**ARTLIFT PROJECT REPORT** July 2013

“When I first started Artlift, I wasn’t sure if it was for me. It took me a few weeks to get used to, but by the end of the end of the first week I went and bought my own equipment and now I love it. Just wish the course went on for longer. Thank you Kim (artist) you have been a great help.”

Artlift participant, Cheltenham

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*Image: Artlift Trustee and former participant, Kath Mathews, curating an exhibition of participants’ work at Blackfriars Priory, Gloucester July 2013.*

**Context**

2013 has seen Artlift reach the most number of NHS patients in its 7 year history – with patients facing waiting lists in Cheltenham and Gloucester residencies. This is due to its growing track record and recognition by health professionals across the county, and positive feedback from users.

Artlift began as mainly a GP referral project, but has since grown in to a socially inclusive service that receives referrals from a wide-cross section of health professionals. Apart from a core of GPs who continue to refer their “frequent attenders” affected by mild anxiety and depression, Artlift also meets the mental health needs of clients referred from the Pain Management Clinic, and by IAPT, Psychologists, SALT, Children’s Centre/Family Services, Physiotherapy, Practice Nurses, Social Workers, amongst others. Given that depression is “two to three times more common in people with a chronic physical health problem”\(^1\), the increased referrals from Pain Management and for post-stroke patients indicates that Artlift is reaching its target group.

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\(^1\) Quality Standards Programme Cost impact and commissioning assessment: quality standard for depression in adults Published by NICE in March 2011
This growth and success has required Artlift to adapt, and the need to provide further support to our artists, who apart from the technical skills as artists are now managing more complex group dynamics. For example, in our Stonehouse residency, the artist mentions the new challenge of meeting the pace and needs of a stroke patient whilst keeping the flow and interest of other participants. Our artists meet this challenge with great skill, which has resulted in participants going on to sustain their interest in their new found artistic skills, as can be seen by the overall success of our pilot peer led ‘move on groups’. Without the expertise of the artist-facilitator in focusing on the artistic content whilst also knowing when to step forward and when to step back, the move-on groups would not have been possible.

A key strength of the project is non-clinical approach – as a recent independent study by the University of Gloucestershire discovered after in depth interviews with Artlift clients - “Artlift helped patients move away from the notion of being defined by their condition (and associated identities) towards the idea that they were defined by their art (ie. distinct from any particular condition).”

In spite of this non-clinical approach, and in order to protect it, we have recognised the need for artists to reflect on their often emotional experiences in a structured and supportive way. We have therefore introduced more regular peer Supervision sessions, and we have also piloted an independently facilitated Supervision session with an NHS Mental Health Nurse from Bristol, who has worked with artists in the city in a similar arts on referral scheme.

Other significant developments to ensure high quality delivery of the Artlift project is to establish ourselves as an independent Social Enterprise, with a new Board of Trustees who bring a cross-section of experience and skills. The Trustees include previous users of the service, clinicians, artists, people who bring expertise and insights in living with mental ill health, experts in governance, fundraising and finance as well as people with artistic ambition. The newly established Social Enterprise is well positioned to draw in additional funding to enhance the follow on support once the initial NHS referral comes to an end.

Artlift’s Trustees recognise the funding and partnership with Public Health and Mental Health to be vital to the success of the project. The Director of Cirencester Children’s Service, for example, noted that many Health Visitors were more confident and willing to refer in to the project because the NHS was supporting it.

We are therefore building on this strategic partnership and the message this sends out to potential referrers, for example by ensuring Artlift is visible on the Map of Medicine and Artlift referral forms and information about the service has already been included on the Depression Pathway.

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2 Artlift, Gloucestershire Evaluation Report Extension Published March 2013 by University of Gloucestershire. Evaluation Team Professor Diane Crone, Dr. Colin Baker, Dr. Lyndsey Kilgour, and Mrs. Frances Clark-Stone.
Key achievements in 2013

- To see some of the works produced and comments by participants and artists, please see our ‘blog’ at http://www.artlift.org/community-blogs/

- Highest number of referrals and attendances to date – average 8 regular attendees per 10 week residency

- Value for money – per capita cost = The total project cost for one year of Artlift is £60,000 divided by average 8 people attending over 8 residencies. This indicates that Artlift costs approximately £300 per head for 10 week intervention. In addition, the benefit of the intervention is proving to have long term sustainable results. For example, patients who took part in an initial Artlift intervention in Brockworth, have now sustained their own Move On independent group for over 3 years. We are replicating this model across the county.

- Successful residencies continue in Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Stonehouse, Brockworth and Forest of Dean. With further ‘trial’ residencies in Cirencester and Stow on the Wold and Wooton Under Edge.

- New website and clearer referral system established. www.artlift.org

- Artlift is now formally constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, with Trustees to include health experts, artistic professionals and former service users. This makes us well placed to deliver a commissioned service and to seek diverse funding streams in future as well as continuing to develop and improve arts on referral and other arts and health interventions.

- Continued collection of Warwick and Edinburgh Well-being scores and independent evaluation report produced by University of Gloucestershire, which will be analysed, subject to further availability of funding, over the forthcoming months, and add sample size to strengthen the existing statistical analysis of Artlift impact on Well-Being.

- Independent Evaluation of Artlift has been published in Journal of Public Health and Journal of Mental Health Nursing

- In depth qualitative evaluation carried out by University of Gloucestershire in partnership with NHS Gloucestershire Public Health, featuring interviews with clients who have used Artlift over extended periods. The report is available on our website under the “What People Say” section. www.artlift.org

- Partnership with Adult Education – Artlift works closely with Adult Education in Gloucestershire to sign-post users to other learning and development opportunities after the Artlift intervention. Ofsted has recognised Artlift’s approach as an example of National Good Practice on its Website
Please see the link below for feature about Artlift on Ofsted’s website
http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=gloucestershire+adult+education+ofsted&oq=gloucestershire+adult+education+ofsted&gs_l=youtube.3...10352.16080.0.16185.40.27.1.11.11.0.137.1601.25j2.27.0...0.0...1ac.1.11.youtube.iNzpIlLG60w

• **Artlift participants in Brockworth have set up their own peer-led community arts group** as a result of taking part in Artlift. The group of NHS patients cum artists won the Adult Learner Awards, and continue to meet and build links in their community. In June 2013, they held their first exhibition, run solely by the group with no support from Artlift or any other institutions. Please see APPENDIX 1 for further information.

• **Pilot of Peer led Move On Groups for 7 residencies** – building on the success of the Brockworth Group, Artlift has been testing ways of ensuring that all Artlift participants have the opportunity to take part in peer-led community arts groups, once they have graduated from Artlift. We tried a range of approaches across the county. In some localities, for example Gloucester, it proved more challenging to successfully set up a group. This is because there is a waiting list in Gloucester for people to take part in Artlift, which means that participants do not have long enough to set up their Move On Groups. In other parts of the county, for example, Stonehouse, there is not a waiting list, and so participants can be re-referred more flexibly for a further 10 weeks, which gives a more realistic lead in time for participants to go it alone in setting up their own Move On Groups. We have learned the lessons from this pilot year, and have established a more structured Move On Progression journey, which includes a certain number of participants being nurtured across 20 weeks of attending Artlift.

• **Spin off activities inspired by Artlift sessions** – apart from a Christmas party for all Artlift participants and staff, attended by some 50 people, there have been other opportunities for participants to take part in wider activities. For example, the Stonehouse Artlift group visited an exhibition at the Guildhall in Gloucester featuring the work of a previous Artlift participant. This was mentioned as a highlight for many members of the group. In July, as a celebration of the completion of this year’s activities, participants from Gloucester, Cheltenham and Stonehouse groups will have a private guided tour around the Quennington Arts Trail. The trip is organised by the Artlift team, with risk assessments in place and artists supporting on the day. Quennington have funded a mini-bus to pick up participants from all 3 locations.

• **Consultation event** to be held with users, referrers, commissioners, artists commissioners and other stakeholders facilitated in kind by Create Gloucestershire. The event was attended by some 90 people, and took place at Blackfriars Priory in Gloucester on Wednesday 3rd July. For more information, please see : [http://www.artlift.org/news/](http://www.artlift.org/news/)
Financial Report
We are awaiting final invoices and outstanding payments to be issued as activities for this year of Artlift draws to a close. We will be able to produce an accurate financial report by mid August 2013.

Independent Evaluation
We have been collecting data regarding this year’s participants, in terms of numbers of referrals, attendances, postcode data and Equal Opportunities. However, we are working on securing funding for University of Gloucestershire to analyse this data and produce a report, as current funds allow only for delivery of Artlift and not for evaluation of data. We will continue to try to secure modest funds to ensure that we can keep building the evidence base around our work, and arts and health work more widely.