

LESSONS LEARNT

Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



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RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

Arts on Prescription

Allow for adequate time to get referral channels onboard.

It takes time to recruit participants, we advise to begin a minimum six – eight weeks before the programme's start-date. Maintain ongoing contact with the referral channels in order for them not to forget to refer participants.

Contact the participant(s) shortly after you receive the referral as participants can change their mind about attending, if there is too long a lapse from referral to link worker contact.

Having an introductory face to face meeting for all participants with the link worker before the AoP programme begins is a valuable way to create a safe space and gain a sense of trust and social belonging.

Already existing culture and heritage institutions & professionals was a great resource to build upon when setting up the programme.

Training of CAF before the start of the programme was crucial for its success, expressed, from CAF and participants perspectives.

In most cases it was the link worker who did the training, but in some cases the training was followed up with a lecture and discussion with a psychotherapist.

It is not enough the CAF are experienced, they need to have empathy, patience and be able to work with target audience who may have little understanding of the art, processes and materials used in the activities.

The venue can mean a lot for the target audiences' engagement; they need to feel both safe and welcome. Venues can include schools, local community centers, culture institutions where the participants gain the full culture experience, nature areas.

AoP has a positive effect on people from different backgrounds and among all age-groups. It is a programme that focuses on shared experiences as opposed to personal differences.

We learnt that participants gained new skills, no matter their previous experience with the arts and interactive activities.

Although AoP programmes focus on the individual and not on mental health illness, it does occur that participants speak of their mental health. As it is not forbidden to speak about mental health, there should be no stigma around spontaneous conversations that may occur in the group. However, we recommend all participants respect each other and not pry into other participants reason for participating in the programme.

Many participants in each group wished to continue with the fellowship in culture or social activities after the programme. We learnt that this can be challenging depending on the resources available in the community. In the cases where it was possible the participants continue to engage in these activities over a long period.