

CIVIL MONEY PENALTY (CMP) FUNDED PROJECT FINAL REPORT



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES / DIVISION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

This project report has been prepared by the author under a research grant from the Department of Health Services (DHS) Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee. The views expressed in the report/training are personal to the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Department of Health Services or any of its staff and do not bind the Department in any manner.

Grantee

Alzheimer's Poetry Project LLC

Project Title

Dementia Arts Mapping

Amount Spent

\$ 91,500.00

Grant Period

10/11/2023

To

11/09/2023

(MM/dd/yyyy)

(MM/dd/yyyy)

Additional Information and Resources

Dementia Arts Mapping: observational methods for documenting impacts of poetry and recreation in care settings

Daniel B. Kaplan & Gary Glazner

To cite this article: Daniel B. Kaplan & Gary Glazner (26 Nov 2023): Dementia Arts Mapping: observational methods for documenting impacts of poetry and recreation in care settings, Arts & Health, DOI: [10.1080/17533015.2023.2283530](https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2023.2283530)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2023.2283530>



Published online: 26 Nov 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Dementia Arts Mapping: observational methods for documenting impacts of poetry and recreation in care settings

Daniel B. Kaplan ^a and Gary Glazner ^b

^aAdelphi University School of Social Work, Garden City, NY, USA; ^bAlzheimer's Poetry Project LLC, Chicago, IL, USA

ABSTRACT

Background: Long-term care homes for older and disabled adults, including those who are living with dementia, facilitate a diversity of recreational activities and program as social interventions. The relationships between interventional elements and participant impacts are not well understood.

Methods: This paper explores a poetry methodology and reports the findings from a pilot test of Dementia Arts Mapping, a novel ethnographic observational technique, to better understand impacts of poetry and recreation on people living with dementia in long-term care settings. Between 2017 and 2020, at 17 skilled nursing facilities throughout Wisconsin, researchers situated within care homes observed participants during diverse activities.

Results: We found poetry workshops surpassed other activities in eliciting self-expression.

Conclusions: Dementia Arts Mapping is an effective instrument for generating insights about dementia care and may be further enhanced for future use in research to inform care provision to foster meaningful engagement with people with dementia.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 11 October 2023
Accepted 9 November 2023

KEYWORDS

Participatory arts; dementia; creativity; poetry; personhood

Introduction

In a wide variety of care settings, older adults and individuals with cognitive impairment are typically encouraged to participate in programs to provide social stimulation. People deserve to have a quality of life in both institution and community-based care settings (Coulter & Oldham, 2016). It is a high priority to create opportunities for socialization. Programs offered to older adults and individuals with cognitive impairment in many residential and community-based care settings include among others: arts and crafts; bingo; exercise sessions; music; storytelling; and Wii bowling and other games. Typical arts and crafts programs may include adult coloring, working with clay, or making paper flowers. Morning activities often feature the group sitting in chairs stretching and doing

CONTACT Gary Glazner  garyglaznerpoet@gmail.com  Adelphi University School of Social Work, Garden City, NY, USA

Daniel B. Kaplan is now at Adelphi University School of Social Work, Garden City, NY, Gary Glazner is now at the Alzheimer's Poetry Project LLC, Chicago, IL

This is a contribution to the special issue on Research Poetry and Practice.

movement exercises. Groups sing together or have guest musicians play for them. They create stories together. They play many types of games including dice rolling and video games using Wii technology.

In addition, there is widespread use of arts-based interventions that include participant collaboration and co-creation. The ground-breaking 2001 Creativity and Aging Study found the intervention group members who were involved in intensive participatory arts activities showed better overall health including fewer doctor visits, less medicine dosage and better mental health scores on standardized tests as compared to the control group members who were not involved in any cultural arts activities (Cohen, 2006). Well known arts-based interventions include: *Arts 4 Dementia* with various arts programs (Arts 4 Dementia, 2023); *Kairos Alive!* for dance (Genné & Anderson, 2011); *Songwriting Works™* for music playing and song creating (Friedman, n.d.); *TimeSlips™* for story-telling (Vigliotti et al., 2019); *Music and Memories™* for music listening (Bakerjian et al., 2020); *Opening Minds through Art* for art making (Levenberg et al., 2021); and *Meet Me at MoMA* for art viewing (Rosenberg, 2009).

Anecdotal reports from facilitators of arts-based interventions, such as those listed above, describe moments of spontaneity and whimsy that shape these activities. The spontaneous and interactive contributions offered by participants in arts program sessions shape the shared experiences of the participants. Their social and cognitive alertness coupled with positive emotional states are reportedly typical for some participants. This multi-modal engagement has often been observed by session facilitators and nearby witnesses as a sharp contrast to the socio-emotional and cognitive states of the same people just prior to the sessions and throughout other recreational activities where a large proportion of participants seem to remain disengaged and withdrawn. The effects of the combinations of activities in arts intervention sessions has stirred questions about our ability to document and measure such anecdotally described impacts so as to better understand the mechanisms of these observed changes. The articulation of effective interventional elements could illuminate methods for enhancing the quality of care and quality of life for people with various stages of dementia symptom severity in a broad array of settings by tailoring the activities offered throughout their days.

In this study, we are inspired by the practice-based observations defined above to seek to better understand the mechanisms underlying participatory arts-based interventions and their impacts on participants. Our focus is on one of the art forms used in programs for older adults and people with cognitive impairment- poetry. The poetry invention used in this study asks participants to answer open-ended questions to provide the lines that form newly created poems, as other arts programs are known to use similar methods to generate original songs, dances, and stories during activities-based interventions that inspire group collaboration, socialization, and cognitive stimulation. In these programs of group-based participatory arts, interventionists rely on the practice of centering participant creativity as both the structure of the activity and the focus of validation efforts (Kaplan et al., 2023). What is not well understood is how arts-based and non-arts programs may lead to variable impacts on participants. Methods of studying those impacts continue to emerge. In this paper we report on the pilot testing of a novel method seeking to better

understand and differentiate the variable impacts of social and recreational programs experienced by older adults and people with cognitive impairment in long-term care settings.

Poetry's cultural significance

In "Can Poetry Matter?" (Gioia, 1991, p. 94), the author states "Poetry has vanished as a cultural force in America. If poets venture outside their confined world, they can work to make it essential once more." Performing and creating poetry in care homes and other settings serving older adults represents a venturing outside of the world of MFA programs, poetry workshops, Poetry Slams and coffee house readings. The article further states:

Poems should be memorized, recited, and performed. The sheer joy of the art must be emphasized. The pleasure of performance is what first attracts children to poetry, the sensual excitement of speaking and hearing the words of the poem. Performance was also the teaching technique that kept poetry vital for centuries. (Gioia, 1991, p. 106)

Participatory poetry – where older adults and people living with cognitive impairment become co-creators and performers – draws on the long history, strength and vitality of poetry while creating shared moments of joy derived from speaking evocative words aloud and hearing them ring out in the voices of others.

Poetry intervention

The poetry program and intervention used in this study was first used in 1997, at an adult day care centre in Northern California. Since that time, the program has created and performed poetry with people navigating dementia in 35 states in the U.S. and internationally in seven countries. A typical poetry session is one hour in length. The artistic focus of the poetry is on participant creativity. Facilitators and participants recite poems and combine poems and songs with movement. They co-create original works of poetry around themes, for example, springtime, birds and flight, or even whimsically imaging new superheroes. The facilitators build the sessions around well-loved, classic poems. An example would be Emma Lazarus' poem *New Colossus*, celebrating the Statue of Liberty, "... Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free ..." (Lazarus, 1889, p. 203). Poems utilized in the sessions are selected due to their relevance to a theme that is declared to the participants and linked to activity elements.

Call and response

To engage the participants in performance, the session leader begins each session with a call and response technique, reciting a line from the poem and coaching the group to echo the line. This use of repetition builds on poetry's strength as an oral art form. By asking participants to join voices in repeating a line of poetry, participants are supported to shed some measure of isolation and tap established long-term memories.

One can find call and response across cultures and traditions. Soldiers learn to move in unison with marching cadences (Salley, 2015). Fans at sporting events chant and cheer for

favourite teams (Schwartz, 2012). Protest leaders guide demonstrators to repeat calls to action (Reguillo, 2012). Religious ceremonies are replete with call and response traditions, including the Catholic liturgy, gospel services (Floyd, 1996), and marriage vows. Call and response is infused in blues, gospel, jazz (Smitherman, 1977), and hip-hop music. Importantly, it is often used in teaching to facilitate language mastery across all ages and is the central tool of secondary language acquisition, both in face-to-face classroom instruction and self-study programs (Oller & Richard-Amato, 1983). Such frequent and effective utility in promoting language development and memory raises the question of the potential value of call and response for language maintenance in the context of dementia.

Discussion starter

Poetry facilitators use poems to start discussions with and among the participants. This is done by asking questions to engage the group on the subject matter of the poem. As social beings, all people rely on discussion, both through casual chats and more emotionally-trusting heart-to heart conversations.

Props or object handling

Props which reinforce the theme of the workshop include objects that people can smell, feel, hold, hear and taste. An example of a prop for a summer theme would be roses. Visual and tactile engagement with props is believed to further stimulate participant cognition throughout poetry sessions.

Create a poem

Participants co-create an original poem as facilitators ask open-ended questions around the session theme and write down participant's contributions. One technique is to choose a classic poem as the model and then base the question on the subject matter of the poem. For example, a facilitator using the poem *Daffodils* by Wordsworth would ask how the participants about the smells, tastes, sounds, looks, and feels of the season Spring. The answers to these questions come from different participants who speak out or respond when called upon and their words and phrases become the lines of the new poem.

Not all participants contribute coherent answers but instead offer words and phrases, or even gestures, which suggest some understanding of the questions and contexts as well as the language-limiting impairment of expressive aphasia. Facilitators' listening skills are crucial in creating the new poem. Using the exact language, intonation, and gestures of the participants instead of paraphrases helps strengthen the text and its recitation, as the session ends with a call and response group performance of the newly created poem.

Poetry cards

Poetry Cards have two-to-four lines of poetry printed on business card-sized stock along with a discussion-prompting question. Each pack of cards contains 40 poems. The Poetry Cards are designed for staff to have on hand, perhaps in their pockets, for quick access to a short poem

**My love is like a red, red rose that is newly sprung in June.
My love is like a melody that is sweetly sung in tune.**

Red Rose, by Robert Burns

Say this poem to the person and then ask them if they like roses or have a favorite color rose.

Figure 1. Poetry card Sample.

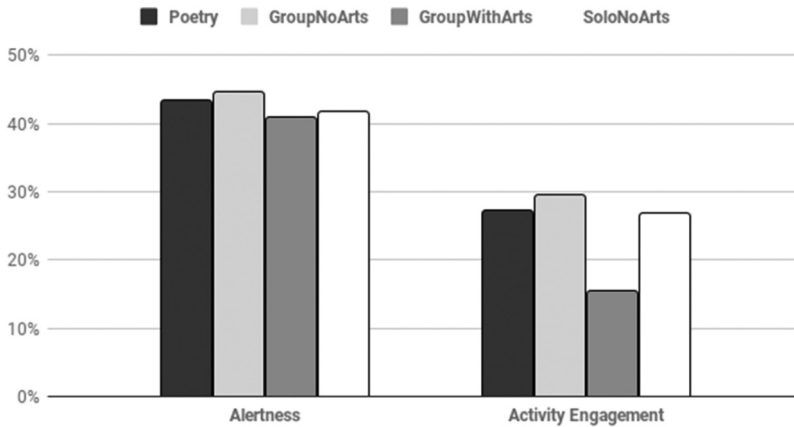


Figure 2. Graphs from observational Study.

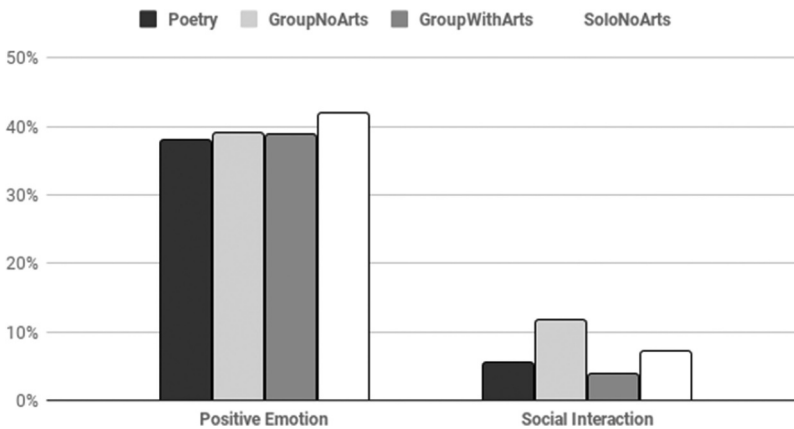


Figure 3. Graphs from observational Study.

to help with interactions with people. For example, a care worker might recite the lines “My love is like a red, red rose, that’s newly sprung in June/My love is like a melody, that’s sweetly played in tune,” as they move with a resident from the bedroom to the unit’s dining room for lunch, or during activities of daily living such as morning bathing, dressing, and grooming. The staff member might then engage the resident in talking about the fragrance of roses to move from the poem into conversations rooted in reminiscence or imagination (Figure 1).

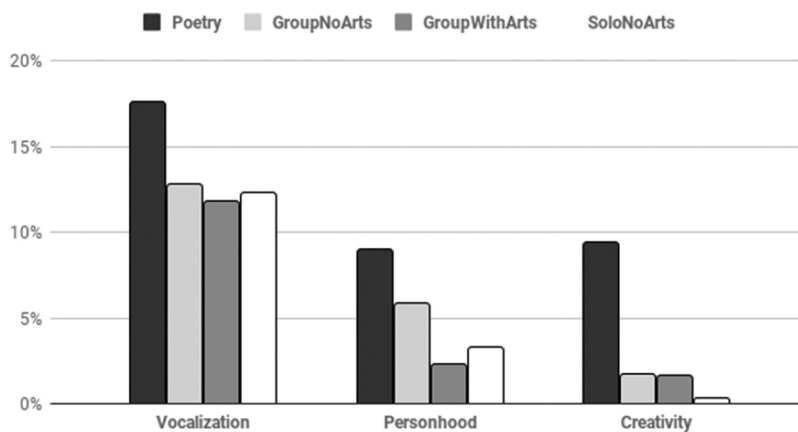


Figure 4. Graphs from observational Study.

Methods

This study seeks to answer the research question: What are the comparative impacts of creative arts therapies relative to recreational dementia care activities in terms of social engagement, alertness, vocalization, vocabulary, affect, and self-expression? To answer this question, ethnographic participant observation methods were developed and used to collect qualitative data during diverse routine activity programs in nursing homes throughout the state of Wisconsin. The focus of observation was participant experiences during diverse recreational activities and socialization interventions, including the poetry program described above as well as numerous other activities that varied in terms of mode of audience engagement and inclusion of art. Care staff at each facility delivered the programs, and this study required the training of care home staff to use the poetry program skills and the adoption of the poetry intervention into the activities schedule for comparison of the poetry intervention with standard programming.

The research component of the project was undertaken in partnership with Adelphi University, which provided Institutional Review Board review, approval, and oversight for the Poetry Intervention-Long Term Care Implementation Study. Recruitment of study sites and subjects began with a comprehensive list of nursing homes provided by the Wisconsin Department of Health. The recruitment goal was 20 participating nursing homes. Activities Directors were contacted and provided a description of the project and their responsibilities to participate including IRB protocols and staffing requirements. They would then work with the nursing home administration to get approval to commit to the program. We had a 25% success rate with outreach over the first several months of the study, achieving partnership with 17 nursing homes before terminating the study due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The nursing homes that did not commit to the study often cited low staffing issues as a primary reason for not participating. In addition to study agreements at the facility level, participating staff documented their own informed consent and the assent of participating residents.

In this study, we trained staff in each participating care home to facilitate poetry interventions and we collected study data from 34 social and recreational programs and events including poetry sessions. Each facility received 12 hours of staff training

and committed to subsequently holding at least 12 poetry sessions during the study period, with one session per week over a three-month period. The convenience sample of participants were residents of the nursing homes, all of whom self-selected to attend the poetry sessions with encouragement of the staff. Participants involved in observed activities varied from day to day, activity to activity, even within facilities. Care home administrators facilitated participants' study consent, following IRB protocols, by obtaining informed consent for participants' legal guardians as well as informed assent from participants themselves just prior to the observed events. Participant names and identities were intentionally omitted from study notes as part of the terms of agreement for research observations within care facility spaces occupied by residents, families, and staff. Research notes indicated that participants appeared to be diverse in race and ethnicity, gender, age, health status, and cognitive status.

Dementia Arts Mapping

Dementia Care Mapping™ is an established approach to achieving and embedding person-centered care for people with dementia (Kitwood & Bredin, 1992) and is recognized by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (United Kingdom) for use in dementia care. Dementia Care Mapping™ was developed at the University of Bradford by Professor Tom Kitwood over 20 years ago and is now used in more than 10 countries. In this approach, two trained staff engage in observations at the same time to study and document the experiences of people with dementia during specific care tasks such as meals and exercise. Observations are facilitated repeatedly over time, and the process includes the stages of preparation, observation, analysis, written and verbal feedback, and action planning (Alzheimer's Society, 2023). Our research builds understanding of poetry interventions' impacts on people living with dementia. In this project, we place at the core of our work the observation and studying of a wide range of arts and other activities with the goal of increasing engagement. As inspired by Kitwood's seminal work in this area, and for the purposes of this paper we coin this observational ethnographic research method as *Dementia Arts Mapping*.

Observational technique

Ethnography, a branch of [anthropology](#), involves the systematic study of individual cultures. According to Bikker et al., ethnography "is the immersion of the researcher within a social setting in order to explore the participants' behavior and interpretations of the study topic within real time" (Bikker et al., 2017, p. 1). Much dementia care research relies upon interview and survey data collected from participants and informed reporters and proxies, an appropriate and ethical practice. In this study, ethnography is considered an important complement to traditional research methods and allows for the analysis of connections between observed phenomena and the contexts of those phenomena. Such analysis requires the observer to participate in data collection during observed events and ethnography provides the tools to facilitate systematic observations. Our new ethnographic technique employs observer ratings of 25 indicators of experiences grouped into seven domains: Alertness, Emotional State, Social Interaction, Activity Engagement, Vocalization, Personhood, and Creativity. A researcher was immersed in the activity

space to systematically record data in written field notes on an ethnographic observational data chart during select activities and including reflections of the observer immediately following each activity.

This effort responds to the need to understand which elements of which activities facilitate moments of observable indicators of creativity, joy, humour, and personhood among participants. The observations of multiple activities, including those which vary in terms of the use of arts, poetry, and group-based interaction, were examined to identify impacts on people living with dementia in the domains of cognitive performance, socio-emotional wellness, and self-expression. A total of 32 interventional and recreational activities were observed, including:

- 10 Poetry Intervention sessions
- 15 group-based interactive activities without any arts (e.g. bingo)
- 4 group-based activities with non-poetry arts (e.g. singing)
- 3 activities where groups of nursing home residents were involved independently (without peer interaction) and without the use of the arts (e.g. manicure).

In each activity, a group of 4–6 residents were systematically observed every 5 minutes in order for the researcher to document their behaviors within 25 indicators of engagement across 7 domains. For example, “*originality*”, “*emotionality*”, “*using humour or play*”, and “*improvisation*” were selected as indicators of the behavioural domain “*Creativity*”. In some domains, both the presence and absence of a behaviour were listed, such as “*focusing*” and “*not focusing*” as measures of “*Alertness*”, so as to document positive and negative indicators of attention. These multiple predetermined indicators of each behavioural domain were listed vertically as the headings of rows on the research form. The columns on the form captured counts of participants exhibiting each indicator in five-minute intervals throughout the activity, as well as observer notes for each time period.

The data generated from completed observation forms allowed for the assessment of patterns of changing proportions of participant behaviors with comparison to notes on the interventional elements being delivered in each time interval. An additional page for observer notes is included on the form with prompts to capture details of the observed activity including the methods of activity introduction, engagement method, priming, creation method, validation, and activity ending, as well as other notes.

Results

Impacts of activities varied by domain and on the basis of the type of activity. For example, while comparable impacts were measured in the areas of cognitive performance and socio-emotional wellness across all activity types, poetry workshops excelled in fostering self-expression.

Observed impacts on cognitive performance

The domains of engagement which represent cognitive performance in the Dementia Art Mapping method include alertness and activity engagement. Observed impacts on

Alertness were similar for all types of events and registered between 40 to 43 percent, meaning that about 2/5^{ths} of the observed nursing home residents, on average, demonstrated indicators of alertness during these varied recreational activities (Figure 2).

There is little value in speculating on the potential causes of very small variations in *Alertness* across activity categories due to the low sensitivity of this behavioural observation method. However, there were noteworthy larger differences in the *Activity Engagement* domain with sizeable deficits among participants in non-poetry arts-based group activities despite comparable levels of engagement across the other activity categories. While about 28 percent of observed participants demonstrated Activity Engagement, on average, across other categories of activity including poetry activities, only about 15 percent of participants were seen engaging in the activities defined as non-poetry arts-based group activities.

Observed impacts on socio-emotional wellness

Positive emotions and social interactions comprise the domain of *Socio-Emotional Wellness* in the Dementia Art Mapping method. The observed impacts on positive emotions were similar across activity types and registered just above or just below 40 percent, meaning that about 2/5^{ths} of the observed nursing home residents, on average, demonstrated indicators of positive emotions, such as laughing, during these varied recreational activities. Yet, slightly higher levels of positive emotions were observed during the few activities in which residents were engaged on a more individualized level.

In terms of social interactions, the overall level of engagement was low, with only about 5–12 percent of participants demonstrating social engagement. However, the non-arts-focused group activities had the highest levels of social interaction and this likely has to do with the discussion-oriented activities which are captured in this categorization scheme (Figure 3).

Observed impacts on self-expression

The domains of engagement which represent *Self-Expression* in the Dementia Art Mapping method include vocalization, personhood, and creativity. In the area of self-expression, while the other activity types allowed for about 12 percent of participants to vocalize, the poetry activities resulted in about 18 percent of participants vocalizing during each observation period. This noticeably higher level of vocalization is likely associated with the call and response techniques and frequent solicitation of content from the group in poetry intervention sessions.

Indicators of personhood were low overall, as is commonly reported in dementia care settings. Yet, the poetry intervention sessions yielded noticeably higher levels of impact, on average, with about 9 percent of observed participants demonstrating personhood indicators as compared to about 5 percent of participants in other types of activities.

The most profound differences in engagement across all domains were found in the area of creativity. Again, the overall level of engagement in this area was low, but the

poetry intervention sessions inspired creativity in about 9 percent of residents while only 3 percent of participants or less showed indicators of creativity during other types of activities (Figure 4).

Discussion

The poetry intervention sessions were found to be an acceptable and feasible intervention in dementia care settings. Staff were trained to use poetry intervention facilitation methods and the facilities allowed for the integration of these sessions into different units of care. Thus, poetry intervention methods and techniques can be successfully learned and adopted by long-term care staff members with varied levels of experience in the use of arts and poetry. Furthermore, the novel data collection tool created for this study, Dementia Arts Mapping, is an effective instrument for generating insights about the observable impacts of dementia care interventions as experienced by participants in long-term care settings.

The poetry intervention sessions seem to stand out from other activities in fostering self-expression. While somewhat comparable findings are noted in the areas of cognitive performance and socio-emotional wellness no matter the type of activity being facilitated, the poetry sessions surpass other programs in fostering self-expression. It may be that the design of poetry intervention techniques is uniquely well-suited to eliciting moments of creativity and personhood among participants in this context.

Lessons learned on practical implementation of poetry and other arts interventions

The analysis of research notes on activities observed in this study revealed that those activities found to elicit the greatest degree of engagement among participants and the most positive impacts shared several common features. These findings may guide future interventions and studies. They are presented here as recommendations for the implementation of evidence-informed practices in dementia care.

Activities which begin with an orienting introduction signal a moment of transition from everyday care routines to the start of something distinct and special. The use of multi-sensory or blended arts with co-creativity stimulates engagement. For example, in one event the facilitator used a combination of open-ended questions, call and response, and dancing. This approach stirred the overall contributions and socialization of the group and subsequently inspired one of the participants to coin a new word, "hap-fully." A related recommendation is for the innovative introduction and handling of objects and props. In one activity where water was a prevalent theme, the facilitator used a spray bottle and umbrella and passed out cups of water. In another, the group had a "snowball fight," with colourful cloth balls. Both are strong examples of multi-sensory experiences.

Another impactful element is the frequent use of authentic and enthusiastic praise for participants' contributions. In one event, the facilitator shouted "Bravo! Bravo!" at the end of a recitation. This brings attention to the micro-moment of public praise. Encouraging

the validations exchanged between participants can be achieved by modelling the giving of compliments and praise and by creating space for people to validate each other when asking them to comment on what has taken place. Together, these approaches deliver powerful forms of validation into the lives of people who may seldomly receive affirmations and signals of their personhood (Kaplan et al., 2023).

Limitations, challenges, and recommendations

The work represented in this article marries a large-scale intervention program and a research study. A challenging aspect of this work is building toward rigorous scientific inquiry such as the gold standard double-blind trial with random assignment to study conditions while responding to the unique service delivery needs of both healthcare workers and artist-facilitators. Such work is often under-resourced in terms of funding to support proper staffing levels as well as under-structured in terms of assuring an acceptable level of fidelity to intervention conditions. These are the realities of many studies of arts-based programs that hold potential for more demonstrating desired impacts through valid implementation science methods.

The subjective views and impactful presence of the observer

In this study, a researcher was immersed in the activity space to systematically record data. As with all ethnographic research, the observer acts upon the context through their very presence in the space of observation, and their presence may have greater influence on the people in the space when the observer is known to those being observed. Such influence raises concerns for both the potential bias of the researchers and their potential influences on the participants' behaviours. Dementia Arts Mapping and similar observational methods could be enhanced by recording the sessions on video, which would allow for multiple viewings among multiple trained observers to achieve inter-rater reliability and to further refine the descriptions of target indicators.

Measurement methods

The analyses of data from this study also revealed several methodological and measurement challenges with implications for future research. The quantification of observational data into proportions of participants observed exhibiting each behavioural indicator assumes that the selected participants are representative of the larger group of residents in each activity and the larger population of study. Yet, broad generalization of findings to other people is not the goal of these methods and findings should not be presented using language that declares or implies generalization. This approach also fails to capture any variations in the magnitude or persistence of behaviours within any one subject across observation periods, as the data collection process is based on counting people exhibiting each behavior during each time period. These shortcomings prevent the assessment of the extent of intervention effects on people over time. Future studies should utilize degree ratings and durations of behavioural indicators that have been pilot tested for measurability, including any new indicators added to or replacing some of the indicators on the Dementia Arts Mapping form in our own research.

The tools and methods being developed for this ongoing trajectory of research studies may become beneficial to the staff of long-term care facilities as well as scholars and facilitators. With proper guidance and training, we envision care staff learning to use Dementia Arts Mapping to help strengthen their facilitation capacities and program designs to achieve continuous improvement in their efforts to raise the quality of life for people with dementia.

Infusion of poetry intervention methods into non-poetry programming

While the main goal of this study was to assess activity impacts among long-term care residents with dementia, we also sought to strengthen our training approach for preparing staff members to utilize the poetry intervention techniques in the hope of building interventional capacity and opportunity within participating facilities. The staff were trained to include the poetry intervention techniques in a wide range of activities. During bingo and Wii Bowling, staff created sports nicknames for the participants and encouraged the participants to use call and response, with cheers for the teams. For manicures and hand massages, they used the Poetry Cards to engage the person in saying lines of poetry and having discussions around the poems to enhance the natural flow of conversation. During chair exercises, they used call and response to have the participants say lines of poetry or sing songs in rhythm to the exercises. When reading aloud selected excerpts from the newspaper, a “current events” activity, staff used the vocal skills learned in performing poetry to bring interest to the reading. With Music and Mapping™, a program where participants listen to music through headphones, typically using an iPod, we have had success in asking open-ended questions during the making of the person’s playlist to create poems and/or stories based on the person’s favourite songs. With Mapping™, a project that creates stories by asking open-ended questions inspired by photographs, we have had success in using call and response to perform the story the group has created. This may include alternating between the practice of reading the completed story and using call and response to highlight and perform parts of the story.

The influence of training on engagement techniques likely changed the ways in which standard non-poetry programs were facilitated and we acknowledge that this influence impacts the research results in unknown ways. Yet, our time in each facility was limited and the training element was an important component of the work that likely increased the appeal of participation among facility leadership and staff. This element also comports with our commitment to teaching and learning, as well as service delivery, during the research project.

Conclusions

Dementia Arts Mapping a novel data collection and ethnographic research method designed to build understanding of alertness, emotional state, social interaction, activity engagement, vocalization, personhood and creativity as potentially influenced by participation in arts and other complementary interventional programs for long-term care residents living with dementia. As we witness the growth and development of a worldwide movement to use arts in meeting the needs of people living with dementia, we recommend the use of the Dementia Arts Mapping as a framework for further research

to help strengthen programs and improve the quality of care as well as the quality of life of people living with dementia, a primary goal for artist-facilitators and healthcare professionals alike.

Poetry Program intervention techniques were incorporated into a wide-range of recreational and care-related activities to promote creative self-expression and positive engagement between and among people with dementia and interventionists. Poetry Program methods and techniques seem to reinforce and enhance skills and confidence in leading recreational activities with people with dementia, soliciting artistic contributions from groups and individuals, and validating personhood in the context of long-term care. For practitioners seeking to incorporate poetry into care home activities, this study suggests that performing poetry with the use of call and response provides a dynamic form of engagement. In addition, the group co-creation of poetry using open-ended questions fosters self-expression and validates the personhood of participants. As noted above, these techniques are also valuable for enhancing a wide range of non-arts activities often offered in care homes as well as activities which include the arts.

In the hundreds of hours of observation represented in this study, we have been honoured to guide and train care home staff to inhabit the moments of poetry performance and creation and strive to help them imbue those moments with meaning and joy to best give the person navigating dementia a space and platform to express their creativity and humanity.

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank the residents and staff of these Wisconsin nursing homes: Bridges of Appleton, Appleton; Bria of Trinity Village, Milwaukee; Congregational Home, Brookfield; Crossroads, Waupaca; Hales Corner Care Center, Hales Corners; Luther Manor, Milwaukee; River Pines Altoona; Saint John's On The Lake, Milwaukee; St. Paul Elder Services, Kaukauna; Southpointe Healthcare Center, Greenfield; Terrace at St. Francis, Milwaukee; St. Mary's Care Center, Madison; St. Clare Meadows Care Center, Baraboo; Jewish Home, Milwaukee; The Villa at Bradley Estates, Milwaukee Villa Loretto, Mt Calvary; and Willow Crest Health Services, Milwaukee. We would also like to thank Bader Philanthropies and the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services Division of Quality Assurance. Finally, the authors would like to thank their families.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services on behalf of the Division of Quality Assurance, under Grant F-01593 (08/2015) and Bader Philanthropies, under grant #15686.

ORCID

Daniel B. Kaplan  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9027-1944>

Gary Glazner  <http://orcid.org/0009-0006-1295-7741>

References

- Alzheimer's Society. (2023, October 27). *Dementia Care Mapping*. <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementia-professionals/dementia-experience-toolkit/research-methods/dementia-care-mapping>.
- Arts 4 Dementia. (2023, October 11). Home: *Arts 4 dementia*. Arts 4 Dementia | Empowerment Through Artistic Stimulation. <https://arts4dementia.org.uk/>
- Bakerjian, D., Bettega, K., Cachu, A. M., Azzis, L., & Taylor, S. (2020). The impact of music and memory on resident level outcomes in California nursing homes. *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*, 21(8), 1045–1050.e2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jamda.2020.01.103>
- Bikker, A. P., Atherton, H., Brant, H., Porqueddu, T., Campbell, J. L., Gibson, A., McKinstry, B., Salisbury, C., & Ziebland, S. (2017). Conducting a team-based multi-sited focused ethnography in primary care. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 17(1), 139–139. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-017-0422-5>
- Cohen, G. D. (2006). Research on creativity and aging: The positive impact of the arts on Health and illness. *Generations: Journal of the American Society on Aging*, 30(1), 7–15. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26555432>
- Coulter, A., & Oldham, J. (2016). Person-centred care: What is it and how do we get there? *Future Hospital Journal*, 3(2), 114–116. <https://doi.org/10.7861/futurehosp.3-2-114>
- Floyd, S. A., Jr. (1996). *The power of black music: Interpreting its history from Africa to the United States*. Oxford University Press.
- Friedman, J. K. (n.d.) Songwriting Works. <https://dementiaspring.org/judith-kate-friedman/>
- Genné, M. D., & Anderson, C. (2011). Coming alive: Kairos dance theatre's dancing heart™ – vital elders moving in community. In P. Hartman-Stein & A. LaRue (Eds.), *Enhancing cognitive fitness in adults*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-0636-6_18
- Gioia, D. (1991, May). Can Poetry Matter? <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1991/05/can-poetry-matter/305062/>
- Kaplan, D. B., Glazner, G., & Drake, C. (2023). Validation of personhood in participatory arts-based interventions for people with dementia. *Advances in Social Science and Culture*, 5(2), p1. <https://doi.org/10.22158/assc.v5n2p1>
- Kitwood, T., & Bredin, K. (1992). Towards a theory of dementia care: Personhood and well-being. *Ageing & Society*, 12(3), 269–287. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X0000502X>
- Lazarus, E. (1889). *Poems of Emma Lazarus. Vol. I, narrative, lyric, and dramatic*. Emma Lazarus. Houghton Mifflin and Company.
- Levenberg, K., George, D. R., & Lokon, E. (2021). Opening minds through art: A preliminary study evaluating the effects of a creative-expression program on persons living with dementia and their primary care partners. *Dementia (London, England)*, 20(7), 2412–2423. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1471301221997290>
- Oller, J. W., & Richard-Amato, P. A. (1983). *Methods that work: A smorgasbord of ideas for language teachers*. Newbury House Publishers.
- Reguillo, R. (2012). Human mic: Technologies for democracy. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 45(3), 33–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2012.11722059>
- Rosenberg, F. (2009). The MoMA Alzheimer's project: Programming and resources for making art accessible to people with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. *Arts & Health*, 1(1), 93–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533010802528108>
- Salley, T. G., "Sound-off! An Introduction to the Study of American Military Marching Cadences" (2015). Masters Theses, 243.
- Schwartz, H. E. (2012). *Cheerleading*. Greenhaven Publishing LLC.
- Smitherman, G. (1977). *Talkin and testifyin: The language of black America*. Wayne State University Press.
- Vigliotti, A. A., Chinchilli, V. M., & George, D. R. (2019). Evaluating the benefits of the TimeSlips creative storytelling program for persons with varying degrees of dementia severity. *American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease & Other Dementias*, 34(3), 163–170. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1533317518802427>