Devised and written by Anthea McWilliams
Dancer in Residence: engaging older people with dementia through dance/movement across four Belfast care settings

Strictly Active Staff Dance Tool Kit
For use by staff at Hemsworth Court, Sydenham Court Clifton House, Fairholme

A Music CD and a Move Along a Song DVD included
Strictly Active - a first fully supported Dancer in Residence scheme for four care settings across Belfast.

Professional dance practitioner, Anthea McWilliams has worked in community dance practice in Northern Ireland since 1988; she designed and delivered the programme spending 10 full days at each setting from July 2015-March 2016.

This Tool Kit for staff was designed for use after completion of the residency to enable staff and participants, friends and family to continue dancing and moving a little more for a little longer.

It accompanies the ‘training’ already provided for staff and is not intended for use by others outside the project.

“It has been wonderful watching the music touch people, awaken souls.”
TS/Hemsworth

“I had the pleasure of visiting my dad while he has been attending ‘Strictly Active’ and it’s been wonderful as dad is dancing and smiling and having fun. I’ve joined in also. Well done.”
CF/Hemsworth
Why dance?

Dance as a way to encourage expressiveness, non verbal communication, enjoyment and engagement

Feel it (the music/rhythm)- move it (the body in time and space) - share it (with others)

Aims: to meet, move and laugh together; to be safe, secure and valued.

Participation: all ideas are suggestions to encourage participants to move a little beyond their normal range. Nothing is exact, instead everyone in the group chooses how much they can do, more importantly how much they enjoy.

Encourage joke telling and creative input. Share, reflect and acknowledge. Tell others.

Be a social enabler, movement maker and fun former.

Definitions

DANDER DANCE... a small chorus/group of people moving along to music with rollators/walking aids. Led by a dance professional or member of staff, the danderdance (5-10mins) is enjoyable yet physical and guides danderists simply from start to finish along a safe path/route inside or outside. Choose music with a song/tune that most people know or recognize, that works best. Enthusiasm is essential.

DISTANCE DANCING for more able bodied participants/seniors involves ‘travelling’/moving individually with pre-set choreography for a small group (6-8); then partnering to combine contact themes involving resistance, strength and co-ordination. Lasting up to one hour distance dance is done outdoors, with pre set music and led by a dance professional along a safe path or agreed route.

Group Drum Roll (seated or standing) is a soft percussive drumming of hands on laps, followed by three claps of hands together, then a shout of ‘Hey’ or ‘Me’ all together with outstretched arms at any level. The ‘Hey’ or ‘Me’ can be ‘performed’ individually, directed by facilitator like a conductor around the circle. Enjoy!

Props

Parachute/scarves/large soft balls/beanbags/balloons

Anthea says: “Throwing and catching leads to dancing!”
See for yourself.
Workshop content

SESSION TIME: APPROX 30 MINS
All participants seated in a circle (5-10)
Music selection is just a suggestion (choose from 20 track cd provided)

Warm-up/ice-breaker ... Parachute

Music: ‘Timbaolomson’
Encourage participants to sit tall and forward on seat (to optimize movement benefits)
‘Ready…and’ Shake x4
Lift up, float down
8 counts: arms forward & back, scissor movement
Rest hands on lap
8 counts: Leg kicks/toe taps/knee lifts
Lean gently side to side with arms stretching
Centre/pause
Walk the fingers forward, gathering the parachute whilst leaning in/forward
Release, slide the hands back to start position, tickle chin!
Go Low, fast shakes to floor
Go High, lift to sky, add a cheer
Pause
Pass the parachute to the right, 8 counts, repeat to left 8 counts.
After count of 3, lift up and LET GO
Watch as parachute billows and floats to the floor
Finish with a DRUM ROLL

“Fun filled afternoon, with a purpose
activity that the tenants enjoy
simple
very beneficial to the tenants.”

Staff/Sydenham Court
Warm up (cont)

Music: ‘Wheels’
Just enjoy the rhythm! Encourage ideas: for example

Toes tapping
Heels tapping
Both: toes & heels tapping
Seated walking, feet and arms: slow, slow, quick, quick, slow
Shoulders lifting, alternate
Hands on - Heads, shoulders, knees and click
then reverse
Click, knees, shoulders, head
Individual/group ideas
Finish with a DRUM ROLL

Catch the colour ... sparkly cloths

Music: ‘Jazzband’
1 sparkly cloth each
Hold in front at 2 corners
8 counts: Shimmie
Flick x 4
8 counts: Squiggle
Can-Can (under/over knees)
Hold/pull tight horizontally
Turn the wheel (arms rolling)
Spin
Squeeze
4 throws up/catch
Facilitator moves to centre of circle
Throw/catch exchange across circle in time to music
All throw to centre high and land on floor in middle in a pile
Finish with a DRUM ROLL

"We generate so much heat dancing and moving that we don't need the heaters on"

B/Fairholme
“I am 91, you made me feel 15”
T/Fairholme

Move-along-a-songs
Use the dvd provided and follow the actions on screen

Blue Spanish Eyes
Blue Spanish eyes
Teardrops are falling from your Spanish eyes
Please, please don’t cry
This is just Adios and not goodbye
Soon I’ll return
Bringing you all the love your heart can hold
Please say Si Si
Say you and your Spanish eyes will wait for me

Blue Spanish eyes
Prettiest eyes in all of Mexico
True, true Spanish eyes
Please smile for me once more before I go
Soon I’ll return
Bringing you all the love your heart can hold
Please say Si Si
Say you and your Spanish eyes will wait for me.
Say you and your Spanish eyes will wait for me

“This is the best activity there’s ever been, I’m ecstatic about this, I think it’s wonderful and the colour purple reminds me of Jimi Hendrix.”
J/Fairholme
Q. Do you know the story of the three holes in the field?
A. Well, well, well.

Catch a Falling Star
Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket
Never let it fade away
Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket
Save it for a rainy day
For, love may come and tap you on the shoulder
Some starless night
And, just in case you feel you want to hold it her
... You'll have a pocket full of starlight

Repeat
Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket
Never let it fade away
Catch a falling Star and put it in your pocket
Save it for a rainy day
For when your troubles start and multiplying?
And they just might
It's easy to forget than without trying
... With just a pocket full of starlight.

Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket
Never let it fade away
Catch a falling Star and put it in your pocket
Save it for a rainy day
Save it for a rainy day

End

“Never tire of listening to it, I will never tire of him.”

Mrs H (aged 100+) on Perry Como & Catch a Falling Star
Memories are Made of This
Sweet, sweet, the memories you gave to me
You can’t beat the memories you gave to me

Take one fresh and tender kiss
Add one stolen night of bliss
One girl, one boy
Some grief, some joy
Memories are made of this

Don’t forget a small moonbeam
Fold in lightly with a dream
Your lips and mine
Two sips of wine
Memories are made of this

Then add the wedding bells
One house where lovers dwell
Three little kids for the flavour
Stir carefully through the days
See how the flavour stays
These are the dreams that we savour

With His blessing from above
Serve it generously with love
One man, one wife
One love through life
Memories are made of this

“"I really enjoy
dancing, once I’m up I can’t stop.”"
Finally

The Dander Dance (group of 5/6 per 1 staff member)
Choose music/song that everyone enjoys
Everyone stands together ready to go
Choose your route
Press play, keep together, encourage spontaneity
Off you go!
ENJOY.
Music: ‘Hooked on Swing Medly 1’
   ‘Show me the way to go home’
   ‘Happy’

Cool down

Stretching/breathing/relaxing
Music: ‘It’s Time to say ‘Aloha’
Cross R arm to touch opposite shoulder, tap twice
Open arm slowly and float it out & sideways around circle
Draw it slowly back and rest on lap
RPT with L arm
RPT with both arms
Rolly polly arms low
Reverse: rolly polly arms high
Rest hands on lap
Gently stretch R arm forward and upwards/breath in
Lower / breath out
RPT with L arm
RPT with both arms and breathing
Pause
Gently stretch R leg (as above)
Gently stretch R arm and R Leg (same side as above)
RPT with L arm and L leg
Finally, gently stretch both arms and legs, breath in
Breath out and return to relaxed seated position.
RELAX
Gentle applause!
Well done.
Variations

Tie two chiffon scarves at two corners to make a mini parachute style duet.

Participants sit opposite each other and hold two corners of scarf

Place balloon on top of one scarf then Pass a balloon from scarf to scarf

Create a seated row of people side by side and try to send the balloon in a zig-zag pattern along the row and back

Music: ‘Keep on the Sunnyside’

Bean bags: Create your own simple bean bag dance including throwing/catching x 4; pass from hand to hand while swaying; ‘now you see it, now you don’t’ motif; place on top of foot, flick up and catch.

Music: ‘Sway’

Q. Why does the Irish man wear both belt and braces?
A. To be sure, to be sure.
Q. Did you hear about the glazier’s daughter?  
A. She had windy panes/pains in her stomach.

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Spectrum Centre, Belfast  
Celebration Event March 2016

Contact details:
Anthea McWilliams  
Mobile: 07980 494 063
Email: dancethememories@aol.com