

Zest in Care Homes

What's the impact on care home residents?

WHAT DOES ZEST IN CARE HOMES LOOK LIKE?

Over 50 care homes across Kent and Surrey have participated in our group sessions in care homes, many receiving multiple sessions. The group sessions are themed and structured, incorporating a variety of creative activities e.g. story making, music, drama, dance, visual arts. The sessions are also specifically designed to maintain residents' interest and engagement, by offering a multitude of short and varied activities. There is something everyone can join in with and enjoy!

"I thought that everything worked really well. I really liked the fact that you vary what you do, so that you do several things and don't dwell too long on one thing." (Comment from member of staff)

EVALUATING ZEST IN CARE HOMES

A detailed observational study over 7 sessions was conducted by an independent evaluator. It showed that the sessions generated high levels of engagement with the creative activities, high levels of interaction between the residents and positive emotions.

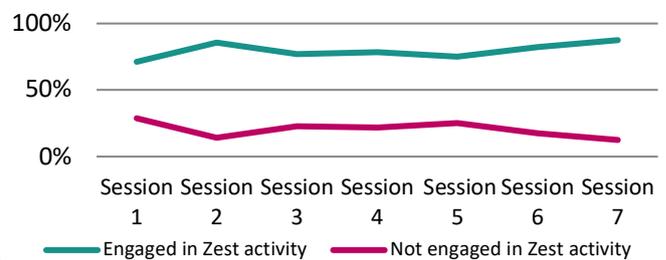
Importantly, the sessions were able to engage and benefit people with differing interests, needs and capabilities – even those less able to participate benefited as they watched with interest and showed signs of positive emotion.

"Very good, I liked all of it; there wasn't one part that I did not like. Quite nice, I've enjoyed myself."

(Comment from a resident)

WHAT DOES ZEST IN CARE HOMES

Detailed observations of 7 care home Zest sessions have shown that residents engage in Zest activities **80%** of the time. As the graph below demonstrates, engagement levels somewhat improved over time, too.



ANNA'S STORY (A CASE STUDY)

Anna (name changed) was a keen participant in all of the activities offered. During the more complex activities, she was often the person to lead the activity. Anna often encouraged other residents to take part and was keen to interact with people around her (residents, staff and facilitators alike). The activities offered during the sessions also encouraged Anna to reminisce, as she proudly recounted her career as a children's dentist. Once, a couple of hours after a session about going to the beach, Anna told the evaluator she enjoyed going to the beach in the morning and having a paddle in the water. Despite Anna's dementia, Zest sessions had a lasting and positive effect on her wellbeing.

"They are wonderful. Very kind, very good. I was quite fed up with myself and they cheered me up." (Anna)

ZEST IN PERSON AND ON ZOOM

Feedback from care home staff was universally positive. Staff members remarked about the residents enjoying Zest sessions (including those delivered via Zoom):

"They were all glued to the screen and got heavily involved."

"Sessions have been absolutely fantastic... we've been surprised about how the residents have become involved in ways we didn't expect."

(Comments from care staff)

Some of the participating homes have taken videos and photos during the sessions. One home created fun videos about their Zest on Zoom sessions. You can see the video of the Paris-inspired session here:

<https://tinyurl.com/ParisZest>

LEGACY OF ZEST IN CARE HOMES

Staff noted some lasting impacts in terms of improved relationships – increased friendship groups and more sociable mealtimes. Two, previously feuding residents, became more amicable towards one another.

"Thank you so much for today, the residents really enjoyed it. They are still talking about it this evening."

"Since Bright Shadow have been coming in, that group [referring to three female residents] now congregate in the lounge on a more regular basis. They will sit down and have a chat...and that has been a regular thing since Bright Shadow have been coming in. Before they would sit there, but it would take us a lot of effort to get them to interact with each other and now they do that of their own accord."

(Comments from care staff)



BRIGHT SHADOW

Bright Shadow dementia charity is part of the local and national networks of expert arts providers working with people living with dementia and their supporters/caregivers. Our Zest programme offers a range of creative activities and inspiring resources designed to suit individual needs, ensuring person-centeredness and accessibility. Find out more: brightshadow.org.uk