

Online Art Therapy service pilot in Na h-eileanan an iar

What is art therapy?

Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses arts as a means of expression and communication. A range of art materials can be used to explore the therapeutic aspects of the creative process alongside the art therapist. Art making in this way gives individuals the opportunity to express themselves more freely, gain insight, self-awareness and can support change. No experience of using art or artistic ability is necessary to be able to benefit from art therapy.

Art therapy can help to support a wide range of difficulties, disabilities or diagnoses. These include bereavement and loss, mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and trauma, learning or physical disabilities, life-limiting conditions, and physical illnesses. Art therapy can also be helpful for someone who is interested in enhancing their psychological wellbeing.

Who is the service for?

We are inviting adults (over the age of 18) living in Na h-eileanan an iar who are interested in working creatively with an art therapist towards achieving personal goals and/or psychological growth. We will provide equipment, but you should be able to ensure that you have reliable broadband access.

What will art therapy sessions look like?

Art therapy will be offered in blocks of 8 weekly sessions (with the possibility of extension). You will work with an experienced art therapist based in the Highlands and Islands who is registered with the Health and Care Professions Council. You and the therapist will connect online via a safe platform used for remote health appointments. Digital equipment for connecting and artmaking will be provided for the duration of your therapy. A set of traditional art materials will also be sent to you and you will be able to choose if you would like to work with digital or traditional art media (or both).

What about research?

Evaluation of the pilot service will be undertaken by the University of the Highlands and Islands. Taking part in evaluation is entirely voluntary and anonymous. You might choose to contribute in different ways - for example, by completing short online questionnaires and/or working with your art therapist on a short audiovisual summary of your experience. Staff referring to the art therapy service and art therapists themselves will take part in interviews, but they will not share any information on participants. This research will help us assess the need, acceptability and feasibility of an online art therapy service in the future.

Would you like to find out more about taking part in art therapy and/or the research?

Dr Ania Zubala will be very happy to answer any questions, please do get in touch:

ania.zubala@uhi.ac.uk