Artist Brief
Artist/s in Renal Units at York and Easingwold Hospitals, York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Deadline for applications: 5pm Monday 2 December 2019

Arts Team
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Introduction
York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust’s Arts Team will be working with a freelance artist/s to provide art sessions for patients on dialysis, within York and Easingwold Hospital’s Renal Units. The Arts Team are working in partnership with The Laurence Sterne Trust to theme the project, aiming to explore the novel ‘The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman’ by Laurence Sterne himself.

About York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust provides a comprehensive range of acute hospital and specialist healthcare services for approximately 800,000 people living in and around York, North Yorkshire, North East Yorkshire and Ryedale - an area covering 3,400 square miles. The Trust manages eight hospital sites and has a workforce of around 9,000 staff working across the hospitals and in the community.

The aim of the Arts Team is to support the delivery of excellence in healthcare by providing a participatory arts programme which encourages patient, staff and visitor wellbeing and improves the experience of being in the hospital environment.

To find out more visit www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/arts

Background
Between 2005 – 2017 patients in York Hospital’s Renal Unit were given the opportunity to work with an artist whilst on dialysis, during which time research was published in the Journal of Applied Arts and Health stating that: “engagement in art work while on dialysis gives patients a sense of purpose, promotes social interaction and creative engagement and is enriched by interactions with the art worker.” Patients in Easingwold Renal Unit were induded in later years. Since the project came to an end patients have strongly identified the creative arts as something they enjoyed and very much miss; commenting on its contribution to their quality of life and wellbeing whilst on dialysis.

The Renal Unit environment
Patients usually visit the Renal Unit for dialysis 3 days a week, with each session lasting around 4 hours. Dialysis is a procedure to remove waste products and excess fluid from the blood when the kidneys stop working properly. Haemodialysis is the most common type of dialysis, during the procedure a tube is attached to a needle in the patients arm. Blood passes along the tube and into an external machine that filters it, before it’s passed back into the arm along another tube.

Due to the nature of this procedure the environment within the unit can be challenging, noisy, busy and warm. It is a clinical environment with visible blood and needles. Many patients will only have use of one arm whilst undergoing dialysis; art activities should be well-considered and appropriate.
Project Aims
The key aims are:

- to engage patients in creative activities, in order to promote wellbeing
- to explore the novel ‘The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman’ by Laurence Sterne, looking at the idea of ‘freedom’ in terms of health and wellbeing/physical and mental recovery.

Background to the book:
‘The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman’ is a book by Laurence Sterne, written to entertain and amuse the reader. Sterne’s humour was one that was understood and welcomed by his contemporary audience in the 1760’s and it is the main reason that the book is still regarded as one of the funniest of novels and has subsequently never been out of print.

Sterne’s philosophy can be summed up in his own words when he tells the reader that the book “is written in a bye corner of the kingdom, and in a retird thatch’d house, where I live in a constant endeavour to fence against the infirmities of ill health, and other evils of life, by mirth; being firmly persuaded that every time a man smiles, -- but much more so, when he laughs, it adds something to this Fragment of Life.”

In the novel there are clear examples that the misfortunes that are suffered by the fictional characters serve the purpose of showing the reader that the obstacles and disappointments of life can be overcome by thinking positively.

Uncle Toby (brother of Tristram’s father) is wounded at the siege of Namur and his chances of recovery appear to be slight. Diverting his attention away from the sick bed to the construction of a miniature battlefield in the grounds of Shandy Hall, the various battles of Europe are re-enacted by Toby and his loyal companion Corporal Trim.

Tristram himself is conceived at a time when his father’s attention is not altogether on the matter in hand; he is given the one name that his father does not want him to have and he is brought into the world by Dr Slop the man midwife who gets his forceps the wrong way round and squashes infant Tristram’s nose. A later incident with a sash window adds to the child’s miseries. Maria is a character invented by Sterne who serves the purpose of awakening our feelings of sympathy when we learn of her unhappiness and her vulnerability. Sterne shows how even depression and misery can have an antidote.

The artist will:
- provide opportunities for participants to develop their creative skills
- provide art activities at an appropriate level
- be led by the Arts Team, with guidance from Renal staff
- adhere to infection prevention, health and safety and environmental restrictions as advised by the Arts Team and clinical staff
- complete feedback forms after each session and contribute to evaluation as required
- provide evidence of liability insurance and DBS certificate
- conduct themselves professionally at all times
- act as a mentor to volunteers
Artist Characteristics
The artist should have:
- a caring and empathetic approach
- the imagination and enthusiasm to engage participants
- experience in working with community groups
- experience in managing different levels of communication needs
- ability to work to a set theme
- skills in a range of art and craft activities

Contract Period
An artist is required to provide art sessions in York and Easingwold Renal Units. Sessions can be shared between multiple artists if appropriate.

The artist/s will provide art sessions for a 16 week project consisting of 1 x 2 hour sessions per site per week. The project will begin in February 2020.

York:
Two hour sessions are required once per week on any day (although Mon, Wed, Fri afternoon patients tend to have greater needs and may be less able), delivered at a combination of the following times: 9am – 11am, 2pm – 4pm, 6pm – 8pm.

Easingwold:
Two hour sessions are required once per week, avoiding Monday and Tuesday and delivered at the following times: 9am – 11am, 2pm – 4pm.

Location
Art sessions will take place in the Renal Units at York and Easingwold Hospitals. The artist/s will be responsible for their own travel arrangements and costs.

Resources
The Arts Team at York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust will be responsible for setting up the project, along with associated admin and support including contracts and paperwork, payment and feedback forms. Materials will be provided by the Arts Team; artist/s will be invited to assist with selection of materials but infection prevention must be considered due to the clinical location of sessions.

Working with Volunteers
Volunteers will be recruited through York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust’s Volunteering Team. Volunteers will work alongside the artist at specified times. The artist will be required to share their skills and experience of community/healthcare based art sessions.
Budgets
The artist will be paid £30 per hour/£60 per session. There will be 6 paid hours per artist available for supporting volunteers, meetings and research. There will be 2 paid hours for artists to attend the Arts Team’s ‘Arts Review’ in April 2020. Invoices may be submitted monthly and will be paid no sooner than 30 days after receipt.

Funding
The project is funded by York Teaching Hospital Charity, Kidney Care UK and The Holbeck Charitable Trust/The Laurence Sterne Trust at Shandy Hall.

How to Apply
If you are interested in this project please send the following via email:
• A recent copy of your artist’s statement and CV
• Up to 5 images of your recent work
• A covering letter outlining your approach to the project

Expressions of interest should be sent via email to art@york.nhs.uk by 5pm Monday 2 December 2019.

Selection Process
Applications will be shortlisted by the Arts Team with successful applicants invited to interview Monday 16 December 2019 at York Hospital.

If you have any further questions please contact the Art and Design Project Coordinator using the details below.

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Art and Design Project Coordinator

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