

Engaging Older Adults in the Arts Online

A Guide for Referrers



Unforgettable Experiences works to inspire creativity, build connections, and improve cognitive function through delivering live, interactive, and creative sessions.

Music

with Sam Slatcher

This set of sessions explores the art of song writing and develops the skills needed to write your own song. The sessions cover different aspects of songwriting: the art of listening to music, writing lyrics, using chords, creating melodies, singing techniques, as well as composing songs.

Participants are guided through writing your own song, whether about a fond memory, a family member, or a particular interest or enthusiasm. These sessions are for anyone who would like to have a go. No musical skill or experience is required, only the willingness to get involved and try things out. The sessions highlight the power of music for self-expression, boosting confidence and self-esteem, whilst meeting others in a nurturing and safe, online space.

Music has been shown to have a positive effect on communication, increasing interaction and involvement with others, and improving mood. Singing, as well as being a wonderful thing to do together, activates the parts of the brain associated with working memory.

BENEFITS OF ONLINE ENGAGEMENT FOR OLDER PEOPLE

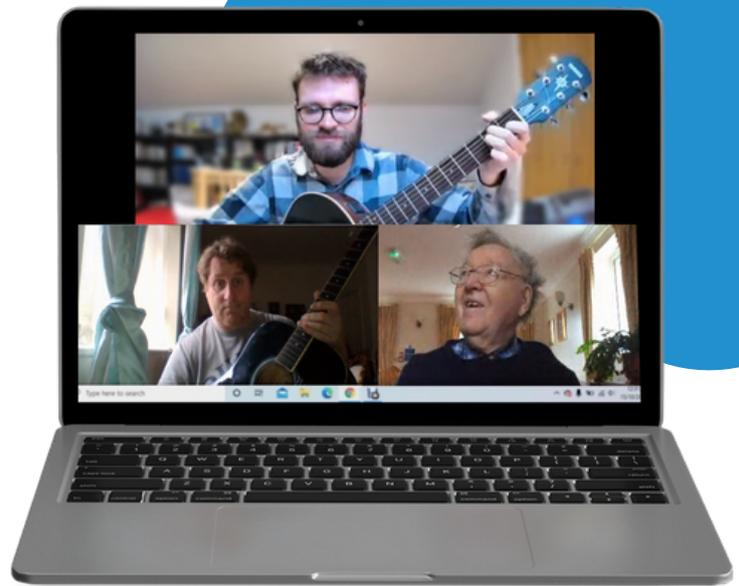
Delivering online ensures access to participation for those who might otherwise not be physically able but, as age rises, internet use decreases, meaning those most likely to benefit from online social connection are least likely to access it. This is where the one-to-one support of our Digital Activity Buddies comes in. Outside of our sessions, increased digital confidence and knowledge can help people to stay connected with family and friends.

HOW TO REFER TO THE SERVICE

To make a referral, simply contact us with a name, telephone number and consent of the person you would like us to support.

Contact Emma Bryan on: 01325238007

Emmab@unforgettableexperiences.org.uk



BENEFITS OF ARTS ENGAGEMENT FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Participatory arts activities combine learning something new and developing thinking and doing skills with being physically active and socially connected. These activities can have a positive impact on concentration and attention, the stimulation of memories, on mood and confidence. The activities and their outputs can also provide a unique means for people to explore and express their experiences, and to enjoy a sense of achievement and accomplishment.

INCLUDING ONLINE ARTS ENGAGEMENT IN THE SOCIAL PRESCRIBING CONVERSATION

People do not need to think of themselves as creative to take part in arts. Although people may not describe it in this way, arts engagement is an important part of our identity. Taking photographs, listening to music, reading books, watching documentaries, keeping scrapbooks – all of this is arts-based activity. In talking to people about their care, include questions about what interests and enthuses them, what lights them up, what matters to them and what makes them who they are. Raise these themes and topics in more than one conversation, building a picture of the whole person to see how taking part in sessions delivered by Unforgettable Experiences could contribute to an improvement in their quality of life and wellbeing within their medical journey.