

Capital Care Foundation - Open Doors Final Report

Executive Summary

The Capital Care Foundation Open Doors program was designed to bring together those living with dementia in the community with those living in continuing care centres to participate together in in-person fine arts programming. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the need to pivot the project to be provided virtually. As a result, the program focused on developing two video series that can be viewed by those living in continuing care centres and those living at home. The first series focuses on visual art in the form of painting classes and the second takes people through Music Movement and Mindfulness classes. Both are designed for participants living with dementia of varying progression and focus on active living. The series are both available through a private YouTube link that is supplied to registrants at no cost. Those that register to participate can access the episodes of the series at their own pace and can repeat the series as desired. In addition, participation kits are available which include art supplies (adapted brushes as needed) and loaner music instrumental kits.

The Open Doors program video series will continue to be available as a resource to caregivers, day programs and other community supports to support sustainability. Providing a fine art and active program set of video series was a way to share expertise available at continuing care centres and expand the reach to those who live in community. It also provides a view into the activities and positive experiences available in continuing care centres.

Objectives/Implementation

- A. To provide a participatory resource for those living with dementia in the community.
- B. To provide an opportunity for individuals living with dementia in community to experience new fine arts-type experiences.
- C. To develop a resource that is easily accessible and sustainable.
- D. To develop a sense of peer support with residents in care, helping others living in the community with dementia.
- E. To develop awareness of the virtual series.
- F. To highlight active living within continuing care centre life.

The Open Doors Project originally intended to provide in-person fine arts programming to individuals living with dementia in community. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project shifted to creating two online resource video series of dementia programs that can be used in households or program groups to support those living with dementia. Loaner musical and art toolboxes were also made available for local programs.

The Open Doors Project is an opportunity for anyone experiencing dementia, no matter where they live, to participate in active programs virtually. Individuals can access the series through an easy one-time registration process that takes them to an online link that can be accessed unlimited times.

The first of the two series focuses on visual fine arts, taking participants through a step-by-step process of completing two paintings. A University of Alberta fine arts graduate led each episode of this series, with detailed easy to understand guidance on starting and finishing both paintings. The goal of this series is to build a sense of accomplishment by completing two pieces of art participants can be proud



of. The second series is a Music, Motion, and Mindfulness class that has several episodes, exploring a variety of activities that are fun and engaging both physically and mentally. Participants are part of an online class providing the feeling of being in a class without leaving the comforts of their home.

Both series are excellent resources for day programs, Alzheimer social groups, or senior centres to use in group situations. These can be utilized in rural and metro locations, wherever a group leader can set up the group viewing space.

Impact

The resource has been shared with five day programs in the Edmonton area and the Alzheimer Society in Edmonton. Promotions were also shared in a social media campaign in the spring of 2023. Information about the resources will also be shared with Alberta based day programs, additional chapters of the Alzheimer's Society, and seniors' centres.

The evaluation of the series is still under development. Initial feedback from participants is the two series have helped motivate the mind and body and support them to stay active to help keep them well and socially engaged. Information about the resources and impact is planned to be shared at:

- The Alberta Therapeutic Recreation Association
- Walk With Me Canadian Conference 2024 – Changing the Culture of Ageing.
- Local Institute for Continuing Care Education and Research (ICCER) session where continuing care, homecare, and caregiver practitioners and professionals gather to share successful initiatives.

For more information about the courses, email: ccfoundation@capitalcare.net.