Participant Information Sheet

Study title

Art therapy to address hospital clinician burnout and psychosocial distress: a randomised controlled trial (CHArt)

Version number and date

Version 1: 07.11.2022.

Researcher's name

Megan Tjasink (Chief Investigator), Supervised by Prof Stefan Priebe and Dr Catherine Carr

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to participate in an art therapy research study. Before you decide whether you wish to participate, it is important to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us questions if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?

Burnout and psychosocial distress resulting from chronic work-related stress are serious and growing issues for NHS clinicians. The increasing need for specialist psychosocial support, and the growing understanding that "one size does not fit all", means we need to explore a range of effective interventions which offer choice to clinicians.

Art therapy, a psychological therapy which uses art as a key element of treatment, has been found to reduce symptoms of burnout, stress, and anxiety in healthcare workers and to increase quality of life. Art therapy – based approaches have been found to be acceptable and helpful to a range of clinicians globally. Whilst research

is growing, the use of art therapy with clinicians is at an early stage and more robust research is required to establish an evidence base.
The CHArt study is investigating the use of art therapy with NHS hospital clinicians. The aim is to see if a group art therapy intervention, developed at Barts, is helpful for clinicians who may be at risk of burnout. CHArt will be the first Randomised Control Trial (RCT) using art therapy with clinicians in the U.K.
The intervention has already been piloted with St Bartholomew's Hospital (SBH) oncology and palliative care doctors, and the research has grown out of the researcher's experience working with clinicians and their patients for 17 years in the role of Lead Art Psychotherapist in Cancer and Palliative Psychological Services at Barts Health NHS Trust.

What would taking part involve?

We would like interested clinicians to participate in a series of art therapy workshops over a 6-week period. The 90-minute workshops will take place within a suitable, private space within or adjacent to your place of work (at Barts Health NHS hospital). There will be daytime and evening options to accommodate different shift patterns, clinical and personal commitments. (Senior management are supportive of the project and the research team are happy to meet with your line manager to discuss potential solutions if it is difficult for you to attend due to work commitments.)

In addition to attending the art therapy workshops, we will ask participants to complete questionnaires taking 15 – 30 minutes to complete on four occasions. These are: Three short self-reported questionnaires about psychosocial factors such as burnout, stress, and anxiety before and after the art therapy workshop series and at follow up,12 weeks after the end of the last workshop. One feedback questionnaire after the end of the last workshop. Questionnaires can be completed online, in person or over the phone as per individual preference.
If you are randomised to the waitlist control, you will have a 6 week wait before the start of your series of art therapy workshops. If you are randomised to the waitlist control, you will also be asked to complete the questionnaires after a 6 – 8 week waiting period, before the start of your series of art therapy workshops.

All art materials will be supplied, along with refreshments at each session. You will receive a portfolio folder which you can keep, along with your artwork at the end of the intervention.

How can I take part?

To be considered for participation you will need to be a patient-facing clinician, employed by Barts Health NHS Trust or Barts Bank Partners.
Send your expression of interest to m.tjasink@qmul.ac.uk and we will reply with a screening email.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is voluntary, and this information sheet has been written to help you decide if you would like to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be free to withdraw at any time without needing to provide a reason, and with no penalties or detrimental effects.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Based on existing research, benefits of art therapy-based group interventions for healthcare professionals could include, amongst others, a reduction in symptoms of burnout, improved capacity to manage work stress or to lower stress indicators, mitigation of the effects of vicarious trauma, decreased anxiety, increased positive affect, decreased negative affect, and improved quality of life.
This research could also indirectly benefit patients through improving symptoms of anxiety and burnout in clinicians (both known to increase staff sickness rates and to impact negatively on patient care). Previous studies have also shown art therapy to impact positively on staff turnover, which can significantly impact team morale and patient experience. Most St Bartholomew's Hospital doctors participating in the pilot study which preceded this research project, reported improved relationships with patients and colleagues following art therapy.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Within the literature no risks have been described in the use of art therapy to address work related stress or burnout with healthcare professionals.

However, it should be noted participants may be reflecting upon potentially upsetting material linked to work related stressors such as distressing patient cases. There is also a possibility of personal material emerging due to the group process and thus a risk of exposure to colleagues.

Risk to participants is mitigated by the following factors:

1. Group facilitators are experienced, qualified HCPC registered art therapists. The team of art therapists running groups have experience working in medical settings and with issues such as trauma, bereavement, and loss.
2. The groups have pre-defined themes and structure, focused on work related stress, not personal issues.
3. Group facilitators receive training in the intervention, are NHS employees and have received statutory NHS risk management and health and safety training.
4. Facilitators will receive clinical supervision with a highly specialised and experienced HCPC registered Art Therapist.
5. The recruitment and randomisation process will allow for a broad range of professionals across departments to participate, minimising the chance of close colleagues from the same team being in a group together.
6. There is a precedent at Barts Health NHS Trust for the provision of psychological support for hospital colleagues by internal art therapists and psychologists. This remains current practice and has been found acceptable by hospital staff. The CI has extensive experience of providing support for colleagues through her role in Cancer Psychological Services at Barts Health NHS Trust Hospitals.
7. Participants are self-selecting and can opt out at any point.

How will we use information about you?

We will need to use information from you for this research project. This information will include your name, demographic information, contact details and your questionnaire responses. People will use this information to do the research or to make sure that the research is being done properly. People who do not need to

know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number instead.
We will keep all information about you safe and secure.
Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study. Photographs of your artwork may be included in reports or publications. This would be done in a way that no-one can work out who made it.

The only case in which your information would be shared outside of the research committee would be in the case of a serious adverse event in which case the therapist would contact the CI/PI and local NHS protocol will be followed as appropriate to the event.

What are your choices about how your information is used?
You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have.

We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won't be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?
You can find out more about how we use your information

- at www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/
- by asking one of the research team
- by sending an email to the CI m.tjasink@qmul.ac.uk
- by ringing the data protection officer for Barts Health NHS Trust on 020 7480 4892
- by visiting DPO.bartshealth@nhs.net

When and how will my data be destroyed?
Data will be retained and archived in accordance with the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research which requires that research records are kept for 25 years after the study has completed. Records will be archived in the approved

repository for long-term, the Trust Corporate Records Centre. All research documentation will be archived in the approved repository, the Trust Corporate Records Centre, and will be destroyed after 25 years in line with policy.

What should I do if I have any concerns about this study?

If you have any concerns about the way the study was conducted, in the first instance, please contact the researchers responsible for the study: Megan Tjasink (CI) or Prof Stefan Priebe (Supervisor). Should you wish to discuss your concerns with a clinician / researcher independent to the study, please contact consultant psychiatrist, Prof Dennis Ougrin.

Who can I contact if I have any questions about this study?

Megan Tjasink
m.tjasink@qmul.ac.uk

Professor Stefan Priebe
s.priebe@qmul.ac.uk
0207 540 4210

Professor Dennis Ougrin
d.ougrin@qmul.ac.uk
0207 540 4210