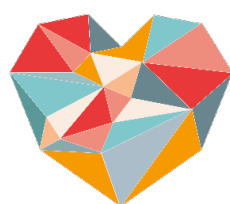




Art and care in dialogue

 Royal Museums
of Fine Arts
of Belgium

A good practice nominated by

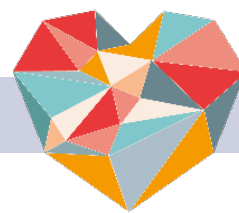


Dementia
in Cultural Mediation



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The activity



Name of the activity

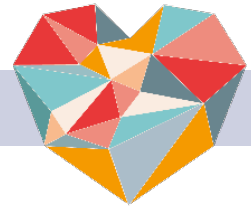
Art and care in dialogue.

Museum tailored to people with dementia.

Summary

We organise museum visits for people with dementia living in residential care homes and their caregivers, accompanied by a museum guide. A week before the museum visit, the museum staff first visit the residential care home to introduce themselves.

Content



Target group

We focus on the end users of residential care homes. We do not set any specific criteria or restrictions concerning the profile of the participants: everyone is welcome! Often the staff of the residential care home decides which of their end users can participate in the activity.

Objective

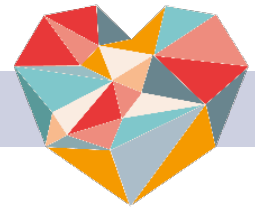
The aim is to give people with dementia self-confidence and the opportunity to connect with society: to not be 'ill' for a while, but to be like everyone else.

Partners

We work together with a number of expert and network organisations that are important to us as references. These organisations think along with us and give us input and feedback, including on specific training courses for our staff.

Specifically, the following organisations belong to our reference group: Alzheimer League (for training), Centre of Expertise on Dementia brOes (for promotion and content reflection) and the residential care home in Sint-Joost-ten-Node (for feedback and evaluation).

Practical



Venue

Part 1 takes place in a residential care home: preferably in a cosy room, big enough for ten people, with a round table and, very important: coffee and tea! The most important thing is that the room is cosy and the acoustics should be good too.

Part 2 continues in the museum: the collection we visit is decided together with the people with dementia during part 1. It is important that it is a quiet place: not a room with many groups of visitors for example. There are 2 parking spaces for people with physical disabilities in front of the museum. Usually groups come with a van. We wait for them and receive them outside by the van. If necessary, we wait for them there with wheelchairs, blankets and the material for the tour: music, objects, relief drawings that we use especially for people who are blind or visually impaired, the iPad to show things in detail, ... The museum is fully accessible for wheelchair users.

Day, time & duration

For the session in the residential care home, we always choose an afternoon (usually Tuesday or Thursday). In the morning, there is often already a lot planned. This session lasts max. 75 minutes. One week later, for the visit to the museum, we foresee at least one and a half hours, because a lot of time needs to be foreseen for the framing. For this afternoon session we prefer a quiet moment when there are few visitors in the museum. Experience shows that a Tuesday, for example, is often more suitable than a Thursday when there are fewer groups in the museum.

Group size

Maximum 10 people in total.

Max. five residents, and max. 5: healthcare staff/informal caregivers (may be mixed but is not a must; at least one responsible from the residential care home).

Supervisors and hosts

During the session in the residential care home, we ask that at least one staff member is present at all times. For the museum visit, at least one museum guide (who is trained to do so) and a maximum of one volunteer from the museum are needed. The volunteer can help out in case of unforeseen circumstances, for example if someone has to go to the toilet, if a participant runs away, becomes restless, ... These persons have had training or have experience with people with dementia.

Materials & facilities

For part 1 in the residential care home: chairs, coffee, tea and biscuits, Wi-Fi, possibly a screen and a beamer. We will also bring along some presents from the museum (posters, napkins, ...).

For part 2 in the museum: chairs or wheelchairs and material that we use during the tour (music + music equipment, drawing materials, prints of works of art, objects, ...).

Costs

For part 1 in the residential care home, we charge 90 euros (all included).

For part 2 in the museum, we charge 8 euros per end user of the residential care home. Three accompanying persons can participate free of charge (from the fourth accompanying person, the rate of 8 euros applies).

Name tags

We do not use name tags but ask everyone to introduce themselves at the first session at the residential care home. We write down these names and memorise them for the next session. For us it is very important not to make a distinction between people with/without dementia and to address them equally.

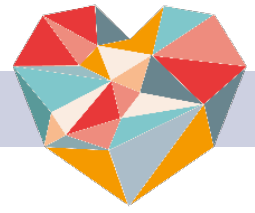
Memento

After part 1, we often leave behind some posters of works of art from the museum in the residential care home. Also very popular are the napkins with prints of Brueghel artworks. During the museum visit, the participants sometimes make drawings that they can, of course, take home with them.

Afterwards

During both parts, we often take pictures, which we then pass on to the residential care home. Sometimes we notice that staff from the residential care home do something creative with these photos afterwards, with the posters we give them or the drawings that participants make during the visit. We appreciate this very much, but do not consider it part of our work.

Communication & Registration



Communication

We do not address our communication to the people with dementia, but to the residential care homes. How they communicate with their residents is up to them.

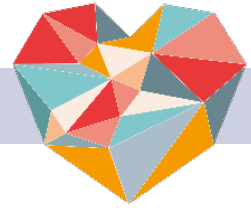
The communication to the residential care homes happens through our website, social media (Facebook, Instagram,...) and through direct mailing. In addition, the Centre of Expertise on Dementia brOes also plays an important role in terms of communication. This organisation already has a whole network of partners and various communication channels, such as a magazine, ... In collaboration with them, we are now working out a more global communication plan. We focus locally, especially on Brussels, because we notice that proximity is very important.

We have also noticed that there is a lot of word-of-mouth advertising: for example, between the residential care homes or via staff who go to work in another residential care home. We have also received press attention as part of the broader theme of 'art and care', to which we are very committed as a museum.

Registration

Residential care homes that are interested can contact us by e-mail or telephone. We will then contact them by telephone to discuss everything. Afterwards, we will send a confirmation e-mail with all the practical details (time and place of the appointment, mobile phone number of the person in charge and the guide, the price, necessary materials, ...). It is very important to make good arrangements. We send a reminder the day before the activity.

Description & Program



Part 1 in the residential care home

We arrive at least fifteen minutes beforehand. After the residents have arrived, we briefly introduce ourselves using visual material. This way the participants can immediately visualise who we are and where we come from. Then they introduce themselves, we write down their names and make a short summary of what they say (as biographical elements or interests can later be integrated into the museum visit). Then we explore our collection together and we do this using a number of objects, for example a ladle, which refers to a painting by David. We also work with pictures of works of art. Everything happens very organically: we let it depend on the group what we show and how the conversation goes. We try to find out which part of the museum interests the group the most. We want to decide with them which collection we will visit during the visit the following week. This is voted on at the end. After the vote, we have coffee and answer any questions in a friendly atmosphere. We also make clear what we expect the following week and give some presents: posters, napkins, ...

Part 2 in the museum

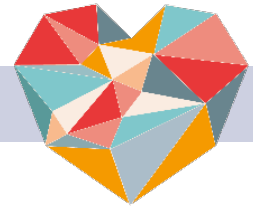
We call the residential care home an hour beforehand to find out how many people are coming and what time they will arrive. We wait for them outside. We help them to enter the museum, wheelchairs are available if needed. Then, we take some time to acclimatise (and possibly go to the toilet, ...). We organise the visit very organically: usually we know which work we will start with, but then we often improvise based on the atmosphere and what is said. If someone feels attracted to a particular work, we go there. Usually, we discuss four works, to which we often also link an activity: for example, playing music or working with objects (such as a glove - which is allowed to be touched - that can also be seen in the work, ...). It is also important to give enough time to look. The visit is also very interactive: we talk to the visitors. The last step is the closing: a short reflection on how the participants experienced the visit.

Evaluation



Immediately after the activity, the experiences of the participants are gauged: both the persons with dementia and their caregivers. In addition, we always do a separate reflection with the guide and the volunteer of the tour.

Checklist, when to do what



One month before the activity

- General communication about the programme via our website, social media, direct mailing, Centre of Expertise on Dementia brOes, ...

Two to one weeks before the activity

- We contact the residential care home by telephone.
- We send an e-mail with all practical information, as agreed by phone.

The day before the activity: **part 1** in the residential care home

- We send a reminder.
- We prepare the material we will bring (posters, napkins,...)

Day of the activity: **part 1** in the residential care home

- We arrive 15 minutes in advance to prepare everything.

The day before the activity: **part 2** in the museum

- We send a reminder.

Day of the activity: **part 2** in the museum

- We contact the residential care home by telephone about the number of participants, the exact time of arrival, the wheelchairs needed, ...
- At the briefing in the museum in the morning, we let everybody know that there will be a group of people with dementia coming.
- We set up all the equipment.

Corona

Because of Corona, all the activities in the museum were halted for a long time. We did continue with the activities in the residential care homes, which was possible thanks to the rapid vaccination in the residential care homes. We also developed an additional activity: 'Klavertje Vier'. As a museum, we chose six themes and for each theme we selected four works from our collection. We then wrote to all the residential care homes in Brussels. We asked the residents of the residential care homes to choose their favourite work of art per centre. We made a poster of the work of art that came out on top, to which we added a quote reflecting the theme and the work of art. The posters were then delivered to the participating residential care homes, which often put them up in communal areas.

Points of attention

