

# Creative Ageing state of play

Alice Thwaite

Director – Development

Equal Arts

# Equal Arts Aims

- To improve the health and well being of older people through access to the arts
- To combat isolation through participation in creative activity
- To work with partners to raise the status of the field
- To support and train artists to ensure good practice
- We work with hard to reach, isolated older people particularly those living in residential care and sheltered accommodation and increasingly those with dementia.



- We run 12 – 14 projects per year, both participatory, cross art form projects and access projects.
- Recent examples include an art on prescription project, Care staff training with the Sage, Gateshead an Asian older women's dance project.



# Recent developments nationally

- The Baring Foundation has taken the arts and older people as its central theme for its arts funding programme since 2009
- Last week the Foundation launched their report An Evidence Review of the Impact of Participatory Arts on Older People, carried out by the Mental Health Foundation
- Used a step wise methodology to identify the highest quality research available, and covered the period 2001 - 2011
- The review found 511 articles, of which 24 peer reviewed articles were selected
- 72 good quality grey literature were examined, of which 7 were included in the review
- Most of the 31 studies (2040 participants) examined were in the UK

# Baring Review Recommendations

- Those commissioning and funding arts projects should recognise the importance of funding evaluation
- Further good quality research and evaluation is needed. Larger samples and longitudinal impact studies are required to provide better strength of evidence
- There is a need for a forum for the sharing of research findings amongst practitioners and policy makers to prevent duplication and promote learning

# Examples of Evaluation Methodology



# Art on Prescription project

- GP referral project, funded by Gateshead PCT for older people showing early signs of dementia or depression and are considered to be at risk of social exclusion, started in December 2010 – evaluation report due December 2011.
- Evaluated using three different methods:
  - Centre for Public Policy, Northumbria University
  - LODEX well being survey
  - Person-centred Outcomes Assessment, Mental Health Concern

# Art on Prescription project

## Three types of evaluation

- Qualitative approach by Centre for Public Policy, Northumbria University which involves:
  - Interviews with key stakeholders
  - Observation of programme workshops
  - Focus groups and interviews with workshop participants
  - Analysis of additional project data

# Art on Prescription

- LODEX well being survey
- “a tool that measures the impact that projects and interventions have on the wellbeing of participants”
- Lodex are an independent company which work closely with South Tyneside Primary Care Trust
- The PCT wanted us to use Lodex as one of the evaluation tools
- It uses a questionnaire format and does a baseline survey with 27 questions, then end of project survey and then delivers a report.

# Art on Prescription

- Outcomes Focus tool, Mental Health Concern
- Uses an outcome star method which has been adapted for people with dementia
- Looks at 6 domains – meaning and purpose, relationships and interdependency, hope and self esteem, independence, choice and control, citizenship and stability and consistency
- Interviews participants at start of involvement with a service and then after 4 months

# Museum of Modern Art, New York

- The Programme
- Meet Me at MoMA programme runs once a month on a Tuesday, when the Museum is closed to other visitors.
- Participants are greeted in a common registration area and given name tags, portable stools or wheelchairs
- Groups small in size, eight people with dementia plus carers. Can be up to six groups at one time.
- Trained Arts educators lead each group through a tour of four to five art works, sitting in front of each piece, the group are led through a series of discussion questions.

# Evaluation Design

- Study designed by the Psychosocial Research and Support Program of the New York University Center of Excellence for Brain Aging and Dementia in partnership with MoMA
- Carried out over 9 months
- Focused on people in the early stage of Alzheimer's disease and their family caregivers
- Restricted to those attending the programme for the first time

# Development of Assessment Battery

- Questionnaires designed to capture the general emotional state of participants (family relationships scale, a self esteem scale and a quality of life scale).
- Smiley-face Assessment Scale, which uses five faces ranging from very unhappy to very happy was used to measure the mood of the participants immediately before and after attending the programme.
- Observer-Rated Scales: at each session one person with dementia in each of two gallery tour groups was observed by two raters.
- Take-Home Evaluation form designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative data about participants experiences during and up to three days after the programme. (40 caregivers completed the form)

# Conclusions

- Importance of the Educator – the way in which they involve the participants and elicit comments without being didactic or condescending
- Intellectually stimulating
- Shared experiences
- Social interaction
- Accepting environment
- Emotional carryover, for both the people with dementia and carers



# Equal Arts

