

Renal Arts Group Quarterly Report April – June 2020

Meetings and Members

The Renal Arts Group continues to meet monthly via Zoom, and has recently welcomed three new members to the group. Charlotte Rhodes works with Kidney Care UK as a Grants and Administration Officer and has found writing and art to be a great support to her self-care and wellbeing. Lynne Cunningham and Ewen MacLean are Kidney Care UK Patient Advocacy Officers and are hoping to implement arts programmes in renal units throughout Scotland.

Research



**Economic
and Social
Research Council**

The ESRC Impact Acceleration funded ESRC study 'Development of guidance for sustained implementation of a volunteer led arts programme within regional haemodialysis units' had been delayed

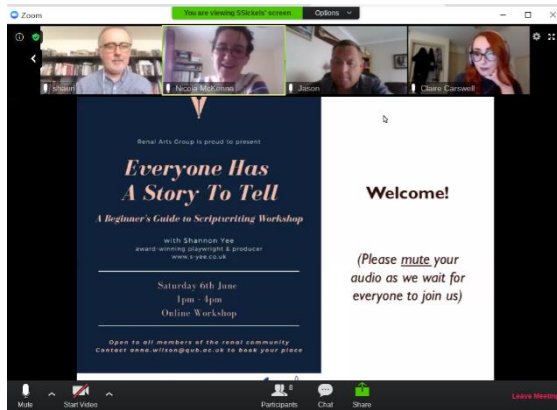
due to limited availability of Health and Social Care Trust staff while they manage the ongoing pandemic, however online meetings with healthcare staff have been re-established. We will be discussing how to best manage the project going forward, and what adaptations might be required in order to meet the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic.

Helen Noble and Anna Wilson have submitted an application to the ESRC Rapid Response Fund through Queen's University for £9,991 to programme a series of online art activities for renal patients and their families, to support their mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic. This project will build on the success of the online scriptwriting workshop held as part of the 'Starman' project, and will offer a wider range of arts activities such as music, photography and printmaking. We hope to hear the outcome of this application in July.

Helen Noble and Clare Carswell have submitted 2 grant applications to the MARCH Mental Health Network for £20,000 and £50,000, exploring the factors that contribute to sustainable provision of community assets and activities for people whose mental health is impacted by chronic kidney disease and the relationship between virtual community asset engagement and levels of depression and anxiety in people with chronic physical illness during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Both applications were submitted on 31st May and the outcome is expected in July.



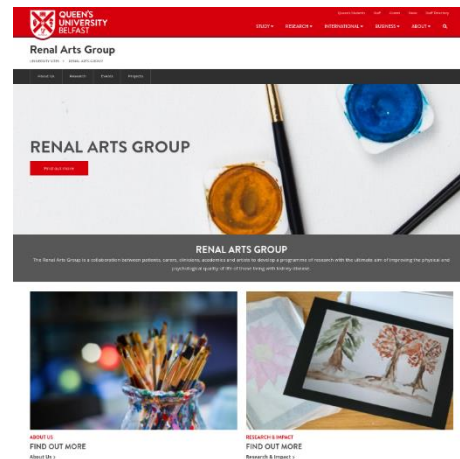
Projects



On Saturday 6th June RAG hosted an online scriptwriting workshop for members of the renal community, led by award-winning playwright and producer Shannon Yee. The workshop was attended by dialysis and transplant patients, kidney donors and renal healthcare practitioners, who worked with Shannon to learn the basics of scriptwriting and explore their own lived or professional experience of chronic illness through creative writing. This is the first of three workshops which have been organised as part of a project funded

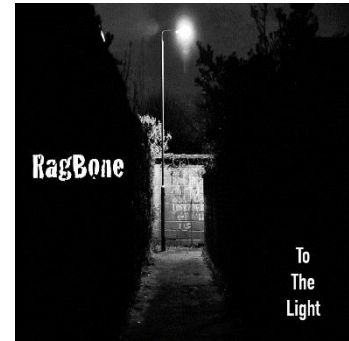
by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland to develop 'The Starman, The Superheroes and The Wizards', a script written by William Johnston while on dialysis. Shannon is providing bespoke mentoring to William to develop his script, which will culminate in a performance of the play in a theatre space with professional actors. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic much of the project has been moved online, and we received a very positive response to the virtual workshop from participants!

Anna Wilson is continuing to develop the Renal Arts Group website, which will become part of the University's website. The site will feature information about the groups research and projects and will provide an invaluable resource for kidney patients as well as establishing a web presence for the group. As part of the website development, we have contracted Science Animated, a company who create engaging and accessible animations, to develop a 30 second animation that explains the work of RAG, credits our funders and can be used within our website and social media channels.



Group member Paul Sibley created this beautiful painting of a rainbow kidney as a gift for his surgeon following his recent transplant, and has kindly agreed that the group can use the image within the animation, website and marketing materials. We are extremely grateful for this and in awe at Paul's artistic skills!

RagBone have recently released a 3 track EP, recorded before lockdown, which is available to hear via [Amazon Music](#), [Spotify](#) and [Apple Music](#). The band have also produced a CD which will be available to buy at their performances, with the profits to be donated to Northern Ireland Kidney Patient Association and Kidney Care UK. The band have also recorded 'On The Beach' as part of The Lockdown Sessions which is available on [YouTube](#).



[Acknowledgements](#)

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