PUNCHESTOWN KIDNEY RESEARCH FUND PROGRESS REPORT

ART PROGRAMME IN THE DIALYSIS UNIT 2011-2012

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Introduction
The art programme in the Renal Dialysis Unit at Tallaght Hospital continues to expand and develop thanks to the generous funding and support from the Punchestown Kidney Research Fund. Through the National Centre for Arts and Health in Tallaght Hospital, the programme has developed significantly in 2012 and we report here on both arts activity for patients and an evaluation of the service by patients and staff.

For any of us, having the opportunity to access the arts, or be involved in a creative activity, in some way, can improve our sense of well being and inspire our imagination. However, for patients spending long hours in hospital undergoing treatment, such as dialysis, on a continual basis, the opportunity to participate in art sessions and explore and experiment with color and materials, has enormous therapeutic value and contributes to the quality of care in a more holistic sense. Creativity and imagination stimulate the spirit and in doing so can often speed up the healing process. The art sessions give freedom of expression and the chance to develop a new interest, thus empowering patients with a sense of achievement, turning trapped negative time into positive productive time.

The art sessions in the Renal Dialysis Unit aim to contribute to the care of the dialysis patients and to improve their quality of life. Providing patients with a stimulating interest and the opportunity to learn new skills, helps to relieve the long hours spent in hospital, as well as creating a sense of achievement through productive use of their time. The art sessions also increase the social interaction and communication between patients and staff, often providing a healthy diversion from discussions on clinical matters regarding patient health. The art sessions also help to create a more enlivened atmosphere for all.

Lucia Barnes is Artist in Residence in the unit. In last year’s progress report the plans outlined for this year were:
- Hospital Street Exhibition of artwork by patients from the unit
- To work on a favourite mug art project
- To create images for a selection of greetings cards

All three projects have been achieved and this report outlines all aspects of the current art service as well as plans for 2013.

Artwork by Anthony, patient in the Renal Dialysis Unit

Artist in Residence in the Renal Dialysis Unit
The generous funding and support of the Punchestown Kidney Research Fund allows for the continued employment of a professional artist who is responsible for maintaining and developing the visual art programme in the Renal Dialysis Unit for patients who wish to avail of this creative outlet. Over the last year this service has been expanded and a level of flexibility introduced. There are four weekly sessions which now alternate mornings and afternoons, in order to ensure there is a maximum uptake of the service. There are leaflets available advertising the art sessions, and staff are also very accommodating in changing dialysis sessions, whenever possible, to enable interested patients to participate.

The artist in residence in the Renal Dialysis Unit also provides ongoing guidance and support to the numerous students and professional artists who come to the unit for course placements, and offers work experience about using art in this type of healthcare setting. The Best Practice Manual for artists working in Renal Dialysis Units in Ireland, produced during a previous dialysis research project, is a very useful and insightful introductory manual. We advise all artists working with dialysis patients to use it as a practice guide.

The National Centre for Arts & Health also provides training and networking sessions throughout the year. On these occasions, the artists and volunteers have the opportunity to meet, hear a variety of pertinent speakers, and get a broader understanding of the arts and health programmes across the hospital. In May 2012 we met a group of arts and health professionals from the University of Florida and shared ways of working in hospitals.

**Progress**

**The Favourite Cup and Mug Project**

The favourite cup and mug project developed following a discussion between patients, staff and artist about the benefits of using a particular cup or mug to measure the exact fluid intake, or whether to use a china cup or pottery mug for drinking tea (considering the strict dietary restrictions for the patients) It seems that whether it’s a ‘smiley happy faced’ mug or a square china cup, most people have their favourites.
Examples from the favourite cup and mug art project

Since the beginning of September, patients who were participating in the art sessions brought in their favourite cup or mug, which was then photographed. Using the photographs as source material, the patients painted their images on A4 sized canvases, choosing varied block coloured backgrounds. The canvases were then assembled together, and the project culminated in an exhibition on Hospital Street. The second part of this project is ongoing, aiming to offer staff, who have always been very supportive of the art programme, to do the same with their favourite mug, and to assist them work on their canvases at selected times. We aim, with all our art projects, to create an attractive and more enlivened atmosphere for patients and staff, and to engage staff and patients in shared art projects to create different dynamics away from clinical discussions and concerns. The final artwork of both staff and patient mugs will hopefully form a large collaborative artwork which will be permanently displayed in the hospital in late 2012.

Exhibition of artwork on Hospital Street
Exhibitions are a wonderful way to celebrate and share the outcomes of the work created during the art sessions. In March 2012, an exhibition of artwork by patients in the Dialysis Unit commenced. This time the exhibition ran over six months along the walls of Hospital Street, a dedicated exhibition space within the hospital, allowing access to the work for a longer period of time for patients, visitors and medical staff.

One of the themes of the exhibition was to explore the significance of undergoing dialysis treatment and/or being a patient in the hospital, through paintings or text. The exhibition also included art work by Lucia Barnes, artist in residence. We have been asked to exhibit some of the patients’ artwork permanently in the Occupational Health Department of the hospital following the temporary exhibition this year and also one patients plans to donate his work to enhance the Dialysis Unit (image below right).

Artwork from the exhibition

Selection of Greeting Cards and Calender
Previous projects have included making calendars and greeting cards, using images of patients artwork. These can give patients a well deserved boost and sense of achievement. In 2012 we have created a new pack of greeting cards with images by patients from the Renal Dialysis Unit, including images from the Favourite Cup and Mug Project and the Hospital Street Exhibition. These are now available from the Arts Office, all proceeds from sales go to funding the art programme in the Renal Dialysis Unit.
Images to be used as greeting cards, all work by patients from the Renal Dialysis Unit

Evaluation
This year the National Centre for Arts and Health carried out an evaluation of the art sessions in the Renal Dialysis Unit, to gain feedback from patients and staff members. (see Appendices 1 & 2 for blank examples of forms). The following section gives a detailed report of the results from the feedback received and outlines recommendations that were made during the evaluation.

Patient and Staff Evaluation
Thirteen patients and eight staff completed the feedback questionnaires.

100% of patients and staff stated that it was important to provide specific art activities for patients in the renal dialysis unit.

Benefits of the current visual art programme:
- Helps the time pass by
- Develops new skill, new interest created
- Very relaxing, stimulating,
- Opportunity to try something new
- Reduces blood pressure

When asked what other arts or leisure activities might be suitable to develop for patients on the Renal Dialysis Unit the following selections were indicated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Patients</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Opportunities for patients to listen to recorded music</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Live Music</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Reading materials (books/magazines/newspapers)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) E-books</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>e) Creative writing/poetry sessions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Knitting/crafts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>g) Indoor gardening</td>
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We asked service users and staff what changes or improvements could be made to the current art service. Staff members wanted to have an art session going on everyday or for all shifts available and to increase number of art sessions for their patients. Most of the patients were satisfied with the service, with one respondent requesting a design improvement to the waiting area, suggesting that it could be made more relaxing with soothing music and relaxing interior.

We also asked where they would most like see arts activities carried out in the hospital - indications were as follows:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Renal dialysis unit at the bedside</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Waiting rooms</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Public areas (e.g. main reception)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) On in-patient wards</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e) Outpatient department</td>
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<td>f) Other____________________</td>
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When asked to comment further with what would help us improve /develop/expand our service in the Renal Dialysis Unit; patients were mostly satisfied with the service. Staff members felt they would like to be consulted more about which patients might be referred to use the service and to have more art sessions available for patients.

**Implementing the recommendations**

As a result of the evaluation we have decided to expand and develop the arts service in 2012/13 as follows:

- **E-reading**: We have developed a pilot e-reading scheme with Tallaght Library, whereby patients will be offered use of an e-reading device with training to support their use.
- **Expanding the service**: In September 2012 we are recruiting 2 new artist volunteers to the Renal Dialysis Service to increase the service available to patients. One of these will provide an early evening session.
- **Crafts/knitting**: We aim to recruit a volunteer to offer crafts/knitting sessions as part of the art programme
- **Renal Dialysis Unit art project 2013**: We aim to work towards developing an art project for staff and patients from the Renal Dialysis Unit In 2013.

**Conclusion**

The art programme is an important and well established service for patients in the Renal Dialysis Unit. We constantly strive to increase the availability of art sessions for dialysis patients, to create interesting art projects for our patients and to ask patients what they want from our service. The evaluation undertaken this year confirms that the art sessions are valued by staff and patients, that more sessions are required and point to developments we can make to better serve our patients in the future.

**For more information please contact:**

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All artwork in this report is original artwork by patients, created while on dialysis.
Appendix 1

Arts service in the Renal Dialysis Unit – Patient Evaluation

The arts office is currently reviewing arts activity in the Renal Dialysis Unit. Please can you tell us what you think about the art service.

1. Which of the following art activity have you come into contact with during your time as a patient of this hospital? (please circle as many as you want)
   a) Art (Painting/Drawing)
   b) Music Concert
   c) Design improvement
   d) Crafts
   e) Reading/Literature
   f) Others (Please state) _____________________

2. Do you think it is important to provide specific art activities for patients in the renal dialysis unit?
   a) Yes
   b) No

If YES what do you think are the benefits of the current visual art programme for you?

3. What other arts or leisure activities would you like to see available for yourself and/or other patients? (please circle as many as you want).
   k) Live music
   l) Opportunities for patients to listen to recorded music
   m) Reading materials (books/magazines/newspapers)
   n) E-books
   o) Creative writing/poetry sessions
   p) Other arts (please write here) ______________________________________________________
   q) Knitting/crafts
   r) Indoor gardening
   s) Jigsaws/games
   t) Computers/Internet access/Gaming
   u) Other leisure activities (please write here) ______________________________________________

4. What changes or improvements could we make to the current art service?

5. Where would most like see arts activities carried out in the hospital (please circle as many as you want)
   g) Renal dialysis unit at the bedside
   h) Waiting rooms
   i) Public areas (e.g. main reception)
   j) On in-patient wards
   k) Outpatient department
   l) Other ___________________

6. Do you have any other comment that will help us improve/develop/expand our service in the renal dialysis unit

Thank you kindly for your time and contribution
Appendix 2

Arts service in the Renal Dialysis Unit – Staff Evaluation

The arts office is currently reviewing arts activity in the Renal Dialysis Unit. Please can you tell us what you think about the art service.
Do you think it is important to provide specific art activities for patients in the renal dialysis unit?
  a) Yes
  b) No
If YES what do you think are the benefits of the current visual art programme for patients in the unit?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

What changes or improvements could we make to the current art service?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

What other arts or leisure activities would you like to see available for patients? (please circle as many as you want).
Live music
Opportunities for patients to listen to recorded music
Reading materials (books/magazines/newspapers)
E-books
Creative writing/poetry sessions
Other ____________ arts (please write here)
Knitting/crafts
Indoor gardening
Jigsaws/games
Computers/Internet access/Gaming
Other ____________ leisure activities (please write here)

Do you have any other ideas or concerns about art in the renal dialysis unit?

Thank you kindly for your time and contribution