

# ARTS

FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## Case Study

### Rubicon Dance



# How it Began.....

The Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team first contacted Rubicon in 2018 after hearing about their work with Stroke survivors in the community.

As part of the Gwanwyn festival the Arts for Health and Wellbeing team and Rubicon ran a six week pilot project of dance projects for stroke patients called 'Flow at the Stroke Rehabilitation Centre at UHL.

The aim of the project was to enhance mood, confidence, movement and social interaction and address inactivity through shared creative activity. A 1 hour session was set up in SRC with an average of 9 attendances per session where increased socialization, confidence, activity and enhanced mood was evidenced.

The positive impact the sessions had on patient's mood presentation was presented at the Welsh Stroke Conference in 2019 . The SRC also displayed a poster on how they use creative activities including sessions by Rubicon to address inactivity and social isolation.

Rubicon and The Arts for Health and Wellbeing team both wrote case studies on this project which were used on WAHWNs website and Rubicon's case study was then utilised in the Cross Party Group on Arts in Health which aims to raise awareness among Assembly members



# How it Grew.....

After the success of the first pilot all involved were determined that the project should be sustained and developed further, sourcing additional funding to ensure sustainability and embedded the programme at the SRC which is still ongoing today.

Anwen Davies employed both movement and music in inspiring, uplifting sessions, which had an immediate effect on patients in the centre. We became aware that even small movements or small changes of mood can be enormously important for patients' recovery. Tapping feet or singing along and moving to music can have significant holistic benefits to both wellbeing and recuperation. Anwen worked in a number of different areas including 4 bed rooms, the Gym and the Day Room with an engaging, positive personal style which has worked exceptionally well.

Conversations over music and music collections became a regular feature of the sessions in the dayroom, particularly for a group of male patients, and giving patients their musical choice has been an empowering and positive experience for them.

We immediately recognised the sometimes profound effect these sessions could have on patients and staff, and we were delighted to extend Rubicon's work in the department with assistance from the Stroke Rehabilitation Centre, and other funding organisations Cardiff & Vale Health Charity Stroke Endowment funds, Fusion, WMC and Cardiff City Fund, also recent sessions have been funded by Arts and Business Culture Step.

Due the project's success in the SRC, Rubicon has continued to work closely to the Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team and nurtured this partnership developing further projects and extending sessions to a number of wards within Mental Health Services for Older People at UHL, and at St. David's Hospital with the assistance there of Mental Health Matters.

The success of the collaboration between Rubicon and the Arts for Health and Wellbeing team was also recognised in 2020 by an Arts & Business Cymru Award.



# What we learned



As the Art for Health and Wellbeing Team, have learned that a sound collaboration between Rubicon Dance, lead staff members and the Arts Team has created an arts in health system that works well, that can be successfully tailored to individual patient's needs, patient groups and can work well alongside the clinical day in a number of settings

Participants look forward to their weekly sessions, as do our staff members, and the atmosphere created in the larger group sessions can be utterly electric and inspiring.

Music and movement affect us all in deep ways; moving unconsciously to music, enjoyment, a new focus, social engagement and fun can build confidence and result in recovery breakthroughs.

# What we've been told....

Quotes taken from patients on Stroke Rehabilitation Centre pilot.

"Thank you so much you have made people smile that haven't smiled in a very long time' staff members response following a session at Daffodil's unit"

"It's a lovely atmosphere" , "It is nice seeing everyone mixed together"

"It has made me more confident, especially knowing I had the support of staff at the time",

"Best fun I have had in years"



'Patients on the Stroke Rehabilitation Centre have been able to enjoy the fun of moving to music in the Rubicon Dance sessions in a small and larger group. It has been great to see the engagement, pleasure and fun that people have experienced while moving therapeutically outside of their usual treatment sessions. The staff have loved it too'. - *Claire Butterworth - Stroke Rehabilitation Centre.*

'Activities which inspire and boost confidence, which counter low mood or stress and anxiety, dips in confidence, boredom, or feelings of isolation delivered by a third party are potentially a positive addition to the patient's day' - *Melanie Wotton- Art s for Health and Wellbeing Team)*

'After Dementia mapping exercises were done on 8 patients within our sessions in E7& and E8 a conclusion was drawn that 'the positive benefits of having organised activities for patients on the wards can be seen clearly. The bringing of patients together in shared activities allows for greater interaction and social contact which is a positive impact on mood and engagement value' - *Dementia Mapping by Emma Roberts and Joanne Daunt*

'Thank you , for your energy and ability to go with the flow' - *Staff member from MHM at St Davids.*

# What's next?

Rubicon continue to work through a mixed approach of Online and In-person sessions in St David's, Hospital, and Stroke Rehabilitation Centre and MHSOP, UHL.

The Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team are delighted to commission Rubicon as part of the Arts and Minds Programme supported by the Baring Foundation and the Arts Council of Wales to begin new sessions within our Neuropsychiatry Department at Hafan y Coed, Adult Mental Health Unit, working with vulnerable service users. The aim is to pilot an innovative approach within the department and potentially to extend the provision to people with lived experience within the community.

We are also interested in developing further strategies for patients once discharged back into the community into face to face and online sessions for those lack confidence or who would find it difficult to access a session within the community.

The Arts Team have been able, with Rubicon's assistance, to provide a mixed-approach of both online and in-person sessions for groups of inpatients at St. David's Hospital, and various departments in UHL as the pandemic progressed, and we remain deeply grateful to Rubicon Dance Practitioners for the difference they have made to patient's wellbeing.

Rubicon is passionate about our work with the hospital and we truly value our partnership with the Arts Team which enables us to continue to develop our reach further within the CAVUHB.

- Sharon Tear, Rubicon Team

