

Renal Arts Group Quarterly Report July - September 2019

Meetings & Members

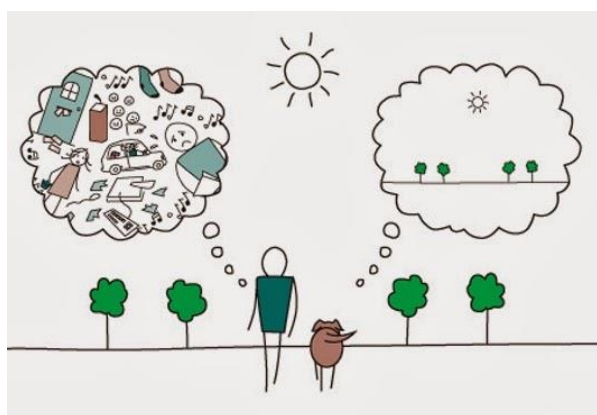
The Renal Arts Group continues to meet on a monthly basis, which we have found to be extremely beneficial to ensure the continued momentum for developing projects and to maintain regular contact and increase engagement with our members.

Upcoming Events

The group has been awarded funding from the Economic and Social Research Council to stage an event as part of the Festival of Social Science in November 2019. *'The Art of Health and Wellbeing'* will take place in the Sunflower Public House from 7–9pm on Wednesday 6th November, and will feature an exhibition of artwork created by dialysis patients as part of



Claire Carswell's PhD study, as well as painting and photography from Renal Arts Group members. The event will also showcase poetry, music and drama, along with patients' stories that demonstrate the benefits that the arts can have for health and wellbeing. Professor Peter Maxwell, Lead Renal Clinician, and Deborah Duval, Managing Editor of Kidney Matters magazine, Kidney Care UK will also discuss the benefits of the arts for renal patients. The group have secured additional funding from the Northern Ireland Kidney Patients Association to provide free pizza and refreshments for attendees. Claire will also be contributing a piece about the event to the Slugger O'Toole blog, who are collaborating with ESRC to promote the festival.



The group has been working closely with NIKPA to plan a series of free workshops based around the theme of the arts taking a mindful approach to enhance wellbeing, for kidney patients and their carers. We will be offering 3 workshops in the coming months; a mindful art workshop facilitated by group members Claire Carswell and Anne Quail, a mindfulness and yoga for wellbeing workshop

facilitated by Dr Helen Noble and Lesley Bratty from NIKPA, and a gallery tour and reflective art activity delivered by the Ulster Museum. We will be carrying out evaluations of these workshops and hope to offer more mindful activities for kidney patients and their families in the future.

Projects in development

The group has applied to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Small Grants Programme for funding of £10,000 to develop 'The Starman, The Superhero and The Wizards' script, written by RAG member William Johnston while on dialysis. We had a successful meeting with Shannon Yee, an award winning script-writer and producer who has agreed to come on board with the project as a mentor to William who will also offer script-writing workshops to members of the group and wider renal community. Shannon suffered a brain injury several years ago and her experience as a patient has informed her recent work, so she is ideally positioned to support and mentor William in developing his script.



In addition to the script, William and Anna Wilson have been developing a photographic timeline of his journey as a kidney patient, which we hope will serve as an educational resource to support the performance, and could potentially be rolled out as a project for other kidney patients to document their journeys.



The group has been in contact with NHS at 70: The Stories of our Lives, a project which is recording stories from people who worked and were cared for by the NHS to create a digital archive of NHS history. The organisers are keen to record contributions by kidney patients, and will send their Northern Ireland

representative to meet the group in the coming months.

In the Media

In July group member Ian Walsh contributed to the BBC Radio 4 series 'Art of Living', telling his personal story for the episode 'Knife Imitates Art – How Surgeons use Creativity', a fascinating study of surgeons working in Belfast and Bristol who believe their work as artists brings huge benefits to the operating theatre and a better outcome for patients.



Research



Claire Carswell recently presented her PhD findings on the feasibility of arts-based interventions for patients receiving haemodialysis at the 48th EDTNA/ERCA in Prague, where she highlighted the successful implementation of the arts in this setting, and the wide variety of people who participated. Claire was able to attend to this conference as she received the Sarah Emily Montgomery Travel Scholarship from Queen’s University Belfast. Additionally she has recently been awarded the Marcia Mackie travel scholarship to travel to the University of Florida’s centre for arts in medicine this year to collaborate with artists, clinicians and researchers.

Currently Claire is working on publishing a realist review of arts-based interventions for patients receiving haemodialysis, which has a theoretical focus to help identify reasons why art can be beneficial in this context, as well as strategies for implementation. Additionally she is currently working on a manualisation paper of the intervention used in the PhD project to provide a replicable guide for implementing art on haemodialysis units and within rigorous research studies.

William Johnston was asked to write a ‘Patient’s Voice’ article for the Journal of Kidney Care, entitled ‘Renal Arts Group, QUB – A source of creativity, communication and time utilisation while on dialysis and post-transplant’ discussing his personal experience of engaging with art as a renal patient, and giving an overview of the work of the group and the current research being carried out by Dr Helen Noble and Claire Carswell. The article will be published in the next edition of the journal.



Dr Helen Noble has submitted an application to the ESRC Impact Acceleration Fund along with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to draw up guidelines for future implementation of volunteer-led arts interventions in renal units. This work, if successful, will be developed with Claire Carswell and Anna Wilson.

Acknowledgements

The continued support from Kidney Care UK in funding our Administrator role has been integral to the ongoing development of the group. We are also grateful to NIKPA for their continued support and assistance.