direct delivery number is due to the fact staff were moving towards providing training and support of volunteers rather than direct delivery.

The sessional figure do not take in to account the number of sessions delivered by our expanding army of volunteers.

A big challenges we face as this programme rolls ou is to keep track of the snowball effect that is taking place. However our feedback from volunteers continues to demonstrate the Think Sense message is being incorporated into homes and family values.

Thus, the figures in reality are much higher than reported here.

VOLUNTEERS (TARGET 60)

87 people have undertaken the volunteer training package

Future training will be via on line course

CARERS (Target 600)

697 INVOLVED IN SENSORY SESSIONS

PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA (Target 600)

986 have experienced nature therapy

NO OF SESSIONS

98 SENSORY SESSIONS

Delivered by staff

Research

Last year we reported on our observational analysis research showing what engagement looks like.

This year, our ethogram now forms part of our Dementia Care and Sense Box resource to help families evaluate impact.

The ethogram helped us explore which was the most engaging activity we delivered. This was drumming,

This year we are focusing on analyzing thematic and discourse analysis from data provided by our volunteers in their volunteer diaries.

In addition, we will be working with researchers at Bournemouth University to explore the impact of drumming on dementia especially in relation to a reduction in agitation and enhanced sleep patterns.

Our continued partnerships with care homes, Alzheimers and Memory Cafes, hospitals, other VSO and statutory bodies has enabled this fantastic reach.

Without doubt the most engaging activity is the Drumming sessions we provide focused on auditory perceptual changes in dementia.

Drumming evokes an engagement response unseen in other activities. This finding is mirroring global research into the effectiveness of drumming in mental health. We are not aware of any other organisation involving drumming as a sensory tool for those with a dementia.

Data from the use of Fit Bits during a drumming session with volunteers showed an equivalent of a 1.2 mile walk, a drop in blood pressure (systolic and diastolic) in gentle drumming and improved sleep patterns for drumming in general. This

needs to be extrapolated to carers. We are unable to extrapolate to people with a later stage dementia due to consent issues. However, the qualitative and quantitative data obtained so far, whilst limited, indicates the potential for enhanced sleep patterns and reduces agitation.

Case study

Graham has Lewy Body Dementia and Parkinsons Disease. He is extremely restless and wanders a lot where, because of his frailty, he requires constant one to one nursing care. His wife visits him every day in the nursing home but he is unable to sit down and spend time with her. Because of her own frailty she can not follow him around. He rarely sits and during the night will only sleep for brief periods of time.

Graham joined our music group and the first time he sat for a period of about ten minutes. This was reportedly longer than he had sat down for some time. The next week his wife came along to our music group as well. This time Graham was waiting for us to arrive and managed to sit alongside his wife and play a rattle and a drum for about 20 minutes. His wife was tearful but delighted to have spent quality time with Graham.

Nursing staff reported after the session Graham went and laid down on his bed and slept solidly for three hours. The longest period he had slept for months.



Dementia Care Sense Boxes

In November 2019 we started to co create a series of Sense Boxes for people with a dementia to help families stay connected.

The idea came from two of the most common things we hear from families. One is they believe a family member with a dementia does not know they are there. Consequently, they do not visit so often if they are in a care home.

Secondly, if the individual is cared for at home, family members often struggle to support them through the changes that are taking place. They feel helpless instead of empowered.

The catalyst for the development of the Sense Boxes was a family member telling us – *if only you could bottle what you do.*

Well, we can't bottle it – but we can box it.

So, we condensed dementia care sensory activities into a box. Well actually five boxes with one for each sense. These boxes can be used by family members or Activity Coordinators,

Each Sense Box contains information about a particular sense, what happens to that sense in dementia, how to understand these changes and ideas as well as resources for sensory activities they can do together.

The aim of the Sense Boxes is to:

- 1 - Spread the Think Sense message
- 2 - Help families stay connected
- 3 - Enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of people with a dementia

Partnership Working

'It was really good to see how you calmed (name) when she was so agitated'

'I am sorry it made me cry but it was a nice cry'

We have continued to build on the partnerships formed in our first year of operation. In addition we were nominated for awards and received additional funding to support the project:

Healthwatch provided a grant of 2k to run drumming workshops for carers. For this we are using the Rythmn to Recovery model of community development to build support

The Burdett Trust for Nursing awarded us a grant of 8k to work alongside researchers at the University of Bournemouth

We were shortlisted for a Rural Community Award. We reached the final four.

Skinnners gifted a grant of £600 to purchase a large drum we could fit over a wheelchair and for a family could all play together

We won a place at the Festival of Innovation to launch our Dementia Care Sense Boxes

We have been shortlisted for an award for the Federation of Small Business Community Project



We were delighted to receive a Community Lottery 25th Birthday Grant of 1k to develop a Tree Library. The Tree Library will be available to all the community. However, as part of our delivery we will also be holding a picnic at the Tree Library for people with a dementia.

We are now on the map for the BBC World Music for Dementia initiative and continue to have a local radio slot each week via Vectis radio.

'We so loved your sessions at the Alzheimers cafes and would like to book you for all the cafes for the coming year. So enjoyable seeing everyone taking part'

Volunteers

'I can't wait to get started. The biggest thing for me is now having the confidence to say that doing activities matters. It really makes a difference'

Knowing the scientific base is a fundamental part of the volunteer training we are delivering. Our ongoing evaluation is showing this is the part of the overall project that is rated the highest by carers.

One of the challenges faced by those trying to deliver meaningful activities in a care home is activities being viewed as non-essential work by other team members.

Despite a lot of care homes now employing Activity Coordinators direct – the Coordinators are saying they face an uphill daily battle to protect the work they do. They can be called away to help provide personal care or fill in gaps in the work schedule as and when they occur.

There is no doubt there is a high level of willingness amongst Activity Coordinators to do the best possible job they can for their clients, yet disillusionment is high in some cases. This is a factor we can only address by giving them confidence and an informed voice to state their case on behalf of their residents.

Part of our role has been to support those carers who are our volunteers to be able to stand their ground. Stating the science behind why it is important for those with a dementia, and our elderly in general, to have meaningful and purposeful sensory enrichment in their lives has been reported to help considerably.

'I can't tell you how much it meant to me to spend that time with my mum – being able to take part in creating music with her was wonderful. It made me cry and it will be something I will always remember.'

Building Capacity

'I keep forgetting things but I don't need to remember with cos I just need to feel it'

Our initial intent was to work towards accrediting and eventually rolling out a Travelling Dementia Suitcase social franchise on a national basis. However our work with Creative Solutions as our business advisor plus input from an advisor at Unltd suggested an alternative strategy of Aid to Trade might be more relevant. This was due in part to the expertise we are developing in creating resources and delivering training. However, it was also based on the fact that outside of our Community Lottery grant, we have not yet 'sold' the work and demonstrated a profit can be made.

Fortunately an agreement by the Lottery to spread spend of capacity funding over the three year lifetime of the project has enabled us to take into account the lessons we are learning. This includes lessons about the different frameworks we can use to deliver the Think Sense message, the subsequent direction of spread and the model most effective for moving from aid to trade to ensure a level of sustainability.

Lessons Learned

Following on from our last report on a Compassionate Community we trialled a whole village approach to training volunteers and staff. The intent was to try and reach those lone carers

Aid to Trade

Set up an on line shop ✓

Specialize in ethically sourced musical instruments that can be used for sensory activities ✓

Crunch our knowledge and expertise into a series of Dementia Care Senseboxes ✓

On line training programme for Activity Coordinators across the country by June 2020

Design and deliver an accredited Drumming for Dementia course for individuals and organisations ✓

Create smaller resources focused on music/hearing and activities i.e A Walk in Nature and A Walk in the Garden ✓

Expand on current range of personal and professional development courses ✓

and individuals in the community who might not otherwise receive or request any support. We had hoped this approach would enhance the volunteer rate for the care home involved.

When you set out to measure something the challenge is that you might not be measuring the right outcome. Although we ran the training and it was successful in one sense, we did not reach anyone in the community (that we were aware of) that was a lone carer without any support.

The ethnic mix of the locality also meant that reaching out to other more marginalised

communities within that overall community did not take place. So, we intend to try again in a locality in Portsmouth with a different mix of ethnicity to see if we get a different result. On the positive side those that took part in the Compassionate Community approach rated the training highly and the care home welcomed in new volunteers.

With our hearing sessions we use music. It has been interesting to note how emotional this can be for people with a dementia, family members and carers alike. This is especially relevant when we work alongside a family to create their own playlist to then play along with. Learning how to deal with emotion, tears and distress from bereavement is an important element for delivery of any project like this. The families are often grieving for the person they feel they have lost even before they pass away.

Whilst we have thus far supported the spread of the Think Sense message, our way forward now is to explore the depth of this concept.

Our Advice to Others

Be prepared for constant change. Think two steps ahead at all times. For example, the CV19 pandemic created an opportunity for us to think outside of the box and instead of direct delivery look towards how else we could reach out to those with a dementia even though they are locked down.

Get tech savvy. Being tech savvy is not a forte of Nature Therapy CIC as our work is very much grounded in nature. However recently we have set up an on line store, taken part in meetings through Zoom, created videos and started developing on line training. All whilst supporting carers through sending out resources for sensory enrichment.

On line training means you can set the standard and quality of the course, cut back on travel and undertake follow ups and support by skype. Whilst this has moved us outside of our comfort zone, it

means we are developing skills to reach out to a much larger audience than is currently possible.

Involve people with dementia – we have been able to pilot our resources and receive valued and instructive feedback.

When developing resources, do not be daunted by the fact that every dementia takes a different path in manifests differently for each person and their family. Try to find the middle road. You will not please everyon but you will please a larger proportion than if you did nothing.

‘Please come again we had so much fun’

Innovations

Last year we put the South of England on the global map by taking part in the World Rocks Against Dementia campaign. This year we planned to run a drumming session in a care home and train Activity Coordinators in how to run Drumming for Dementia sessions. We have postponed both of these actions and instead developed a video for carers on how to calm someone who is anxious and agitated by using a simple heart beat drumming method.

We followed this with a series of Lockdown activities videos using some of the activity sessions we would usually deliver direct. The challenge for us now is to find ways of gaining feedback on those videos.

After last years Steam Up for Dementia in partnership with the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, this year we planned a Bus Up for Dementia with Southern Vectis on an open top bus. This is currently on hold.

As part of our Trade Not Aid strategy we created a new resource. This iCD of a Walk In Nature takes the listener on a journey through woods, countryside, on to the beach and swimming in the sea. The CD is accompanied by a booklet

explaining how to enhance the experience through combining the CD with a series of sensory activities. This resource is ncurrently being piloted in 10 care homes during lockdown. Following any adaptations the CD will be made available via our on line store. We will be reviewing our funding to see if it is possible to provide a set number for free. A Crowdfunding campaig via Solent LEP will be created for this purpose.

Our trial of Music of the Plants technology resulted in an overwhelming positive response. So, we have embarked on creating a second CD called a Walk in the Garden. We have partnered with the creator of the Plant technology to implment this.

As part of our Trade not Aid sustainability strategy we developed an on line shop for our organisation. We were able to partner with an ethical retailer - Shared Earth. They provide us with musical instruments from all over the world we use in our hearing/drumming sessions and will now sell. The instruments are ethically sourced and part of the their funding goes towards supporting communities where the instruments are made.

https://www.naturetherapyonline.com/store/c1/Featured_Products.html

Our main innovation has been in the creation of Dementia Care Sense Boxes. These are a set of five Sense Boxes – one for each sense. We were selected to present the Sense Boxes at the Festival of Innovation. We will now launch them later in the year when the Festival reconvenes.

One further strategy in our Trade not Aid has been to create a Drumming for Dementia practitioner course. This can stand alone as a course or be a follow up to our volunteer training in Nature Therapy and Dementia Care,

<https://www.naturetherapyonline.com/courses.html>

Nature Therapy CIC have two miniature donkeys on loan between two care homes. Noah and Theo bring joy to the residents (around 120) and their families. Not so much joy to the cooks as they tend to holler when they see a white hat thinking it means left over carrots. We are expanding this concept in 2020 as part of our sensory enrichment work to include chickens.

Way Forward

In March we received a grant from the Burdett Trust of Nursing for 8k to work in partnership with the Age and Well Being centre at Bournemouth University (Drs Caroline Ellis Hill and Dr Michells Heward). This is to evaluate the impact of drumming from the Travelling Dementia Suitcase menu of delivery. This will help us drill down in to the impact of our work. Focusing on just one sense will enable the evaluation to be more rigorous.

The researchers will be using an adapted version of our current methodology. We will be training carers in Bournemouth as part of this process. The grant will pay for a a part time researcher.

We are now members of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Social Prescribing group and will work with them to include the Travelling Dementia Suitcase in this model of working.

Please refer to separate financial report for full details of expenditure against the grant allocated.

'That was one of the best activities I have ever taken part in.

Everyone joined in. Everyone.

So many smiles it was a real joy'



Video Links

Introduction to Drumming for Dementia

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2UUxnjIKsU&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR37ZrP284uZuR8QNRWPKWDyqya-jTOX7la2PqBld1oBzugBbvHXFuSk_hw

Making Kokedama

<https://www.facebook.com/naturetherapyCIC/videos/510519462951788/?t=2>

Drum Art

<https://www.facebook.com/naturetherapyCIC/videos/250535099415965/?t=4>



Year Three

Launch national expansion of Dementia Care Sense Boxes.

Pitch at Festival of Innovation.

Crowdfunding campaign for CV19 Dementia Care Activity Boxes with Solent LEP

On line training programme for Activity Coordinators in Care Homes

Case study for alcohol induced dementia

Build on our Trade not Aid strategy to include sales of resources and training

Partnership with University of Bournemouth to evaluate Drumming as an activity in dementia care

Partnership with other charities to establish a digital loans system to share resources

Further trial Compassionate Community approach to establish wider reach to those less likely to seek support

Open Top Bus ride for people with dementia and their carers

Picnic at the Tree Library for people with dementia and their carers

Explore how to obtain feedback from use of activity videos created for lockdown

Analyze data from the Pilot our CDs a Walk in Nature and A Walk in the garden.

Evaluate use and reach of Sense Boxes

Demfest in Romsey

Explore Social prescribing

Chicken Therapy

