

# 'Dancing for Health' evaluation

## 1. Narrative

**Please provide a short narrative which answers the following questions:**

### **What did you set out to do? (150 words maximum)**

The aims of the project were to explore dance participants' experiences and the perceived benefits of the *Dancing for health* programme, in order to collaboratively develop new tools to better capture the perceived impact of taking part in this form of creative intervention.

The objectives were to carry out:

- Observation of *Dancing for Health* classes and to engage with participant voice in the research process;
- Meta-ethnographic synthesis of qualitative evidence exploring the experience of participating in creative dance for people with ABI and stroke;
- Focus group/semi-structured individual interviews with current dance participant cohort to explore their experience, the perceived benefits, barriers and facilitators to participation in the *Dancing for Health* programme;
- Focus groups with other stakeholders e.g. the dance practitioner and physiotherapists to explore the perceived benefits, facilitators and barriers to participation in the *Dancing for Health* programme;
- Gain consensus on potential outcomes of participation in *Dancing for Health* for use in future evaluative studies .

### **What happened? (150 words maximum) How did what happen differ, if at all, from what you intended to happen? (150 words maximum)**

We met the objectives of the project and were able to fulfil the main aims to identify potentially beneficial outcomes for participants, as well as methods to explore these further. Due to the timescale and the challenges associated with engaging with participants with significant communication difficulties or those who lack capacity to consent to participation in research, we were unable to include the wider population of adults with ABI and stroke. Therefore, we have identified strategies to overcome this for any subsequent study in order to understand their experiences of participating in a creative dance intervention.

#### *Meta-ethnography*

The King's PI and MSc student researchers attended the *Dancing for Health* class to observe the environment, dance practice, participant experience and to take in the creative concept. They also met with the Research Fellow at Trinity Laban to understand more about the practice of creative dance (including differences between this particular form and other step-based, choreographed dance forms) and the current evidence base for creative interventions in health. The researchers described these as important activities that highlighted the potential transformative nature of the creative process for individuals and contributed to discussion during the researchers' development of the criteria for the meta-ethnographic study.

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The meta-ethnographic criteria discussed and determined by all researchers included: study population (adults with ABI), intervention (all creative arts interventions) and research/report design (qualitative approach including data in form of creative arts participants experience). The decision to include all creative arts interventions (instead of creative dance alone) was taken to ensure the focus of the study was on the unique contribution of the creative process as the critical component of interventions. A systematic electronic search was conducted across 6 health, psychological and creative arts databases. Searching the Proquest Performing Arts Periodicals database permitted the inclusion of alternative publications such as dissertations, newspaper articles and conference proceedings. The meta-ethnography was completed and identified 6 key themes that describe the experience for participation in creative interventions for people with ABI including: Expressing emotional adjustment; An avenue for escapism; Permitting social interaction; Gaining insight into abilities; Becoming empowered; and Enhancing wellbeing. A single line-of-argument synthesis that seeks to link and explain the key themes was proposed that describes how participation in creative arts permits opportunities that contribute to enhancement of personal well-being.

### *Qualitative study*

We decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with dance class participants, physiotherapists, carers and the dance practitioner instead of focus groups as we acknowledged the diversity of participant experience of acquired brain injury (e.g. aetiology and time since ABI) and its consequences (e.g. physical, cognitive, speech and psychological impairments). Therefore, we wanted to explore individuals' experiences in depth to gain a deeper understanding. However, the timeframe of the project meant that it was not possible to gain ethical approval for potential participants who lack the capacity to consent, nor for the researcher to undertake training in gaining assent and communicating effectively with participants with limited capacity and/or communication difficulties. Instead, we undertook proportionate ethical review of the qualitative methodology for interviews with participants who were able to consent. This inevitably reduced the size of the eligible population for inclusion. We also experienced challenges in recruitment of carers of participants who attended the class from Highview (a residential unit supporting people with acquired brain injury). Nevertheless, we were successful in interviewing 3 class participants, 1 carer, 2 physiotherapists and the dance practitioner. Strategies to gain ethical approval for potential participants without the capacity to consent were discussed and will be employed in any future study.

Interviews revealed how participants valued being offered a safe space to explore playful, creative movement in a social setting, and noted how this opportunity contributed to improved confidence, mood and well-being. Respondents also reported improved functional movement through taking part in the class, and physios highlighted the particular role of creative movement in supporting participants to extend their movement range. However, among these more instrumental benefits, interview commentary also tended to emphasise the 'intrinsic' value to participants of being creative in the classes.

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The results of the meta-ethnography and qualitative study identified several common potentially important outcomes of participation in a creative dance class for people with ABI. Whilst interviewees and studies included in the meta-ethnography reported several potential physical and functional benefits of creative dance, there was a sense here that the overwhelming benefits identified reflected the creative process. These centred around the positive impact of participation on individual's sense of agency, and well-being as a result of having had the opportunity to undergo and express emotional adjustment to the impact of ABI and explore their creative abilities in a safe and supportive social environment.

### **What impact has the project had on the cultural collaborator's activity? Upon research and teaching at King's? (150 words maximum)**

The research project has supported the reflective practice of the Trinity Laban team delivering the *Dancing for Health* programme, including the work of the practitioner, neuro-physios and programme manager, also providing the cultural collaborator with helpful data as to the impact of the programme on its participants. The project has a positive impact on the Research Fellow at Trinity Laban through the highly supportive mentoring of the PI in assisting the research fellow to develop appropriate research methodologies for the project, including interview structure and data analysis, and in developing the research fellow's understanding of the process of conducting a meta-ethnography.

The project has had direct impact on teaching and learning at King's as 3 MSc student researchers conducted the meta-ethnography in part completion of their programme achieving Pass with Merit or Pass with Distinction. As a result of the collaboration, the PI gained greater understanding of creative interventions and the impact on people with ABI that will be used to enhance teaching to UG and PG pre-registration physiotherapy students. The project has had an impact on the PI's research with potential submission of the meta-ethnography for publication in early 2018 and plans for developing the qualitative project further to gain understanding of the experiences of dance class participants who lack the capacity to consent.

### **What could the long-term impact of the project be? (150 words maximum)**

The project permitted collaboration between King's and the cultural partner with view to fostering an ongoing research and teaching collaboration. This may take the form of extending the qualitative project initially or alternatively there is potential for an evaluative study of the efficacy of creative dance on well-being and functional outcomes for people with ABI. It is hoped that MSc Physiotherapy and MSc Dance Science students may be able to work collaboratively on research projects in future.

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## 2. Objectives

- **Rate your project within the areas of impact, profile, knowledge exchange, innovation and engagement.**
- **Engagement:** i.e. the degree to which the public have been engaged with the project
- **Impact:** i.e. the degree to which the project has had an impact on arts and cultural sector policy, practice or creative production
- **Innovation:** i.e. the degree to which the project has realised something new and different
- **Knowledge Exchange:** i.e. the degree to which knowledge has been successfully exchanged between King's and the Arts and Cultural Sector
- **Profile:** i.e. the degree to which the project attracted public notice

Scoring system: 0 – none, 1 – limited, 2 – reasonable, 3 – good, 4 – very good, 5 - exceptional

Engagement (0-5)	Impact (0-5)	Innovation (0-5)	Knowledge Exchange (0-5)	Profile (0-5)
3	2	3	4	3

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### 3. List the outputs of your project:

- Project report
- Planned manuscript submission of meta-ethnography to an arts and health journal in Spring 2018

### 4. Metrics

Capture partnerships, cultural organisations, artists, academics, students and the public engaged in your project.

Create a new row for each separate activity e.g. each workshop, event, discussion group etc.

- **Academics** – i.e. list the academics, with department, involved in each activity and tally the total number of academics engaged in each activity.  
*Separate King's College London academics from external academics.*
- **Artists:** list the artists involved in each activity and tally the total number of artists engaged in each activity
- **Cultural Organisations:** list the cultural organisations engaged in your project and tally the total number of cultural organisations engaged in each activity
- **Partnerships: list new partnerships that have developed in the course of the project**
- **Public:** tally the total number of the public involved in each activity
- **Students:** list students, with department, involved in each activity and tally the total number of students engaged in each activity

Event Title and Date	Academics	Artists	Cultural Organisations	Partnerships	Public	Students
Participant-Observation in 'Dancing for Health' class, Laban Building, 9 <sup>th</sup> June, 2017.	Dr Kate Wakeling (Trinity Laban Research Fellow) <b>TOTAL: 1</b>	Stella Howard (Trinity Laban Dance Artist) <b>TOTAL: 1</b>				Chloe Smith, MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)  Laura Grills, MSc Physiotherapy (pre-

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						registration) Gemma O'Driscoll, MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration) <b>TOTAL: 3</b>
Performance and discussion event held at the <i>London Arts and Health Forum – 'Creativity and Well-Being Week'</i> – which featured an introduction to the <i>Dancing for Health</i> research project. 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2017.	Dr Kate Wakeling (Trinity Laban Research Fellow) <b>TOTAL: 1</b>	Stella Howard (Trinity Laban Dance Artist) <b>TOTAL: 1</b>	Representatives from the following cultural organisations attended: English National Ballet, London Contemporary Dance School, New Adventures dance company, Magpie Dance, and Arts Depot. <b>TOTAL: 5</b>		<b>TOTAL: 19</b>	
Observation of a 'Dancing for Health' class, Laban Building, 6 <sup>th</sup> July, 2017.	Dr Claire White, SPHES, King's College London <b>TOTAL: 1</b>	Stella Howard (Trinity Laban Dance Artist) <b>TOTAL: 1</b>				
Collaborative Research Data Analysis Meeting, Laban	Dr Claire White, SPHES, King's College London		Attendees from Trinity Laban included: Veronica Jobbins, Head of Learning and Participation	John Ling, Clinical Nurse Specialist (Brain injury/neurovascu		

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Building, 11 <sup>th</sup> October, 2017.	Dr Emma Redding (Head of Dance Science, Trinity Laban)  Dr Kate Wakeling (Trinity Laban Research Fellow)  <b>TOTAL: 3</b>		(Dance) Louisa Borg Constanzi-Potts, Programme Manager Learning and Participation (Dance) Gemma Cook, Specialist neurophysiotherapist <b>TOTAL: 1 (x cultural org)</b>	lar), King's College Hospital <b>TOTAL: 1</b>		
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**5. Complete the following table capturing and detailing all disciplines, events, press articles, webstats, social media stats relating to your project.**

- **Discipline:** list and number the range of disciplines involved
- **Events:** list and number events held
- **Press articles:** list and reference press coverage
- **Social Media:** number of social media hits
- **Webstats:** number of website hits

Disciplines	Events	Press articles	Social Media	Webstats
Physiotherapy, Dance Practice, Dance Science	The research was discussed as part of a presentation at a public event entitled 'For the Love of Dance' as part of			

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	the London Arts and Health Forum 'Creativity and Well-being Week'. The event featured live performances, a film showing and an academic presentation (which included an overview of the <i>Dancing for Health</i> research project) and took place at the Laban Studio Theatre on 14 <sup>th</sup> June, 2017			
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6. Is the project eligible for Research Evaluation Framework submission? NO

7.

Evaluation / Review

8. Legacy/Sustainability

**Will the project continue with follow-on funding from elsewhere?**

Yes – funding has been obtained from a private source to support *Dancing for Health* classes while further funding bids are submitted.

**Will participants be signposted to other organisations to enable them to continue?**

*Dancing for Health* classes are ongoing (see above), so all participants are able to continue with the programme.

**Will a lasting legacy be created for the project?**

We are currently exploring the possibility of a further, larger-scale research project investigating *Dancing for Health* classes.

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## 9. Dissemination plan

**Now that the sponsored project is complete, do you have plans to ensure the findings of the project reach the anticipated beneficiaries, and beyond, to other stakeholders and audiences in the sector?**

A report detailing research methodology and a summary of findings will be widely circulated, including with participants, Headway Lewisham and other interested parties.

Meta-ethnography manuscript to be submitted to arts and health publication in 2018.

## 10. Web Story

**Attach a short description (200 words) of the project and its findings together with any relevant images for publication on our website.**

*Dancing for Health* is a collaboration between King's College London's Academic Department of Physiotherapy in the School of Population, Health and Environmental Sciences (SPHES) and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, supported by the Cultural Institute at King's. The project studied a creative dance programme at Trinity Laban for adults (18+) who have experienced an acquired brain injury (ABI) or stroke. This weekly class is delivered in specialist dance facilities led by a highly-experienced Dance Artist, supported by specialist neuro-physiotherapists, and the programme is of particular interest in offering a creative dance experience in a safe, sociable space.

Research was conducted through two strands: a meta-ethnographic synthesis of qualitative evidence (conducted by KCL MSc physiotherapy students, overseen by Dr Claire White) which explored the experience of participating in creative interventions for people with ABI and stroke, and a series of semi-structured interviews with project participants, carers, neuro-physios and the class practitioner (conducted by Dr Kate Wakeling).

The meta-ethnography identified 6 key themes that describe the experience for participation in creative interventions for people with ABI including: Expressing emotional adjustment; An avenue for escapism; Permitting social interaction; Gaining insight into abilities; Becoming empowered; and Enhancing wellbeing. The interviews revealed how participants valued being offered a safe space to explore playful, creative movement in a social setting, with participation often contributing to improved confidence, mood and well-being. Respondents also reported improved functional movement through taking part in the class, and neuro-physios highlighted the particular role of creative

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movement in supporting participants to extend their movement range. However, among these more instrumental benefits, interview commentary often emphasised the 'intrinsic' value to participants of being creative in *Dancing for Health* classes.

### **11. Budget**

*Please see the spreadsheet attached.*