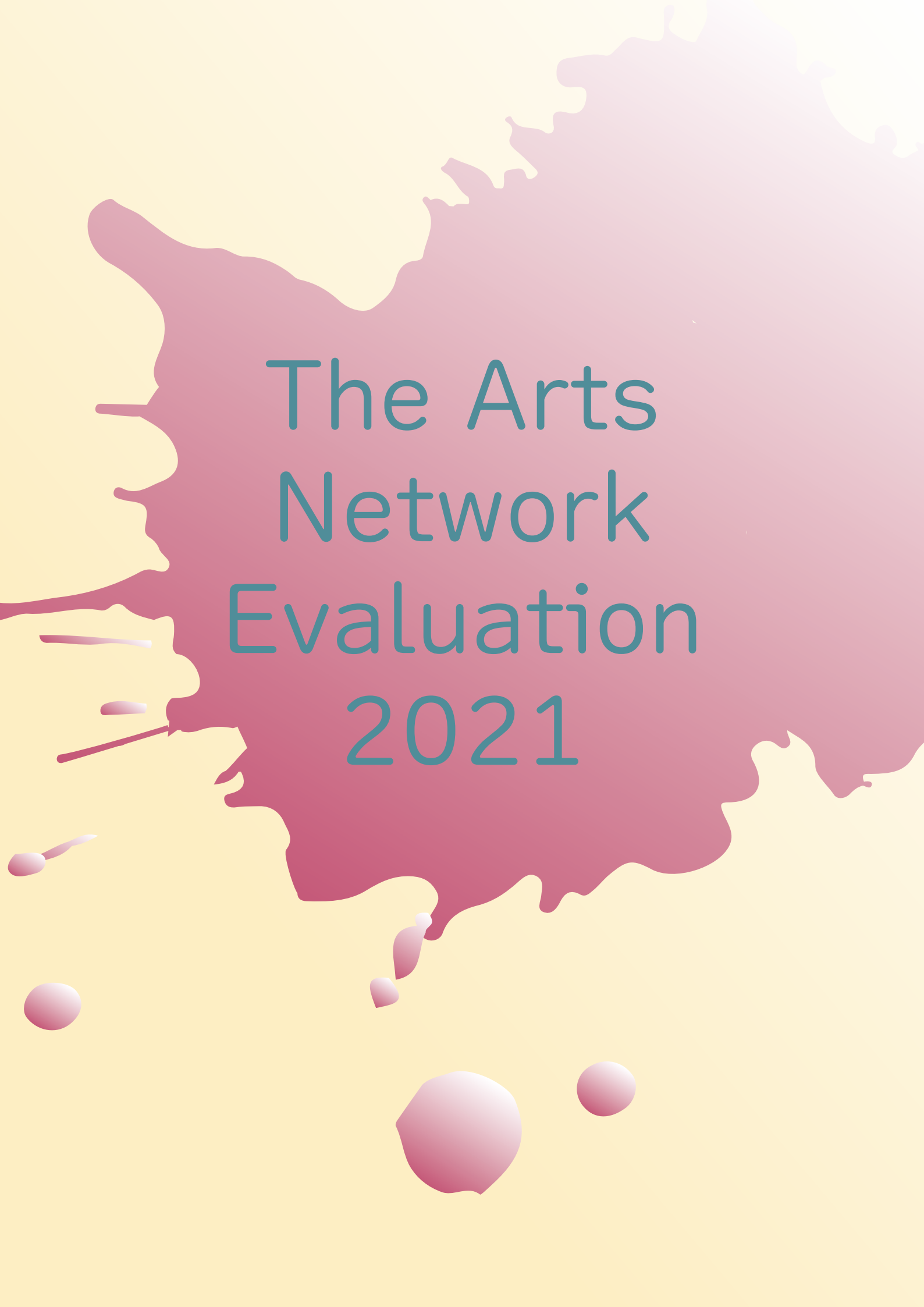




Converge Evaluation and Research Team
insight through experience

The background of the cover is a vibrant, abstract composition of various colors including purple, blue, green, yellow, and orange, with splatter and brushstroke effects. A large, white, semi-transparent circle is centered on the page, containing the title text.

The Arts Network Evaluation 2021



The Arts Network Evaluation 2021

1. Executive Summary

1.1 ABOUT THE REPORT

The **Converge Evaluation and Research Team (CERT)** was commissioned by the Igen Trust to evaluate Arts Network, an arts and mental health charity in South London providing arts opportunities to people in south east London with severe and enduring mental health ill health.

The Converge Research and Evaluation Team is a group of people with lived experience of mental health challenges who have received training in research methods at York St. John University.

The aim of the evaluation was to gather the **views and perceptions** of the participants of the Arts Network.

1.2 METHODS

Due to the lockdown we were unable to visit the Arts Network workshop to interview members about their experiences. Instead, we expanded the questionnaire we have used previously, asking Arts Network participants about the developments which took place due to the Corona Virus lockdown, and made the questionnaire available to members both online and on paper.

1.3 ARTS NETWORK'S RESPONSE TO THE CORONA VIRUS LOCKDOWN

Arts Network **reacted quickly** to the circumstances which occurred just before the lockdown was formally announced. All members were contacted to identify those who were clinically vulnerable and those who did not have Internet access. Members were asked both whether they wanted to keep in touch and about their ability to use social media.

A **'Stay Connected' strategy emerged**, involving the development of a **magazine** sent to members in the post, coupled with an increase in Arts Network's **online and social media presence**.

1.3.1 Stay Connected magazine

The magazine features a **gallery of work** sent in by members; **interviews** with staff and other members; and articles about **art history, mindfulness activities, puzzles, and recipes**. As lockdown progressed, Arts Network **increased the circulation** of the magazine from the small group of the most vulnerable to all members, and various local organisations and mental health providers. Along with the magazine, members were also **posted the materials** they need to complete activities featured in that edition.

1.3.2 Online and social media presence

The *Stay Connected* strategy makes **extensive use of social media**. They post workshop activities for people to follow on [YouTube](#); and use **Zoom** to run between **3 and 4 workshops** a week for members to attend. They also offer **virtual visits** to places such as the Horniman Museum and the Queen's Gallery. Members' work is shared on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Arts Network also ran a **weekly walking group**, visiting local parks and local places of interest, available live on Zoom to members who were isolating.

1.3.3 End of year box

Arts Network received some funding from the National Lottery's 25-year Celebration Fund and used this to send **activity boxes** and an **extra-large edition** of *Stay Connected* magazine to 150 members.

1.4 FINDINGS

In total, 24 members completed the online version of our questionnaire, and 8 completed the paper version. We asked about members' experience in art; their confidence in their artistic ability; and whether they practise art independently at home in both 2019 and 2021. The findings are broadly similar in both years, with members reporting **feeling more experienced in art** and **more confident in their own abilities** since joining Arts Network. It is very apparent that members sense that Arts Network has helped them **feel connected to their community** during this difficult time. While 94% of respondents were **looking forward to returning** to face-to-face sessions, 29% **reported concerns** about returning to the workshop, and a further 29% were unsure. One member expressed this concern:

"I feel anxious about staying safe as I have no control over other people's behaviour and their safety - worried about Covid."

1.5 SOCIAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS

Across all of the areas we explored, the survey responses showed that **social connections between members are highly valued** by members across all four years in which we have evaluated Arts Network.

- **Mutual experience** of mental health difficulties: This **remains important** across 2019-2021, although it fell slightly from 95% in 2019 to 78% in 2021
- Members **offering advice and support** to each other **remains important** but has fallen from 95% in 2019 to 76% in 2021, perhaps as a result of the pandemic.
- The importance of **meeting other members outside** of the Arts Network workshop, for example, for a coffee, **remains important**. This is perhaps due to the pandemic making members want social interactions more, the numbers stating it is important have increased over the three years, from 43% in 2019 to 64% in 2021.

- Similarly, the importance of **communicating with other members outside** of Arts Network (e.g., calling/texting/social media) **has increased**, in 2019, 43% reported that this was important, growing to 56% in 2021, while the numbers saying it was not important fell from 19% in 2019 to 11% in 2021.
- The importance members placed on **looking out for each other** has **fluctuated** over the three years but **remains valued**, with 90% saying it was important in 2019, 74% in 2020, rising back to 81% in 2021. The proportion saying that it is not important has risen year on year from 0% in 2019, to 3% in 2020, and 12% in 2021.

We asked whether members had had any **direct contact with other members during lockdown**. Sixty-four percent of members reported either **'no contact' or 'rare contact'** with each other during lockdown, while 32% reported 'a bit of contact'. We also asked whether members would like more contact with each other now, or after the lockdown ends. Most members felt that they had enough contact during lockdown (51%), however, most respondents want either a bit more contact (38%) or a lot more contact (41%) with other members once lockdown ends, suggesting **a big appetite to return to the workshop**. This reflects the responses to the social relationships mentioned previously. One member expressed that they were looking forward to:

"Hugging my friends, being in the room together. Doing art and workshop activities together, going on trips, have tea and chat again. Seeing the staff again."

1.6 ONLINE CONTENT

Only six respondents reported being unable to access online content. It is interesting that the **biggest problem with online content reported by members was that using technology causes them anxiety**. Some members indicated that they would have **liked more help** accessing Arts Network's online content. Lack of access to the Internet and affording data were also problems faced by some members.

1.6.1 Arts Network's social media reach

Due to their efforts to reach members online due to the pandemic, **they worked extremely hard to increase their social media reach**. As of 31 July 2021, Arts Network has:

- 467 [Facebook](#) followers (+54 since 2020)
- 544 [Twitter](#) followers (+90 since 2020)
- 820 [Instagram](#) followers (+364 since 2020)

1.6.2 Arts Network Challenge videos

The questionnaire data indicates that most respondents do not watch the videos regularly. However, it also shows that respondents **find the videos easy to watch, interesting, and that the activities are easy to follow**. In terms of being able to do the activities, most respondents indicate this is the case some of the time although they did not elaborate about the reasons for this.

1.7 STAY CONNECTED MAGAZINE

Stay Connected magazine appears to be **extremely popular with members**. Sixty-eight percent indicated that they read every edition. Just under half of respondents (40%) read it cover to cover, while 53% say they 'dip in and out'. Most members report that it is easy to read and interesting. In terms of the actual activities included, the vast majority say they are **easy to follow**, but most report that they can do the activities 'most of the time'. In terms of enjoyment of different magazine content, **the members' gallery seems to be highly popular**, along with **feature articles about people linked to Arts Network**. Painting and drawing techniques, alongside art history were also popular (see section 5.6.1). Other content varied in terms of respondents' enthusiasm, but there were none which seemed to be broadly unpopular. It is possible that the variation in content between editions is a reason for the magazine's popularity.

1.8 NEW MEMBERS DURING LOCKDOWN

The **inability to conduct face-to-face inductions** of new referrals made the process of introducing new members into Arts Network **difficult**. New referrals were sent *Stay Connected* magazine and Zoom was successfully used for four inductions, supported by carers or care-coordinators. Without an induction, new members were not able to join online workshops. Of 17 referrals over this year, ten are now receiving the service by post and on social media.

1.9 MENTAL HEALTH

Seventy-four percent of members reported that the Corona Virus lockdown had made their mental health a bit worse or much worse. However, **89% of respondents believe that Arts Network has had a beneficial impact on their mental wellbeing** during this difficult time: 50% said it helped a bit with their mental health, and 39% said it helped a lot.

1.9.1 Self-reported mental health service use

We asked Arts Network members about whether, in their opinion, their usage of different types of mental health service has changed due to attending Arts Network. In general, the data may indicate that **Arts Network has a protective effect**, reducing members' use of various sources of mental health support, in particular their use of unplanned emergency mental healthcare, such as A&E, crisis team/home treatment, and inpatient mental healthcare. However, when reflecting on these figures it is important to bear in mind that many other factors may be influencing this data, including, for

example, whether or not members get support from mental health services at all, and decisions by mental health service providers about provision which may be completely unrelated to a person's actual mental health needs. This year, unlike previous years, many members indicated that their need for mental health care had grown this year. This is reflective of a general deterioration in mental health experienced by many people due to the Corona Virus lockdown.

CPN/Care Coordinator/Lead professional: 23% reported not having a CPN. For those who have one, 31% indicated no change in their use, while 19% reported needing their CPN less and 27% reported needing them more or much more.

Support worker: 54% of respondents do not have a support worker. For those who have one, 15% reported no change, 15% reported needing them less and 23% reported needing them more or much more.

Psychologist/therapist: 38% of respondents indicated that they did not have a psychologist or therapist. For those who have one, 35% indicated no change in their needs, 15% indicated needing them less and 15% needing them more or much more.

Psychiatrist: 31% indicated that they did not have a psychiatrist. For those who have one, 19% reported no change; 27% indicated needing them less and 19% needed them more.

Attending GP for mental health reasons: 42% indicated no change in their GP attendance due to their mental health, 46% reported needing them less, and 15% needing them more.

Attending A&E for mental health reasons: 54% indicated no change in attending A&E for their mental health, 46% reported needing this less or much less, however 8% reported needing it much more.

Use of crisis team/home treatment services: 54% indicated no change, 38% indicated needing them less or much less, and 12% more or much more.

Use of inpatient mental healthcare: 42% indicated no change, 62% reported needing this less or much less, and just 8% reported needing this much more.

The impact of the Corona Virus lockdown on mental health services and GP care nationally has been considerable. Many people have experienced a deterioration in their mental health during this time, making already stretched services even more thin. Despite this, the data may suggest that **attending Arts Network is a contributing factor in reducing members' self-reported use of the whole spectrum of mental health services.**

1.10 PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPED 2020-21

- 'Make Mee' Community Patch Work – Patch Together
- South London and the Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
- Lewisham Community Link Forum - FCLF
- Micro-network of arts and mental health organisations

1.11 STAFFING 2019-2020

Staff roles and changes over the past year are detailed in the main body of the report.

1.12 THE BOARD

William Nicolson – Chairperson and Finance

Jake Strickland – IT and Media

Kate Emblen – Member Rep and Health and Safety

Gillian Phillips – Legal and HR

Claire Morris – Company Secretary

1.13 FUNDING

Funding secured in 2020-2021 is detailed in the main body of the report.

1.14 FUTURE PLANS AND AMBITIONS

Arts Network's **funding situation is now more secure**, which means they are able to plan for the future in a way which they have previously not been able to do. In addition, they have been offered a **new purpose-built site** where they would pay no rent for 10 years. The site is part of a hotel complex in Southwark.

Arts Network continues to work on:

- Delivering new programmes of work in Lambeth and Southwark
- Planning for move to a new main base in Southwark in 2023 / 2024
- Have popups in Lewisham and Lambeth
- Extending workshop delivery at main base
- Taking part in Lewisham's London Borough of Culture programme 2022
- Continuing delivery of Stay Connected Programme
- Continued development of partnerships opportunities

In terms of what Arts Network will offer to its members, the **Stay Connected strategy will continue**. When lockdown ends and the studio re-opens, a blended delivery will take place, with members able to access workshops both at the studio and online.

1.15 HOW ARTS NETWORK ADDRESSED OUR 2020 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Many of the suggestions we made in 2020 were **not achievable due to the Corona Virus lockdown**. Our suggestion of ways they might expand the number of people who could benefit from what they offer was achieved via *Stay Connected* magazine and their social media presence. **New staff have been employed, and considerable connections have been made with other similar organisations and relevant community groups.**

1.16 CERT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- Find ways of **supporting members** who are struggling to **get back to the workshop** – perhaps mentors who could offer individual support to those who need it.
- **Consolidate the successes** they have had over 2021 and not stretch themselves too thinly by over-expanding and dilute what they do in the workshop.
- Seek to carry out a **Social Return on Investment calculation** to explore how much money they potentially save other services. Look into why the videos are less popular, and if there is anything which could be done to make them more popular. Social media could also be considered as a tool for advertising Arts Network, to increase awareness of what they offer and to raise money.

1.17 CONCLUSIONS

Arts Network has **worked extremely hard** to support their members throughout a very challenging and uncertain time. Through *Stay Connected* magazine and their online social media activities, they were able to **maintain a sense of community among their members** during the enforced lockdown: social relationships remain important to members. Care will need to be taken supporting members to get back to the workshop after extended isolation.

In terms of mental health service use, despite 74% of members reporting worse mental health, **Arts Network perhaps has a protective effect**, reducing members' self-reported mental health service use, most obviously in their need for unplanned emergency mental healthcare, such as A&E, crisis team/home treatment, and inpatient mental healthcare.

Arts Network is now more **financially secure**, allowing it to **plan for the future in different ways**. Its growing list of partnerships will allow it to share expertise, and perhaps offer roles for members in **voluntary and paid opportunities**. The new workshop which they will move to in 2023 is an extremely exciting development. However, alongside all of these many opportunities, Arts Network should be aware of the possible risks posed by over-expansion in terms of focusing too much on future developments and possibly neglecting the day-to-day offerings.

Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
1.1 ABOUT THE REPORT	3
1.2 METHODS	3
1.3 ARTS NETWORK'S RESPONSE TO THE CORONA VIRUS LOCKDOWN	3
1.3.1 <u>Stay Connected magazine</u>	3
1.3.2 Online and social media presence.....	4
1.3.3 End of year box	4
1.4 FINDINGS	4
1.5 SOCIAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS	4
1.6 ONLINE CONTENT	5
1.6.1 Arts Network's social media reach	5
1.6.2 Arts Network Challenge videos	6
1.7 STAY CONNECTED MAGAZINE	6
1.8 NEW MEMBERS DURING LOCKDOWN	6
1.9 MENTAL HEALTH	6
1.9.1 Self-reported mental health service use.....	6
1.10 PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPED 2020-21	8
1.11 STAFFING 2019-2020	8
1.12 THE BOARD	8
1.13 FUNDING	8

1.14 FUTURE PLANS AND AMBITIONS.....	8
1.15 HOW ARTS NETWORK ADDRESSED OUR 2020 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS	9
1.16 CERT’S RECOMMENDATIONS	9
1.17 CONCLUSIONS	9
2. Introduction	15
2.1 ABOUT THE CONVERGE EVALUATION AND RESEARCH TEAM	15
2.2 ABOUT THE ARTS NETWORK	15
2.3 ABOUT THIS EVALUATION	15
3. Methods.....	16
4. Arts Network’s Response to the Corona Virus Lockdown	17
4.1 THE EARLY DAYS OF LOCKDOWN	17
4.2 STAY CONNECTED	17
4.3 END OF YEAR BOX.....	18
5. Findings	19
5.1 EXPERIENCE, CONFIDENCE AND PRACTISE OF ART	19
5.2 THE ARTS NETWORK AS A COMMUNITY.....	19
5.3 RETURN TO FACE-TO-FACE WORKSHOPS	20
5.3.1 Concerns about coming back to the workshop include:.....	21
5.3.2 What members are looking forwards to include:	21
5.4 SOCIAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS	21
5.5 STAY CONNECTED ONLINE CONTENT	24
5.5.1 Arts Network’s social media reach	24
5.5.2 Stay Connected Arts Network Challenge videos	25

5.6 STAY CONNECTED MAGAZINE	26
5.6.1 Ranking of content by number reporting 'enjoy very much'	31
5.7 NEW MEMBERS DURING LOCKDOWN.....	32
5.8 MENTAL HEALTH.....	32
5.8.1 Self-reported mental health service use.....	33
5.8.1.1 CPN/care-coordinator/lead professional	33
5.8.1.2 Support worker.....	34
5.8.1.3 Psychologist/therapist	35
5.8.1.4 Psychiatrist.....	35
5.8.1.5 Attending GP for mental health reasons.....	35
5.8.1.6 Attending A&E for mental health reasons	37
5.8.1.7 Use of crisis team/home treatment services	38
5.8.1.8 Use of inpatient mental healthcare	38
5.8.2 Summary	38
 6. Partnerships developed 2020-21	 39
6.1 'MAKE MEE' COMMUNITY PATCH WORK – PATCH TOGETHER	39
6.2 SOUTH LONDON AND THE MAUDSLEY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	39
6.3 LEWISHAM COMMUNITY LINK FORUM - FCLF	39
6.4 MICRO-NETWORK OF ARTS AND MENTAL HEALTH ORGANISATIONS	39
 7. Staffing 2019-2020	 40
 8. The Board	 41
 9. Funding	 42
 10. Future Plans and Ambitions	 43

11. How Arts Network Addressed Our 2020 Suggestions for Future Development	44
2. Further increase opening hours, including weekend and evening sessions	44
3. Employing additional member of staff	44
4. Targeting volunteering in the community	44
12. CERT's Recommendations for 2021-22	45
13. Comparison Over the Years 2019-2021	46
13.1 EXPERIENCE, CONFIDENCE AND PRACTISE OF ART.....	46
13.2 SOCIAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS 2019-2021	47
13.3 SELF-REPORTED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USE 2019-2021	51
13.3.1 CPN/care-coordinator/lead professional	51
13.3.2 Support worker.....	52
13.3.3 Psychologist/therapist	52
13.3.4 Psychiatrist.....	53
13.3.5 Attending GP for mental health reasons.....	53
13.3.6 Attending A&E for mental health reasons	54
13.3.7 Use of crisis team/home treatment services	54
13.3.8 Use of inpatient mental healthcare	55
14. Conclusions.....	56

2. Introduction

The **Converge Evaluation and Research Team (CERT)** was commissioned by the Igen Trust to evaluate the Arts Network, a project in South London providing arts opportunities to local people with mental health problems.

2.1 ABOUT THE CONVERGE EVALUATION AND RESEARCH TEAM: *INSIGHT THROUGH EXPERIENCE*

CERT is a team of researchers with **lived experience of mental health challenges** based at York St John University. Alongside University academics, CERT offers bespoke evaluation of mental health services or community projects, and specialises in finding ways to support people who find it hard to express themselves to take part in evaluations. CERT is part of Converge, a partnership between York St John University and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust delivering educational opportunities to adults who use mental health services in York and the surrounding area. More details can be found here: www.yorks.ac.uk/converge

2.2 ABOUT THE ARTS NETWORK

Arts Network uses **creative practice to support people with severe mental illness** – individuals who experience substantial disability due to their mental health condition. Frequently, members experience considerable difficulties in their activities of daily living, sustaining relationships, and undertaking work.

Arts Network continually **seeks to develop creative ways of responding to members' needs**. The activities are delivered in a supported, friendly and non-clinical environment, where members attend to create, connect and have fun, rather than be 'assessed' or 'treated'.

As a user-led organisation, Arts Network members are actively encouraged to **contribute to the running of the organisation**. This includes co-facilitating workshops, mentoring new members, assisting at exhibitions, volunteering and taking up positions in the charity's Board of Trustees.

2.3 ABOUT THIS EVALUATION

The aim of the evaluation was to gather the **views and perceptions of the participants of the Arts Network**. We will use the term 'members' although the term 'artists' is also used by the project. As a consequence of the corona virus lockdown, this report is different from the previous annual evaluations CERT has completed for Arts Network. Due to being unable to attend the workshop for interviews, our evaluation is based on an **extended questionnaire**.

This report details Arts Network's response to the Corona Virus lockdown.

3. Methods

As a consequence of the lockdown, we were **unable to visit the Arts Network workshop** to interview members about their experiences. Instead, we **expanded the questionnaire** we have used previously, and made it **available both online and on paper**. A paper version and stamped addressed envelope was included in an edition of *Stay Connected* to try and maximise responses. The Arts Network management team were interviewed using Zoom about their response to the Corona Virus lockdown.

The questionnaire covered areas we have explored in previous evaluations, but this time has an additional focus on the developments triggered by the Corona Virus lockdown.

4. Arts Network's Response to the Corona Virus Lockdown

4.1 THE EARLY DAYS OF LOCKDOWN

The Corona Virus lockdowns were a challenge for everyone, but it **was especially challenging for organisations that provide face-to-face support to vulnerable people** such as Arts Network. Even before the lockdown was officially enforced, Arts Network found that some **members were anxious** about attending the studio in case they caught Covid whilst travelling or at the Studio itself. Pre-emptively, staff started preparing for a clean and socially distanced workroom.

A week prior to the formal lockdown, the management at **Arts Network reacted quickly and flexibly**, telephoning all members within two days, asking them firstly if they wanted to keep in touch, and if they did, checking that Arts Network had the right contact details. Knowing that many members used social media (especially Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) **Arts Network quickly grew its online presence**, and from this, **the Stay Connected strategy emerged**. However, care was taken to identify those who could not access these sources of connection to find a suitable alternative so they did not miss out on support.

11th March – Started purchasing safety equipment

16th March – Called members to announce temporary closure

18th March – Posting of the first *Stay Connected* to all members (front cover had details of closure)

23rd March – Government announce national lockdown, beginning on the 26th March

In the first week of April, Arts Network began to **plan how to go about reopening**.

4.2 STAY CONNECTED

Stay Connected refers to a **monthly magazine** produced collaboratively by staff, all of whom contribute; a **weekly YouTube Arts Network Challenge video tutorial**; and **other social media activities**. The magazine features a variety of artistic methods and practices which can be tried at home by readers, interviews with Arts Network staff and members, art history, mindfulness exercises, information about relevant local partners, recipes, puzzles, and a gallery of work sent in by members. **Members receive a physical copy of the magazine** through the post, **along with materials related to activities in the magazine**. Each magazine has a theme, for example, *the water issue*, *the rhythm issue*, and *the storytelling issue*.

The **first issue** of the *Stay Connected* magazine **was six pages long and was printed and put together by hand** within the first week of Arts Network operating remotely. It was initially just sent to a **small number of members** who were clinically vulnerable and/or did not have internet access so could not attend their online sessions.

When it became clear that lockdown was going to last for an extended period, based on positive feedback from members, **Arts Network increased the circulation of the magazine to all members**. This increase in production led Arts Network to **seek funding** from Igen Trust; Lewisham Council; and Pegasus, to both **grow the number of people receiving the magazine**, and to also be able to **send materials to members**, allowing them to take an active part in magazine activities and their YouTube workshops. By issue 3 in June 2020, the number of pages had increased to 12, and 150 copies were **printed professionally** and distributed to members, along with the necessary art equipment. By September 2020, the magazine had reached **20 pages in length**, and to date (August 2021), the **circulation has risen to 1,250**. It costs roughly £1,730 each month to produce (including staff time, printing and postage).

In addition to Arts Network members, the magazine is now sent to various **local organisations and mental health providers**, including South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust who receive 690 copies which are used by their **occupational therapy department** as a resource on the wards and in clinics.

In addition to the regular magazine, the *Stay Connected* strategy makes **extensive use of social media**. Arts Network post workshop activities for members to follow on **YouTube**, and use **Zoom** to run between **3 and 4 workshops a week** for members to attend. These include Art History, and two or three activities from the *Stay Connected* magazine. Arts Network also **offer virtual visits** to places such as the Horniman Museum and the Queen's Gallery. **Members' work is shared on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter**, including takeovers of other organisations' social media. Arts Network also run a **weekly walking group**, visiting local parks and local places of interest which are available, live on Zoom to members who were isolating. A **podcast interview** about Arts Network was also broadcast on North London Radio.

4.3 END OF YEAR BOX

Arts Network received funding from the National Lottery's 25-year Celebration Fund and used this to send **activity boxes and an extra-large edition of Stay Connected magazine to 150 members**. The boxes contained games such as a bingo card, and various art materials, all based on an end of year Zoom gathering which they were invited to attend. There was a programme which centred around **an all-day (11-5pm) online drop-in** where activities, including a laughter workshop, sing-along, charades, bingo and arts activities, took place. Feedback from members suggested this was very **well received and enjoyed** by those who attended.

5. Findings

In total, 24 members completed the online version of the questionnaire, and 8 completed the paper version.

5.1 EXPERIENCE, CONFIDENCE AND PRACTISE OF ART

We asked about members' experience in art; their confidence in their artistic ability; and whether they practise art independently at home in both 2019 and 2021 (practising art at home in [figure 1](#)). The findings were broadly similar in both years. In general, **members report feeling more experienced in art and more confident in their own abilities since joining Arts Network**. Due to people being at home in 2021 we wondered whether members would report practising more art at home. However, in both 2019 and 2021 members consistently report practising art independently at home more than they did before they joined, and this change looks broadly similar in both years.

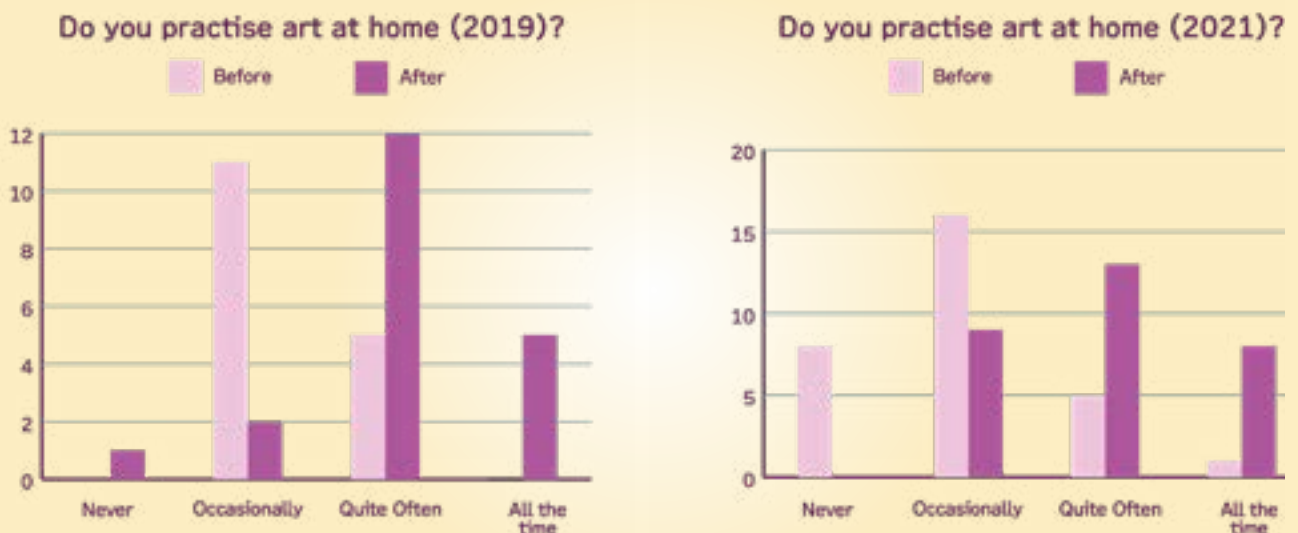


Figure 1 (i-ii): Practising art at home

5.2 THE ARTS NETWORK AS A COMMUNITY

In previous reports, the Arts Network as a community emerged as an extremely important theme. Our questionnaire asked whether the Arts Network helped members feel connected to their community during the lockdown ([figure 2](#)). It is very apparent that **members feel Arts Network has helped them feel connected to their community during this difficult time**.

Do you feel that Arts Network helped you feel connected to your community during lockdown?

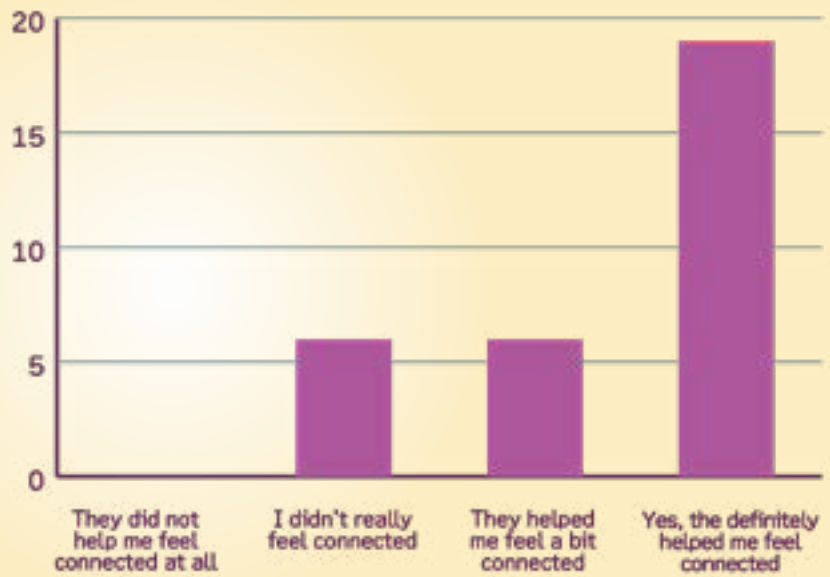


Figure 2: Connection to community

5.3 RETURN TO FACE-TO-FACE WORKSHOPS

We asked whether members had any concerns about returning to face-to-face sessions in the workshop when permitted (figure 3). This indicates **that 29% of members do have concerns** about this return, and a further 29% were unsure about this. Some of these concerns are detailed below.

We also asked whether members were looking forward to **returning to face-to-face sessions** in the workshop: **94% of respondents stated that they were looking forward to this**. Some of their comments are detailed below.

Figure 3: Returning to the workroom



5.3.1 Concerns about coming back to the workshop include:

*"Ventilation in the workroom is not good, some members may struggle with **social distancing**, some members may express views re: lockdown/masks/vaccines that I disagree with."*

*"I'm worried about **being close to people** more because of the Covid 19 pandemic, but I am completely **confident that Arts Network will keep us safe**, members and staff, and I can already see the changes they have made re: numbers, safety policy, alcohol gels etc."*

*"I feel anxious about staying safe as I have no **control over other people's behaviour** and their safety - worried about Covid."*

5.3.2 What members are looking forwards to include:

*"Hugging my friends, being in the room together. Doing art and workshop activities together, going on trips, **have tea and chat again**. Seeing the staff again."*

*"Being able to **see and talk to members and staff** in person. Also being able to **go on outings** and visits to museums with arts network."*

*"Sharing some time doing a **creative activity together**."*

*"I am looking forward to **seeing people again!**"*

*"I have **missed my friends** at Arts Network and been isolated because of no face-to-face sessions. I am most looking forward to being able to make art in a non-judging place with similar people to me - Arts Network is my **mental health safe space**. Making art at the same time and space as others."*

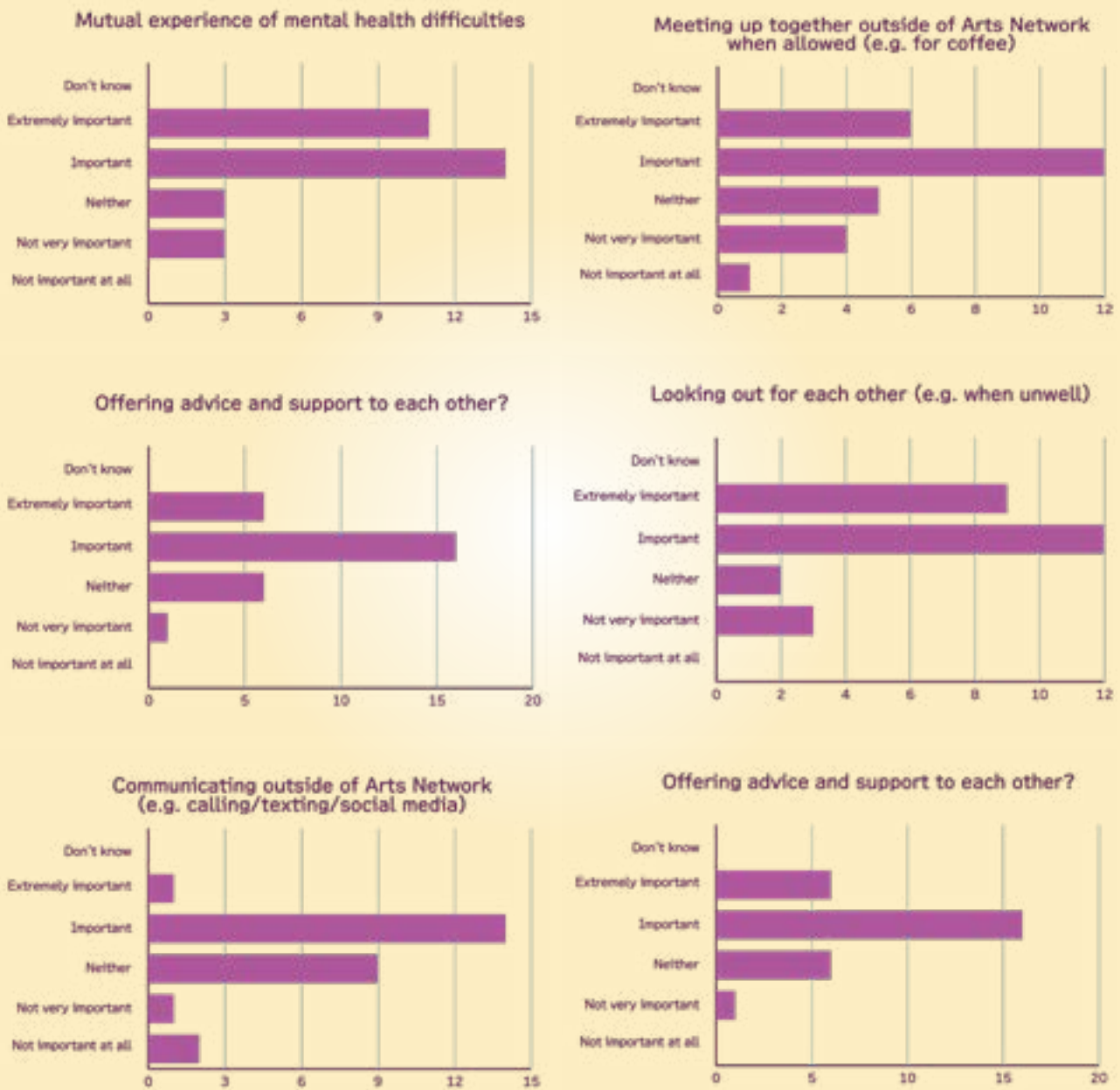
5.4 SOCIAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS

Figure 4 overleaf shows different aspects of social connections between members. Across all of the areas we explored, the **social relationships between members are highly valued by all**.

- 81% indicated that **mutual experience of mental health difficulties** was important or extremely important to them
- 85% indicated that **offering advice and support to each other** was important or extremely important to them

- 69% indicated that **meeting up together outside of Arts Network** was important or extremely important; 19% reported neither important or not important; and 15% reported not very important to them
- 58% indicated that **communicating outside of Arts Network** (e.g. calling, texting or social media) was important or extremely important; 35% indicated that this was neither important or not very important to them
- 81% indicated that **looking out for each other**, for example, when unwell, was important or extremely important; 8% reported neither; and 12% not very important to them

Figure 4 (i-vi): Social relationships



Have you had any direct contact with other Arts Network members during lockdown?

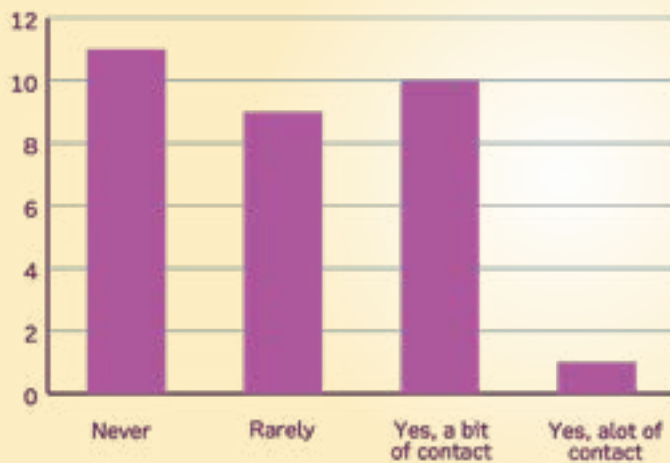


Figure 5:
Contact during lockdown

Further to our questions about social relationships between members, we asked this year **whether members had had any direct contact with other members during lockdown** (figure 5). This data shows that 64% of members had either ‘no contact’ or ‘rare contact’ with each other during lockdown, while 32% reported ‘a bit of contact’. This is interesting in the context of in 2021, 61% saying that meeting other members outside of the Arts Network workshop was important to them; and 56% reporting that communicating with other members outside of Arts Network being important to them. This might suggest that **members desired more contact with each other** than they actually got.

Would you like contact with other members?

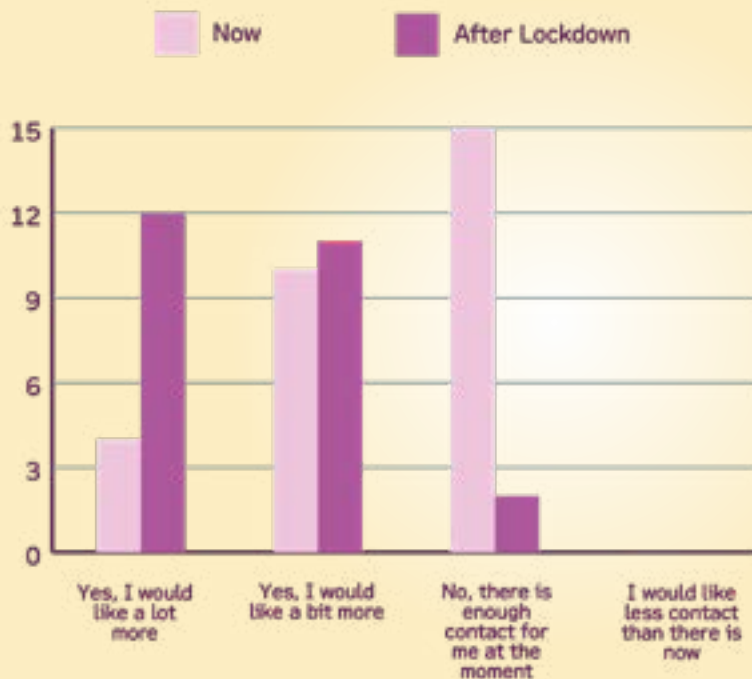


Figure 6:
Contact with other members

To answer this question, we also asked whether members would like more contact with each other now, or after the lockdown ends (figure 6). It is interesting that most **members felt that they had enough contact during lockdown** (51%), however, the vast majority of respondents want either a bit more contact (38%) or a lot more contact (41%) with other members once lockdown ends, suggesting a **big appetite to return to the workshop**.

5.5 STAY CONNECTED ONLINE CONTENT

Only six members reported being unable to access online content. We asked about particular problems members may have experienced in accessing online content (figure 7). It is interesting that the **biggest reported problem was that using technology causes anxiety**. Some members indicated that they would have **liked more help** accessing Arts Network’s online content. **Lack of access to the Internet and affording data** were also problems faced by some members. Some members **faced multiple barriers**, for example, anxiety using technology; not having suitable equipment; and being unable to afford data on their phone.

Problems accessing online content

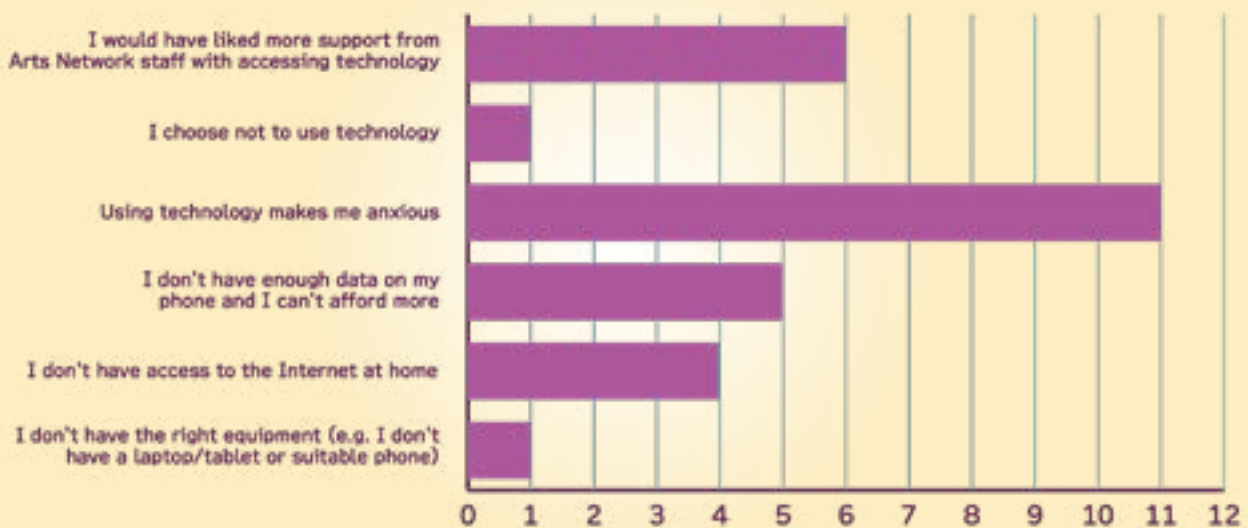


Figure 7: Problems accessing online content

5.5.1 Arts Network’s social media reach

Due to their efforts to reach members online and connect with other organisations due to the pandemic, Arts Network **increased their social media reach considerably**. As of 31 July 2021:

- 467 [Facebook](#) followers (+54 since 2020)
- 544 [Twitter](#) followers (+90 since 2020)
- 820 [Instagram](#) followers (+364 since 2020)

5.5.2 Stay Connected Arts Network Challenge videos

We asked about the Arts Network Challenge videos (figure 8). The data indicates that most respondents did not watch the videos regularly. However, it also shows that **respondents find the videos easy to watch, interesting, and that the activities are easy to follow**. In terms of actually being able to do the activities, most respondents indicate this is the case some of the time. It is curious that members report such positive responses to the videos, whilst choosing not to watch them more regularly. It would have been interesting to explore this in more detail in interviews.

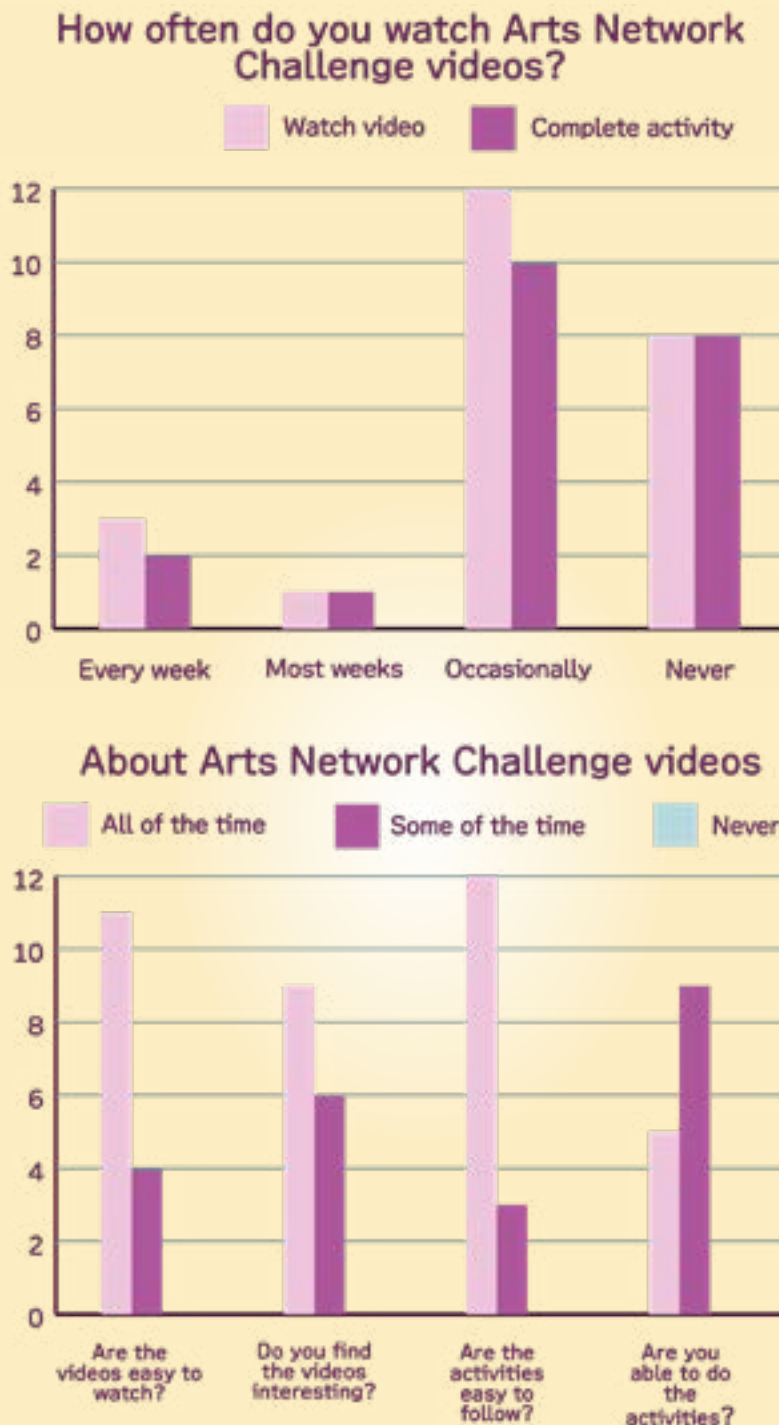


Figure 8 (i-ii): Arts Network challenge videos

5.6 STAY CONNECTED MAGAZINE

We asked whether respondents **read Stay Connected magazine** (figure 9), and the majority (68%) indicated that they read every edition. Just under half of respondents (40%) read it cover to cover, while 53% say they ‘dip in and out’.

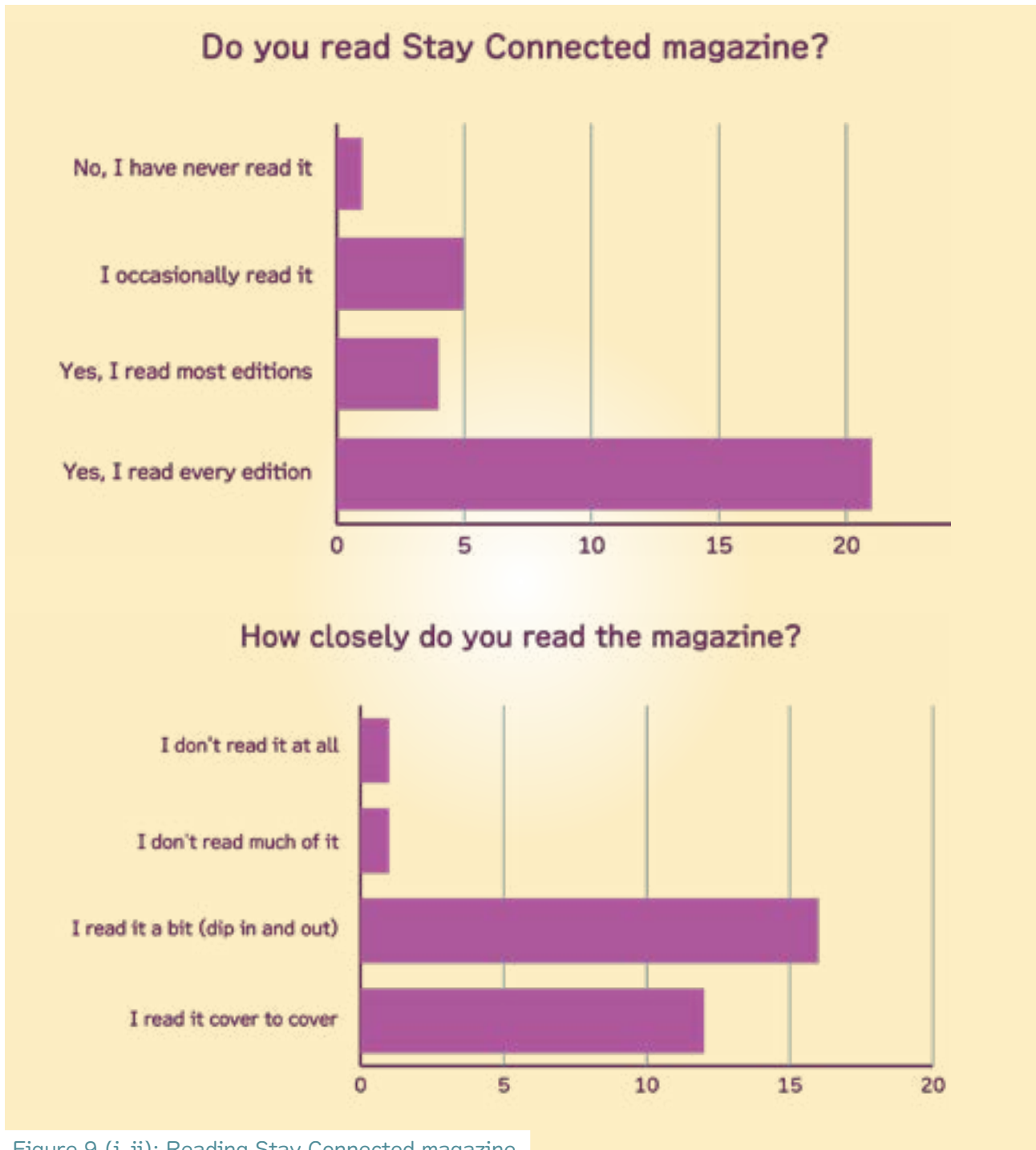


Figure 9 (i-ii): Reading Stay Connected magazine

Figure 10 shows members' reactions to *Stay Connected* magazine. Most members report that it is **easy to read and interesting**. In terms of the actual activities included, the vast majority say that the **activities are easy to follow**, but many report that they are able to do the activities just 'most of the time'. It is not clear whether this difference is because the activities are hard to do, or due to participants' motivation to do it, time, or other distractions.

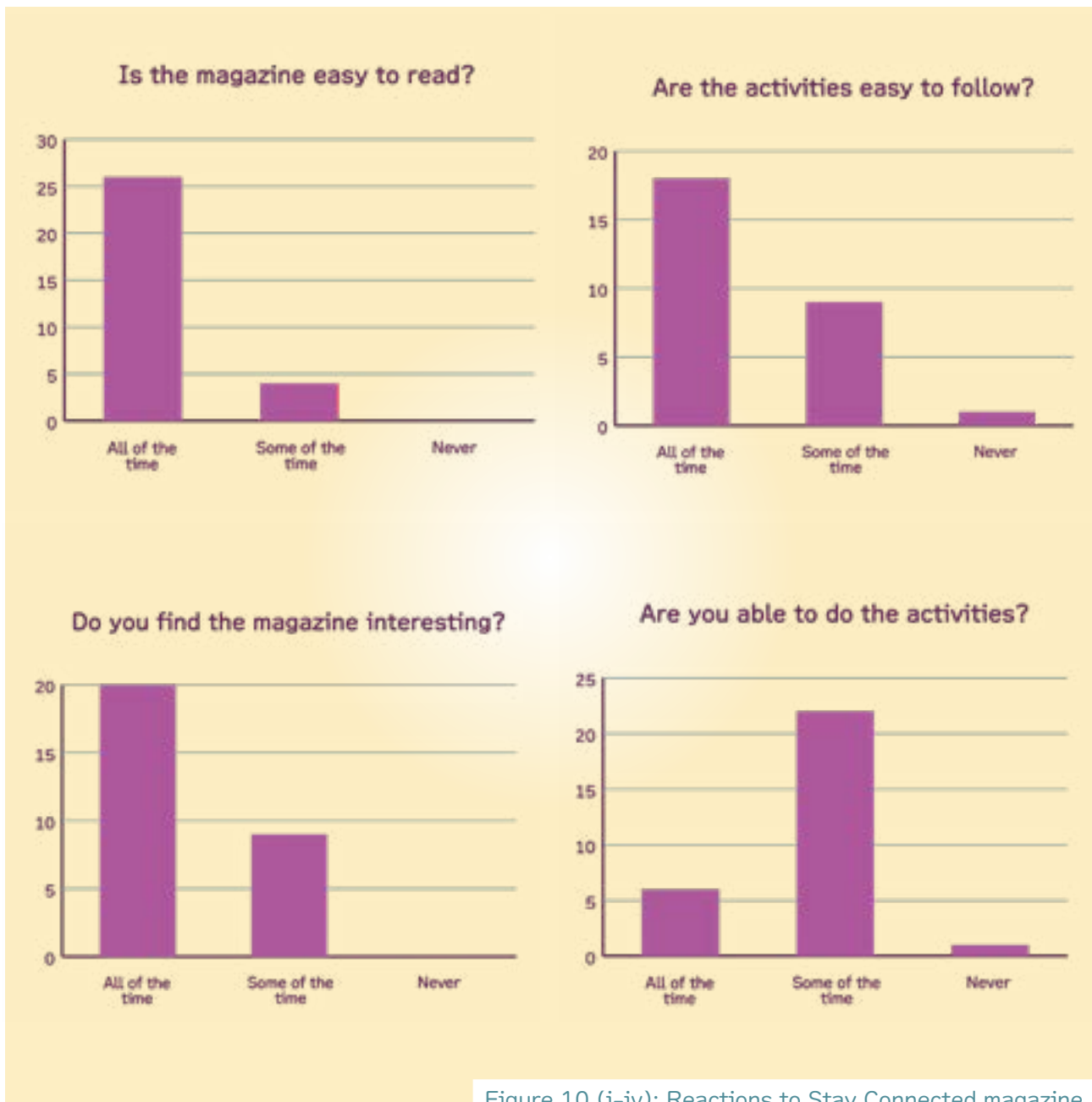


Figure 10 (i-iv): Reactions to Stay Connected magazine

Figure 11 shows the enjoyment of different types of magazine content. Pleasingly, the **members' gallery seems to be highly popular**, along with **feature articles about people linked to Arts Network. Painting and drawing techniques, alongside art history** were also popular. Other content varied in terms of respondents' enthusiasm, but there were none which seemed to be broadly unpopular. It is possible that the **variation in content between editions is a reason for the magazine's popularity.**

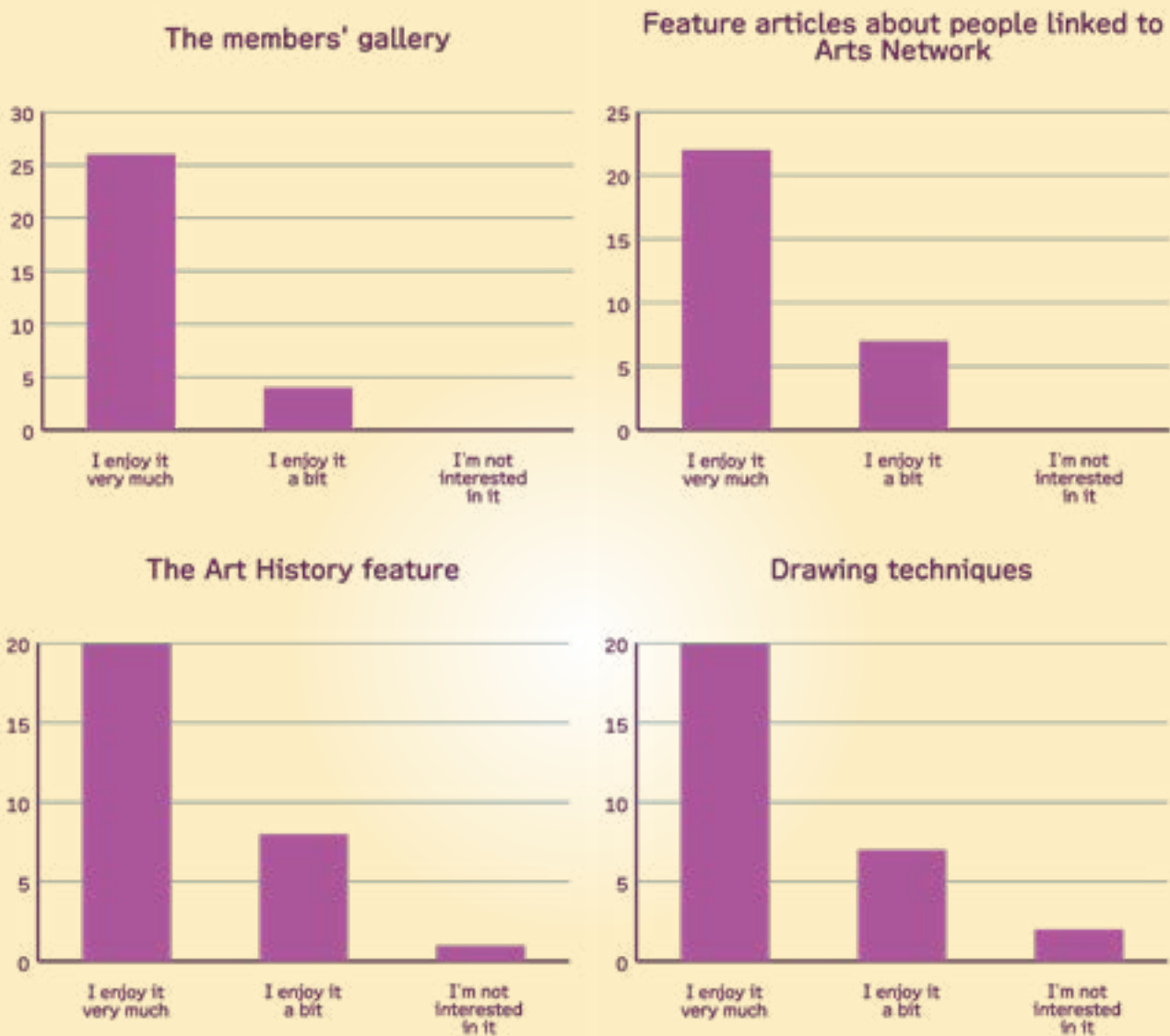


Figure 11 (i-iv): Enjoyment of different types of magazine content



Figure 11 (v-x): Enjoyment of different types of magazine content



Figure 11 (xi-xvi): Enjoyment of different types of magazine content

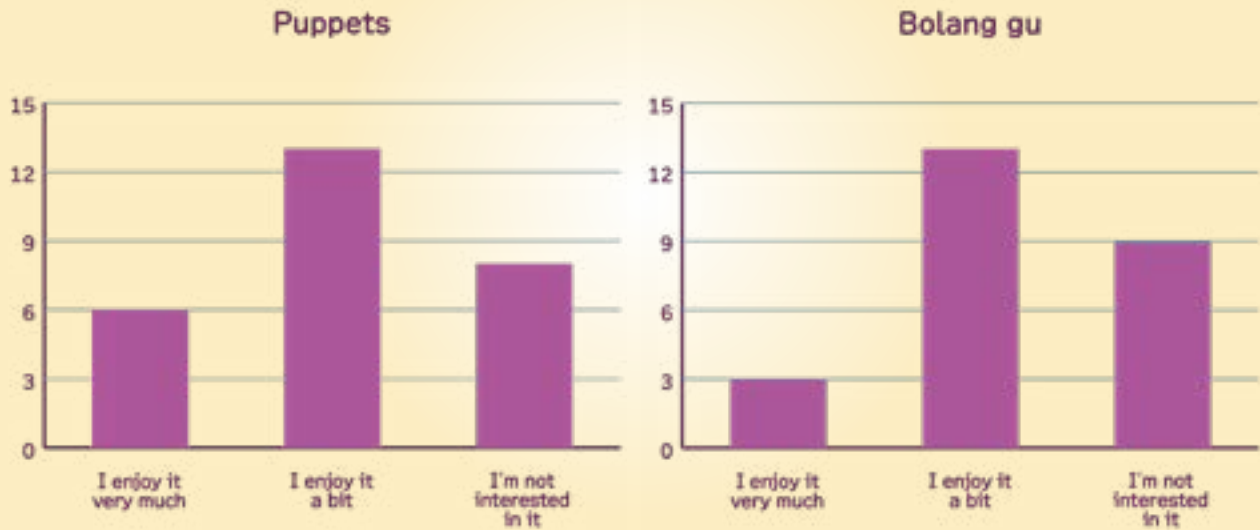
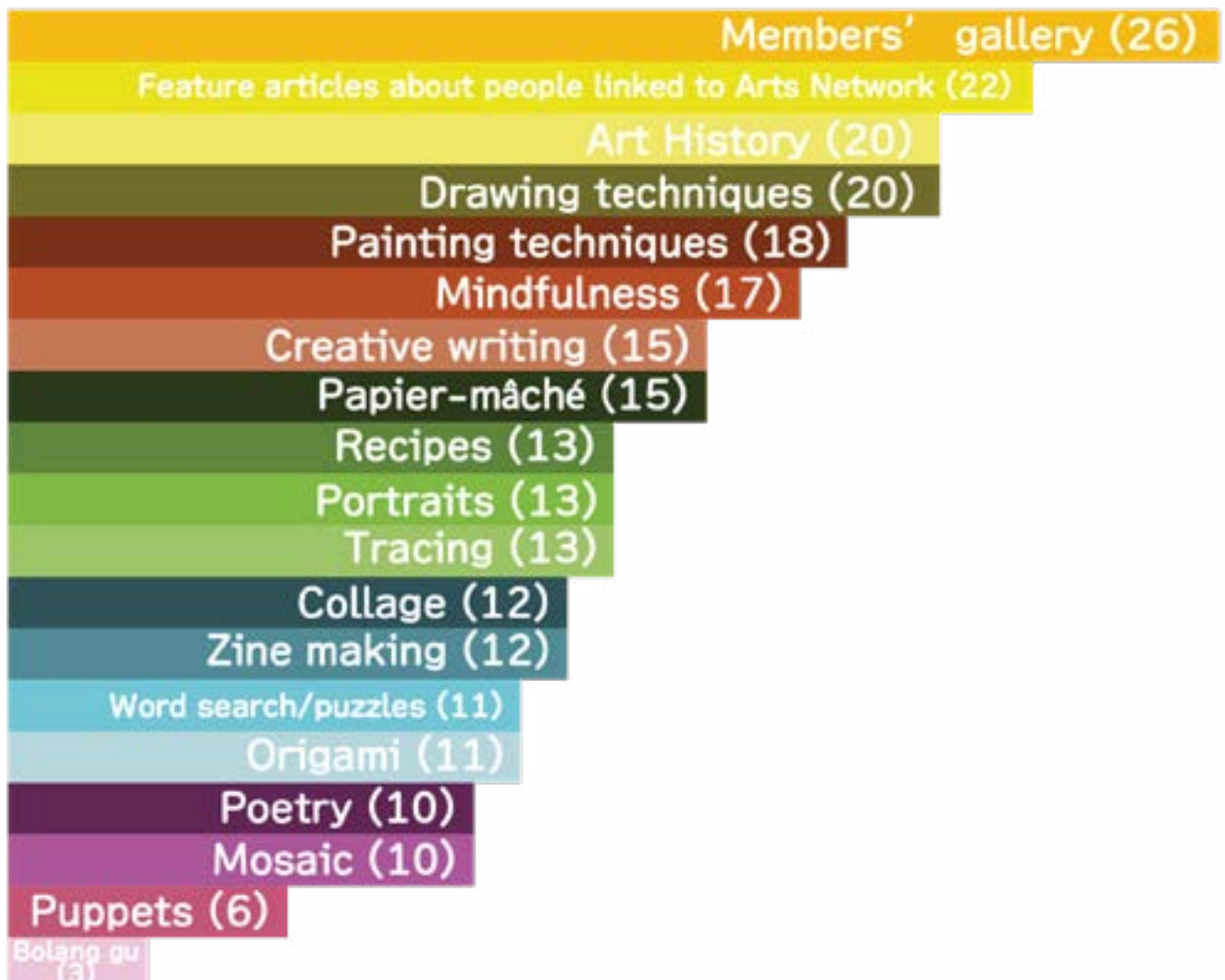


Figure 11 (xvii-xviii): Enjoyment of different types of magazine content

5.6.1 Ranking of content by number reporting 'enjoy very much'



5.7 NEW MEMBERS DURING LOCKDOWN

The **inability to conduct face-to-face inductions** of new referrals made the **process of introducing new members into Arts Network difficult**. New referrals were sent *Stay Connected*, and Zoom was successfully used for four inductions, supported by carers or care coordinators. Without an induction, new members were not able to join online workshops. Of 17 referrals over this year, ten are now receiving the service by post and on social media.

5.8 MENTAL HEALTH

We asked members directly about whether they thought that the **Corona Virus lockdown had influenced their mental health** (figure 12). While 19% said there was no change, the overwhelming majority, **74%, reported that it was a bit worse, or a much worse**. However, without interviewing we do not know the reasons why they felt their mental health was worse. There are various possibilities, for example, it is possible that those who said 'no change' were already in a bad place and perhaps couldn't have got worse, rather than Corona Virus lockdown not making them worse.

To begin to explore this possibility, we asked about the **impact members thought the Arts Network had on their mental health during this time** (figure 13). This shows that despite members experiencing worse mental health during the pandemic, **almost all respondents believe that Arts Network has had a beneficial impact on their mental wellbeing during this difficult time**: 50% said it helped a bit with their mental health, and 39% said it helped a lot.

Impact of Covid on members' mental health



Fig 12: Impact of Covid on members' mental health

Impact of Arts Network on members' mental health

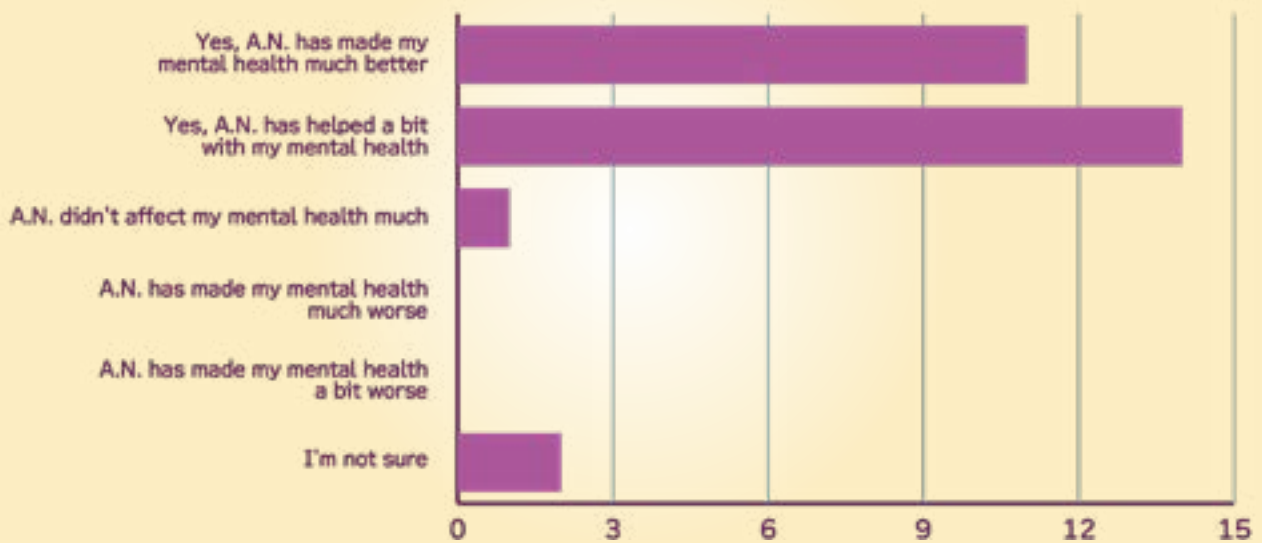


Figure 13: Impact of Arts Network on members' mental health

5.8.1 Self-reported mental health service use

We asked Arts Network members about whether, in their opinion, **their usage of different types of mental health provision had changed** due to attending Arts Network in the past year (figure 14).

In general, this data **indicates that Arts Network may have a protective effect**, reducing members' use of various sources of mental health support, in particular their use of unplanned emergency mental healthcare, such as A&E, crisis team/home treatment, and inpatient treatment. However, when reflecting on these figures it is important to bear in mind that many **other factors may be influencing the data**, including, for example, whether or not members get support from mental health services at all, and decisions by mental health service providers about care which may be completely unrelated to an individual's actual mental health needs.

5.8.1.1 CPN/care-coordinator/lead professional

Figure 14 shows that 23% reported not having a CPN. For those who have one, 31% indicated no change in their use; 19% reported needing their CPN less; however, 27% reported needing them more or much more. This trend reflects the reported deterioration in mental health described by members. This data indicates that despite the Corona Virus lockdown being associated with worse mental health, it is possible that attending Arts Network **reduces members' need for input from their CPN**, although other factors may be influencing this.

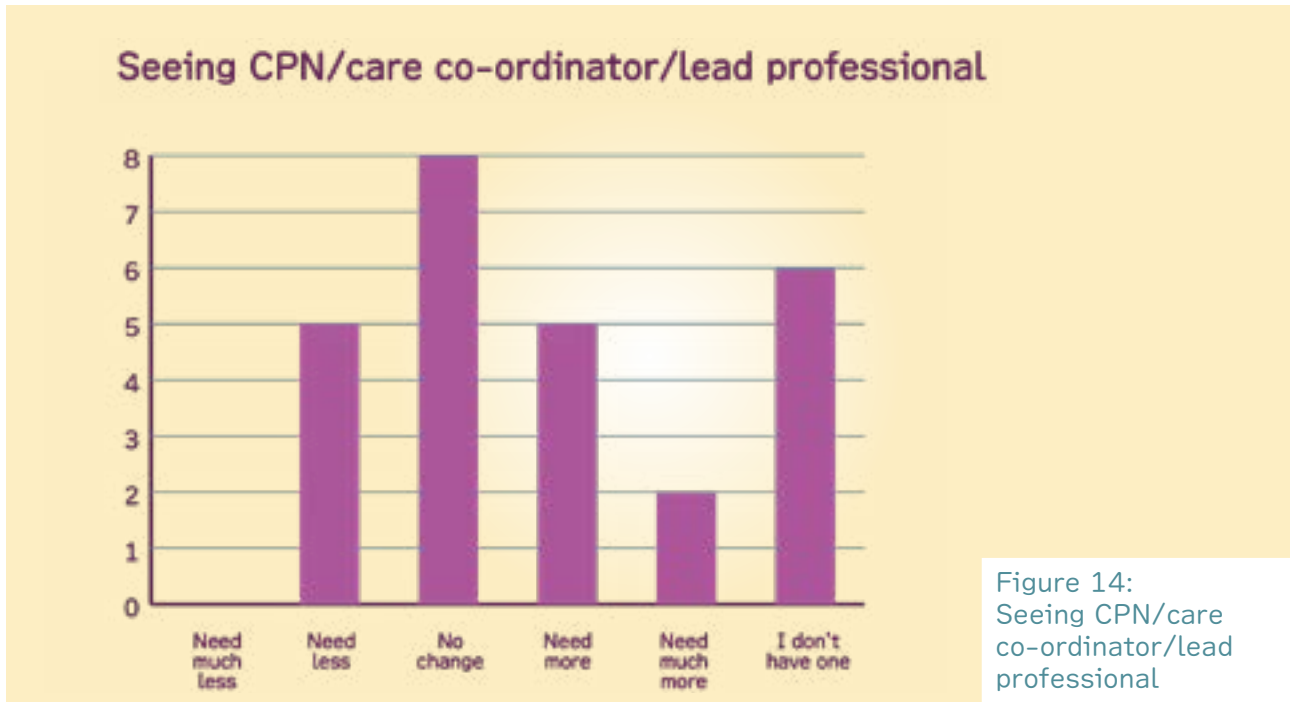


Figure 14: Seeing CPN/care co-ordinator/lead professional

5.8.1.2 Support worker

Figure 15 shows that 54% of respondents do not have a support worker. Of those who have one, 15% reported no change; 15% reported needing them less; and 23% reported needing them more or much more. A potential explanation for this data is that while their mental health needs increased during Corona Virus lockdown, attending Arts Network perhaps **reduces members' need for input from their support worker** (bearing in mind that many other factors may be influencing the data).

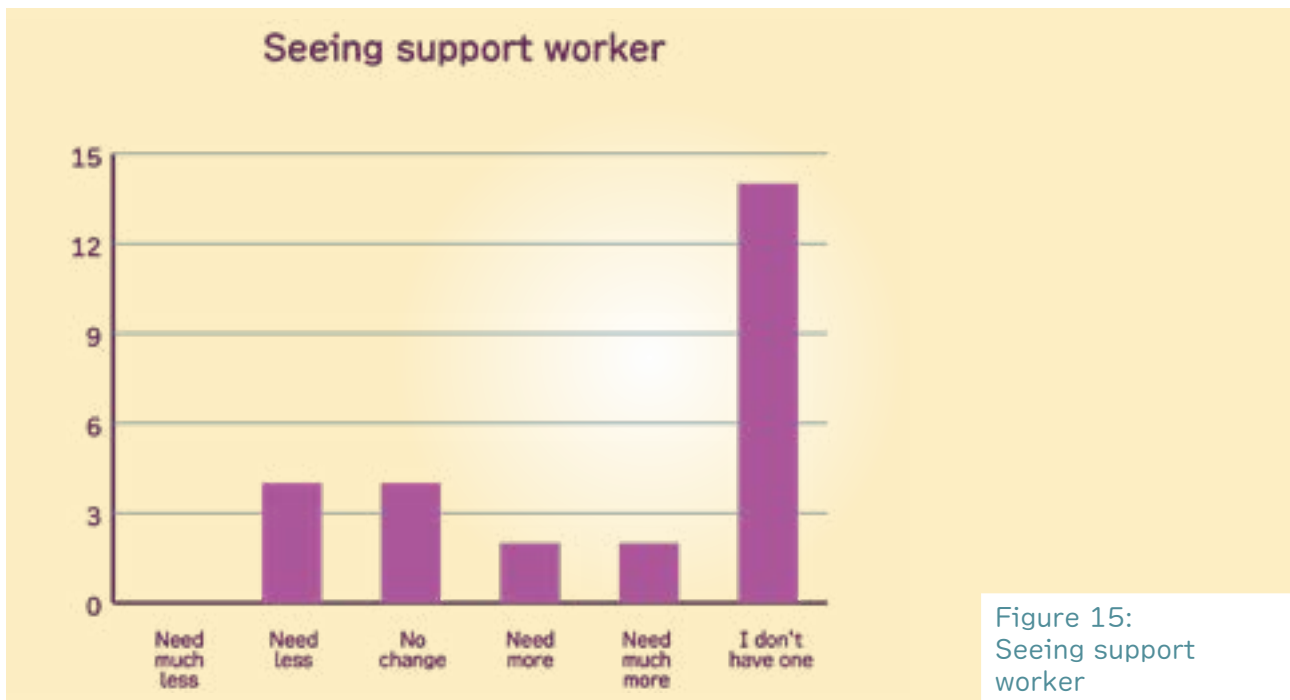


Figure 15: Seeing support worker

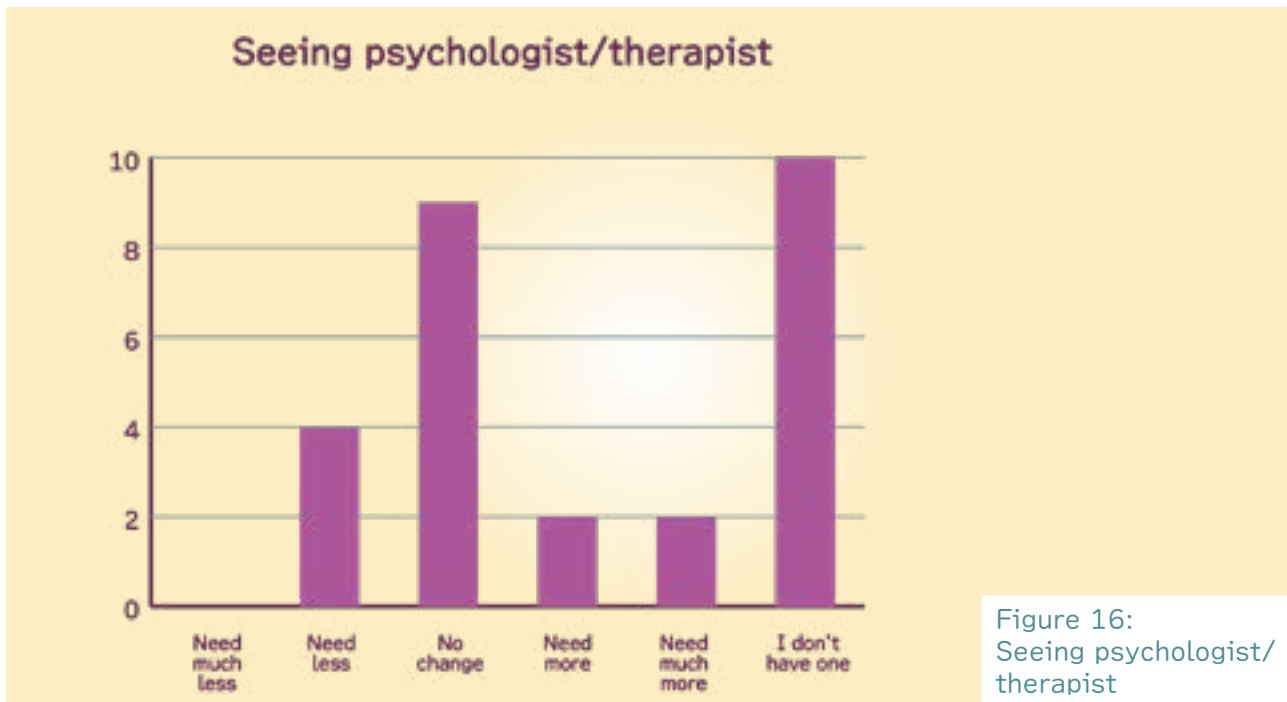


Figure 16:
Seeing psychologist/
therapist

5.8.1.3 Psychologist/therapist

Figure 16 shows that 38% of respondents indicated that they did not have a psychologist or therapist. For those who have one, 35% indicated no change in their needs; 15% indicated needing them less; and 15% needing them more or much more. This data is reflective of worse mental health in 2021, however, the data suggest that Arts Network perhaps **reduces the need for input from a psychologist/therapist** (although of course other factors may be influencing this).

5.8.1.4 Psychiatrist

Figure 17 shows that 31% of respondents indicated that they did not have a psychiatrist. For those who have one, 19% reported no change; 27% indicated needing them less; and 19% needed them more. This perhaps suggests that Arts Network **reduces the need for attention from psychiatrists** (although of course other factors may be influencing this).

5.8.1.5 Attending GP for mental health reasons

Figure 18 shows that 42% of respondents indicated no change in their GP attendance due to their mental health; 46% reported needing them less; and 15% needing them more. This slight increase in the number reporting using their GP less might be due to the **shift from face-to-face to telephone/online appointments**, and a **perception** that appointments are **harder to access**, perhaps putting off respondents asking for the GP for help. However, again, other factors may be influencing this.

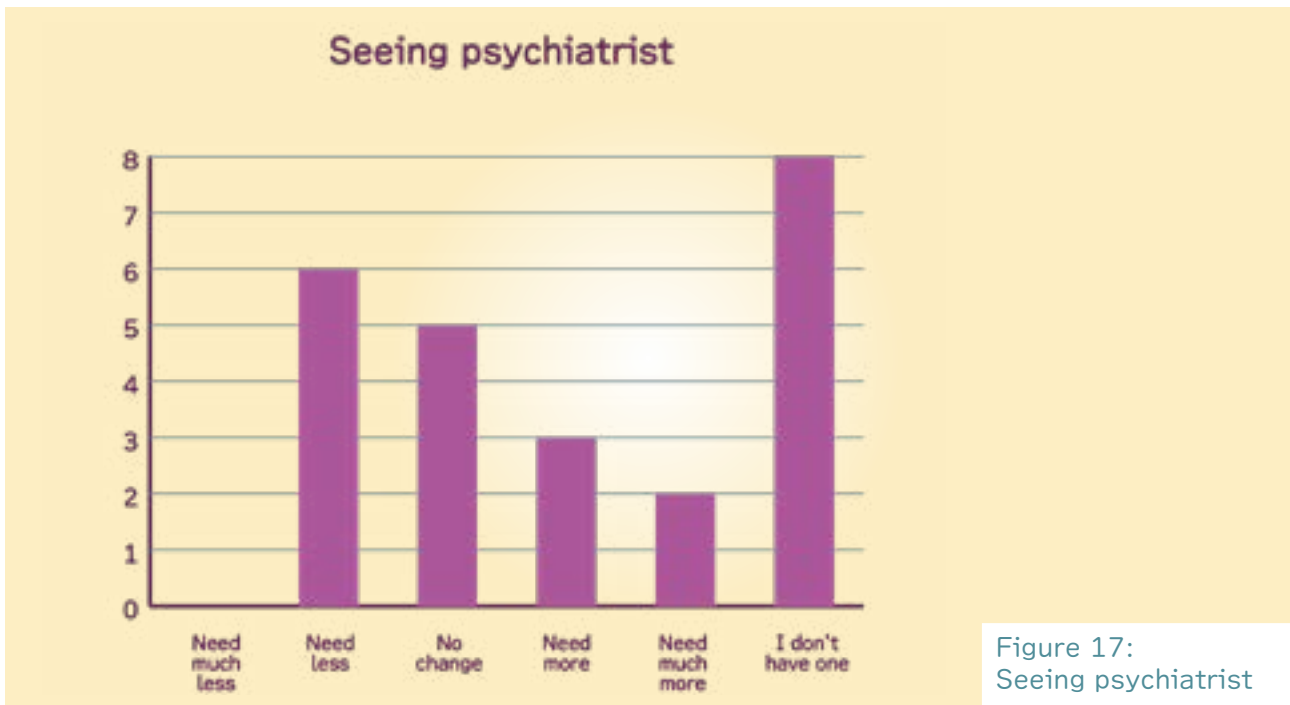


Figure 17: Seeing psychiatrist

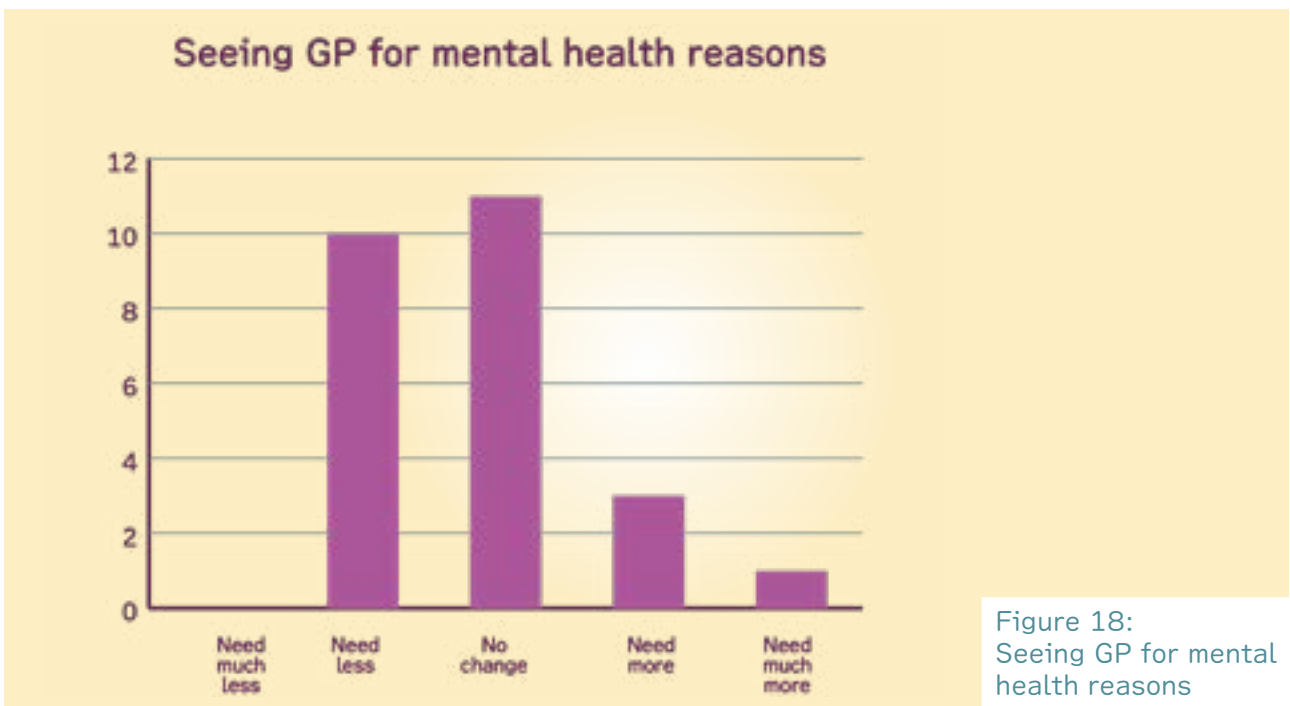


Figure 18: Seeing GP for mental health reasons

5.8.1.6 Attending A&E for mental health reasons

Figure 19 shows that 54% of respondents indicated no change in how often they attend A&E for their mental health; 46% reported needing this less or much less; however, 8% reported needing it much more. This may suggest that **Arts Network may be associated with reduced need for emergency mental health care from A&E** (although again there may be other factors influencing this).

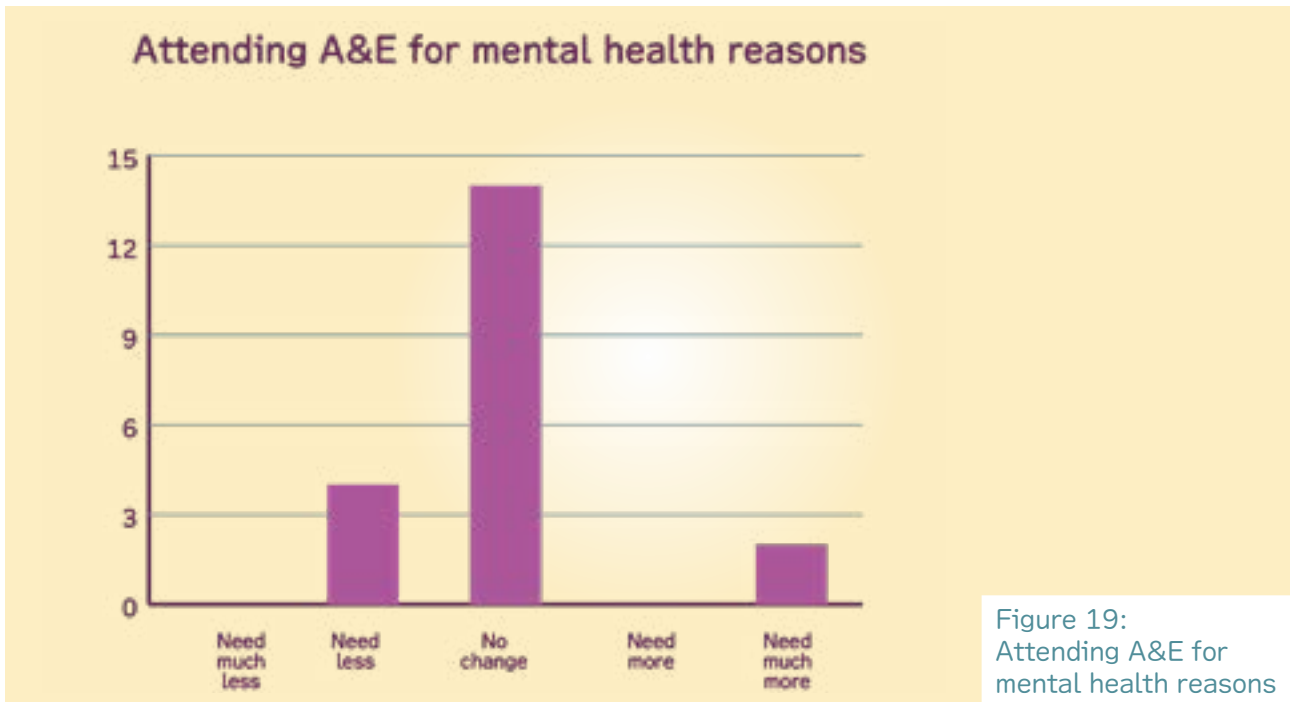


Figure 19: Attending A&E for mental health reasons

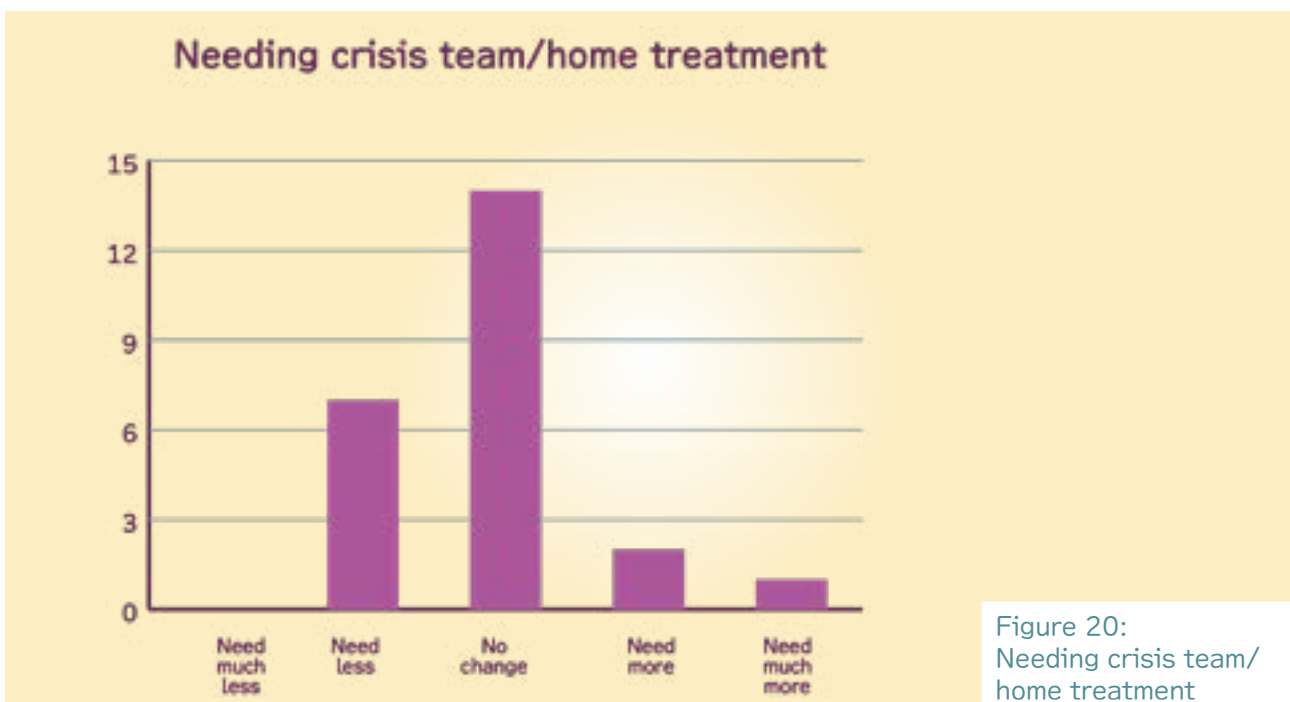


Figure 20: Needing crisis team/home treatment

5.8.1.7 Use of crisis team/home treatment services

Figure 20 shows that 54% indicated no change in how often they access crisis mental health care; 38% indicated needing them less or much less; and 12% more or much more. Again, this may suggest that **Arts Network reduces the need for emergency mental health care from crisis and home treatment services** (although as before, there may be other factors influencing this).

5.8.1.8 Use of inpatient mental healthcare

Figure 21 shows that 42% of respondents indicated no change in how often they have received inpatient mental health care; 62% reported needing this less or much less; and just 8% reported needing this much more. Again, this may suggest that **Arts Network is associated with reduced need for inpatient mental health hospital treatment** for its members (although as before, there may be other factors influencing this).

Needing inpatient mental health hospital treatment

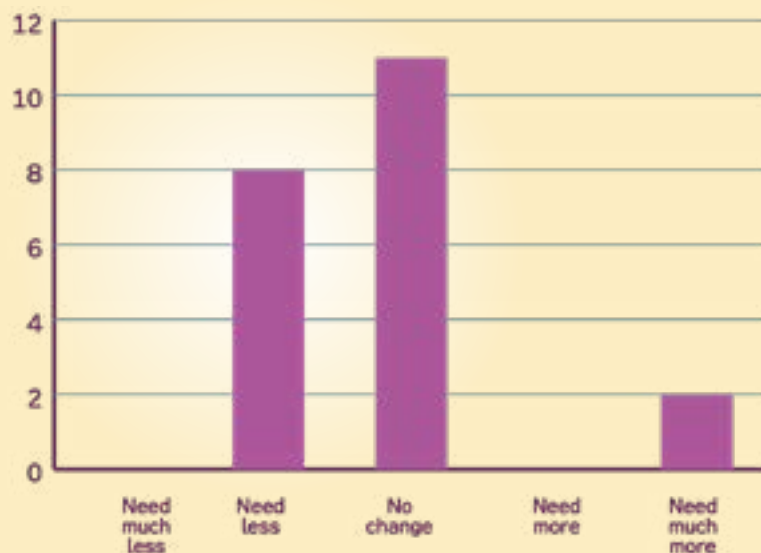


Figure 21: Needing inpatient mental health hospital treatment

5.8.2 Summary

The **impact of the Corona Virus lockdown** on mental health services, GP care and emergency provision nationally has been considerable. Many people, **regardless of previous mental health difficulties, have experienced a deterioration in their mental health during this time**, making already stretched services even more thinly spread. This may lead to services being rationed – for example, frequency of CPN, support worker and psychiatrist appointments is usually in the control of services rather than the patient, so this may be a poor indicator of their actual need or the severity of an individual’s mental health difficulties. All of these factors are **outside of Arts Network’s control**. In spite of this, the **data here do suggest a trend that attending Arts Network reduces members’ self-reported use of the whole spectrum of mental health care**. This possible **protective effect** seems to be particularly strong for unplanned emergency care for example, A&E attendance, crisis team/home treatment services, and inpatient mental healthcare.

6. Partnerships developed 2020-21

6.1 'MAKE MEE' COMMUNITY PATCH WORK – PATCH TOGETHER

Make Mee is a local community organisation offering sewing and creative workshops that are low-cost or free to people living within the borough of Lewisham. Seeking to adapt how they work during the lockdown, they approached Arts Network to see if any members wanted to participate. Mo (Arts Network CEO) hand delivered packs to six members and it was very well received. Arts Network are continuing to work with Make Mee and eight members are now contributing to the next Patch Together.

6.2 SOUTH LONDON AND THE MAUDSLEY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Extensive connections have been made with the local mental health trust – South London and the Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM). In addition to using *Stay Connected* on the hospital wards, Arts Network were commissioned to provide creative workshops for staff wellbeing via Zoom. Furthermore, the Maudsley Charity paid for a video explaining how to make a face covering which was sent to members with the necessary materials via *Stay Connected* packs.

6.3 LEWISHAM COMMUNITY LINK FORUM - FCLF

Arts Network was invited to join FCLF in 2020. This Forum was set up by the Occupational Therapy Department of SLAM to bring together all the mental health providers in Lewisham. There are now 104 providers taking part, sharing information as well as skills about services.

6.4 MICRO-NETWORK OF ARTS AND MENTAL HEALTH ORGANISATIONS

Very soon after the lockdown, Arts Network sought to connect with similar small-scale arts and mental health organisations across the country, with the intention of sharing ideas, mutual support and to share funding opportunities. Roughly 13 organisations are currently in the network, and there is a workshop exchange which started in April 2021.

- Artlift (Gloucestershire) - <https://artlift.org>
- Arts and Minds (Cambridge)- <https://artsandminds.org.uk>
- Arts Well (Cornwall) - <https://arts-well.com/>
- Borderland Voices (Leek) - <http://borderlandvoices.org.uk/>
- Converge (York) - <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/converge/>
- Creative Shift (Bristol) - <https://www.creativeshift.org.uk/>

- Flourish (Sheffield)- <https://sheffieldflourish.co.uk>
- Inspirative Arts (Derby) - <https://www.inspirativearts.co.uk>
- Key Changes (London) - <https://www.keychanges.org.uk/>
- Orb Community Arts - <http://orb-arts.org>
- Pioneer projects – <https://pioneerprojects.org.uk>
- Red Earth (Birmingham) - <https://www.redearthcollective.org.uk>
- Sampad (Birmingham) - <https://www.sampad.org.uk>

7. Staffing 2019-2020

Mo Saunders - CEO/Founder

Matthew Couper - Development Director

Em Greyharbour - Operations Manager

Paula Rivas Rodriguez – Creative Service Delivery Lead (*left July 2021*)

Joseph Kitem – Facilitator and Media Lead (*left May 2021*)

Jannat Hussain – Facilitator(Started March 2021)

Miki Holloway – Facilitator (Started March 2021)

Nora Maddock – Engagement Lead (March 2021)

Declan Mc Gill - Social media/Communications Lead (Started March 2021)

Dareen Burnett – Facilitator (Started July 2021)

Ruth Pickard- Facilitator (Started July 2021)

Lucy Thomas - Facilitator (Started July 2021)

Charlotte Wilson – Operations Manager (Maternity Cover -Started August 2021)

- Em was promoted to **Operations Manager** in 2020: Overseeing and managing all aspects of the day-to-day service delivery.
- Paula was promoted to **Creative Service Delivery Lead** in 2020: overseeing internal and external workshops, and managed and design of *Stay Connected* magazine during lockdown.
- The Maudsley Charity has funded **two new workshop facilitators** who will be developing workshops for people who live in Southwark and Lambeth. This is currently online, but it is anticipated that from September pop up workshops will take place across Southwark and Lambeth.
- Nora is in post as **Engagement Lead**. Her role is to build relationships, set up online referral processes and find new members specifically in Southwark and Lambeth. This post is funded for 2 years.
- Arts Network has also undertaken a strategy review to **re-assess our targets and plans**. This revision also takes into account the impact of the pandemic.
- During the last year Arts Network has gone through a complete **board re-structure to help fulfil the ambitions of the organisation**. This has included reducing the board size, making the board more flexible and dynamic. The board includes one member representative who feeds back from the members group.

8. The Board

William Nicolson – Chairperson and Finance

Jake Strickland – IT and Media

Kate Emblen – Member Rep and Health and Safety

Gillian Phillips - Legal and HR

Claire Morris – Company Secretary

9. Funding

The funding secured in 2020-21 has allowed Arts Network to take stock of their current programme and identify gaps in delivery.

Through this process we have submitted the following bids to ensure our programme delivery:

Funder	Total Grant Confirmed	Amount per annum	First Payment	Last Payment	Note
Pegasus Trust	£ 20,000	£ 20,000	August 2020	August 2020	Another application made in August 2021
City Bridge	£ 125,300	£ 41,100	January 2021	January 2023	Over three years to support project expansion
Maudsley Charity	£ 24,948	£ 12,500	December 2020	January 2023	to deliver projects in Lambeth and Southwark
National Lottery	£ 200,000	£ 50,000	June 2019	June 2022	To support on-going programmes
Drapers	£ 10,000	£ 10,000	April 2021	April 2021	One-off grant
Lottery 25 year celebration	£ 1000	£ 1000	October 2020	December 2020	Christmas issue and activity packs
Garfield Weston	£ 30,000	£ 10,000	September 2020	September 2022	To support on-going programmes
Baring Foundation	£ 12,000	£ 12,000	October 2020	October 2020	One-off unrestricted grant
London Community Response	£ 18,696	£ 18,696	October 2020	March 2021	To support Stay Connected
Lewisham Mico Fund	£ 1000	£ 1000	October 2020	October 2020	To support distribution of Stay Connected
TOTAL	£ 418,644	£ 176,296			

This funding is in addition to funds received from Igen.

10. Future Plans and Ambitions

Arts Network's **funding situation is currently secure**, which means they are able to plan for the future in a way which they have previously not been able to do.

Arts Network have been offered a **new purpose-built site** where they would pay no rent for 10 years. The site is part of a hotel complex in **Southwark**.

Plans for the new site include:

- A Public gallery for art work
- Studio space and workrooms
- Café area
- Space for other community groups to meet

They will also **continue to work** on:

- Delivering new programmes of work in Lambeth and Southwark
- Planning for move to a new main base in Southwark in 2023
- Have popups in Lewisham and Lambeth
- Extending workshop delivery at main base
- Taking part in Lewisham's London Borough of Culture programme 2022
- Continuing delivery of Stay Connected Programme
- Continued development of partnerships opportunities

In terms of what Arts Network will offer to its members, the **Stay Connected strategy will continue**. When lockdown ends and the studio re-opens, a **blended delivery** will take place, with members able to access workshops both at the studio and online.

11. How Arts Network Addressed Our 2020 Suggestions for Future Development

1. Using social return on investment (SROI) to support funding applications – placing a monetary value on Arts Network’s activity

- This has not yet happened, and would have been **extremely challenging given the lockdown**. We suggest attempting to carry an SROI calculation out once the service is back to normal.

2. Further increase opening hours, including weekend and evening sessions

- This would **not have been possible during lockdown**. However, through its social media activity and *Stay Connected*, Arts Network have **considerably extended the number of people able to engage in their activities**.

3. Employing additional member of staff

- Two **new workshop facilitators** have been employed.
- They have contracted an **Engagement lead** and **Communications Lead**.

4. Targeting volunteering in the community

- Lockdown made it **very difficult to engage people in voluntary activity**. However, through the large number of community partners made in the past year, we **expect this will increase considerably** as organisations return to normal.

12. CERT's Recommendations for 2021-22

- Look into why the videos are less popular, and if there is anything which could be done to make them more popular. **Social media** should be considered as a tool for **advertising Arts Network, to increase awareness of what they offer and to raise money.**
- Find ways of **supporting members who are struggling to get back to the workshop** – perhaps mentors who could offer individual support to those who need it.
- **Consolidate the successes** they have had over 2021 and not stretch themselves too thinly by over-expanding and dilute what they do in the workshop.
- Seek to carry out a **Social Return on Investment calculation** to explore how much money they potentially save other services.

13. Comparison Over the Years 2019-2021

13.1 EXPERIENCE, CONFIDENCE AND PRACTISE OF ART

We asked about members' experience in art; their confidence in their artistic ability; and whether they practise art independently at home in both 2019 and 2021 (figure 22 – nb this question was not asked in 2020). The findings are **broadly similar in both years, with members reporting feeling more experienced in art and more confident in their own abilities since joining Arts Network**. Due to people being at home in 2021 we wondered whether members would report practising more art at home. However, in both 2019 and 2021 members consistently report practising art independently at home more than they did before they joined, and this change looks broadly similar in both years.



Figure 22 (i-iv):
Experience, confidence and practise of art



Figure 22 (v-vi):
Experience, confidence and practise of art

13.2 SOCIAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS 2019-2021

Figure 23 shows different aspects of social relationships among members. Across all of the areas we explored, the **social relationships between members are highly valued by all**. We wondered that whether the forced separation of members due to the Corona Virus lockdown might cause changes in values placed by members on different types of social connection.

In terms of mutual experience of mental health difficulties, which was roughly the same in 2019 and 2020, the **number who reported that they did not find it to be important rose** from 0% to 10% in 2021. This shift is also reflected by the number saying it was important, which fell slightly from 95% and 91% in 2019/2020, down to 78% in 2021. The reason for this change is not immediately apparent, but **may be due to members not being able to meet in person**.

With respect to members **offering advice and support to each other**, the **number saying it was important or extremely important has fallen slightly over the three years**, from 95% in 2019, to 83% in 2020, and 76% in 2021. The number saying it was not important rose very slightly from 0% in 2019 and 2020, to 3% in 2021. The **reason for this change is not clear** without interviewing members.

There appears to have been a **shift in the importance of meeting other members outside of the Arts Network workshop**, for example, for a coffee, with the number saying this important rising each year: In 2019, 43% said this was important or extremely important, in 2020 the figure was 61%, and in 2021, it reached 64%. The number of those reporting that this is not important has fallen year on year: In 2019, 29% did not consider it to be important, falling in 2020 to 23%, and then to 18% in 2021. This **might suggest that the experience of lockdown has increased the desire of members to socialise in their own time** outside of the Arts Network workshop.

There seems to have been a **shift in the importance of communicating with other members outside of Arts Network** (e.g. calling/texting/social media) over the three years. The figures for 2019 and 2020 are broadly similar (43% and 39% in 2019 and 2020) saying this is important rising to 56% in 2021. The number reporting that this is not important fell from 19% and 20% in 2019 and 2020, to 11% in 2021. This is possibly **due to members seeking contact with each other while the workshop was closed** – increasing the importance of communicating with each other at home because they were unable to get contact with each other in the workshop.

Finally, we asked about the importance members made of **looking out for each other**. This has **fluctuated over the three years**, with 90% saying it was important in 2019, 74% in 2020, rising back to 81% in 2021. The proportion saying that it is not important has risen year on year from 0% in 2019, to 3% in 2020, and 12% in 2021. The reason for the fluctuation is not immediately obvious.

Interviews with members would have given us the opportunity to explore the reasons for the changes and similarities in the data over the years, but unfortunately, as mentioned in the methods section, interviews were not possible due to the Corona Virus lockdown.

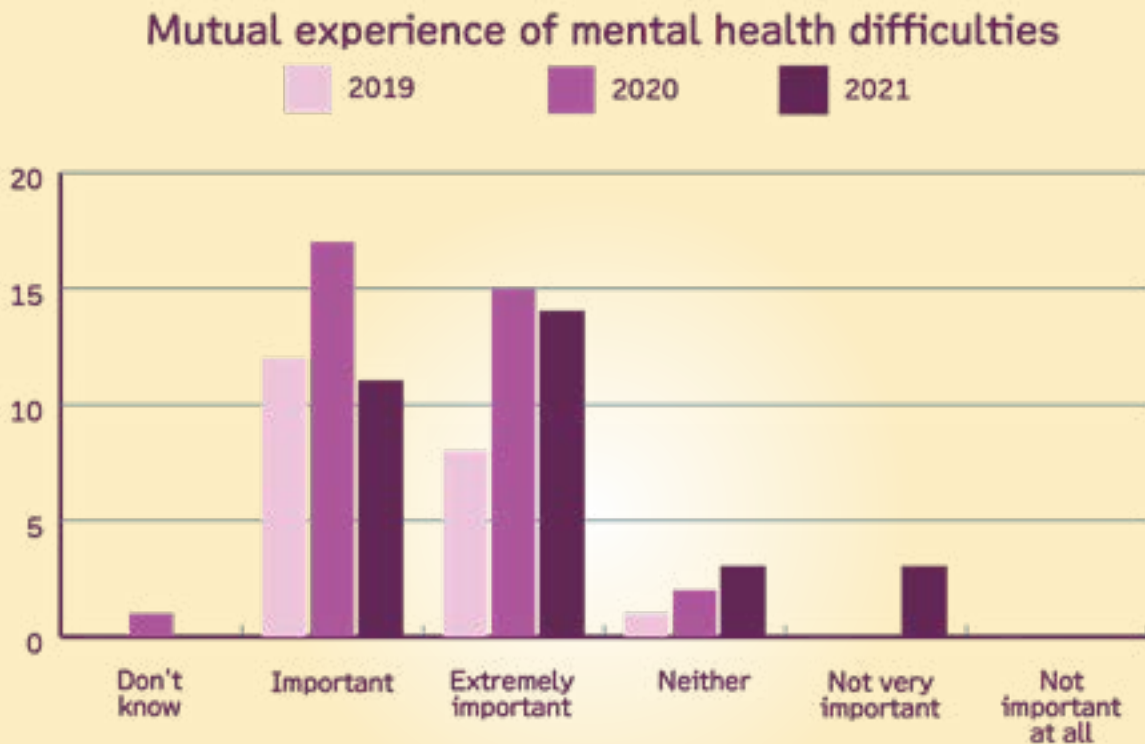
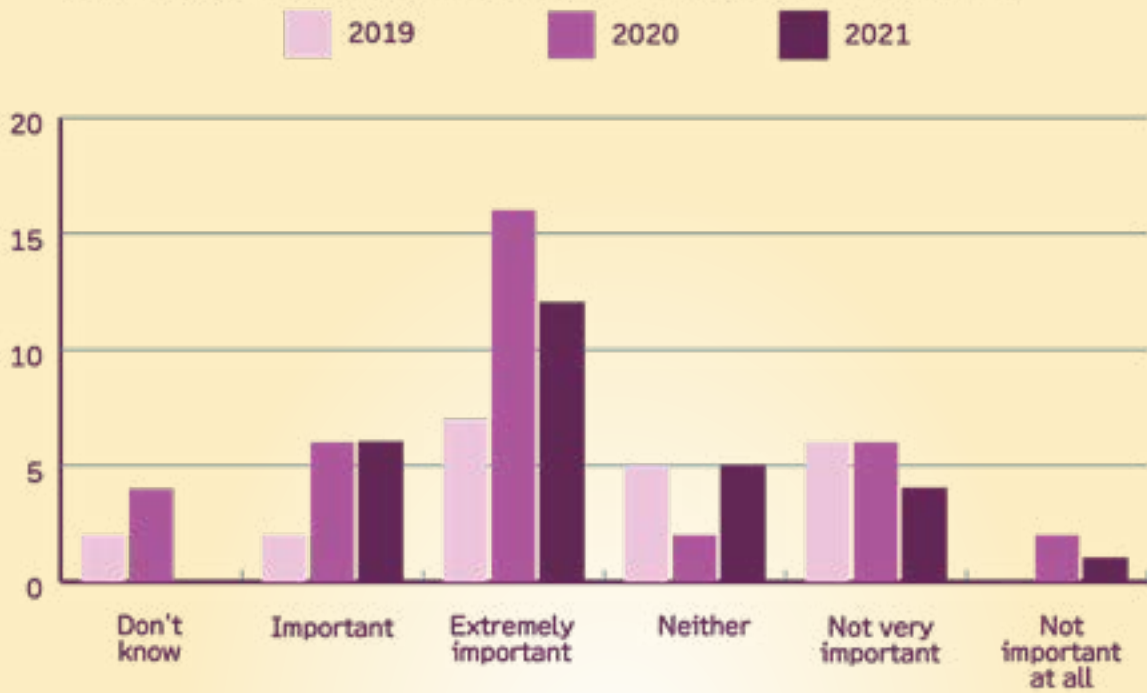


Figure 23 (i): Mutual experience of mental health difficulties [Social relationships between members 2019-2021]

Meeting outside of Arts Network (e.g. for coffee)



Offering advice and support to each other

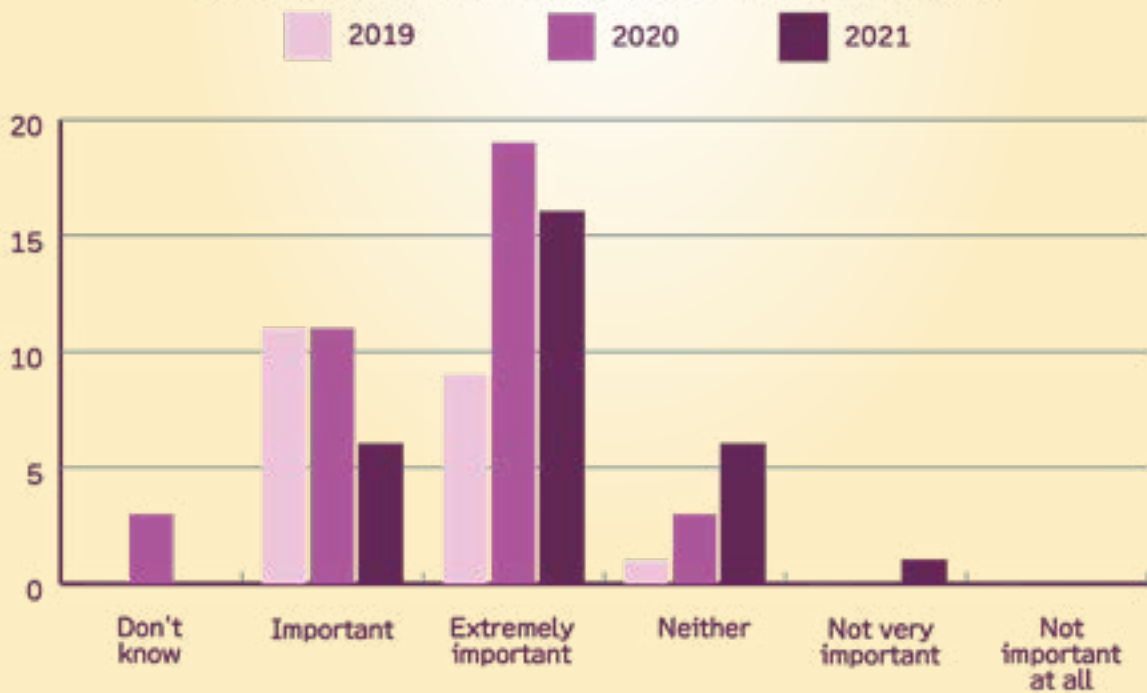
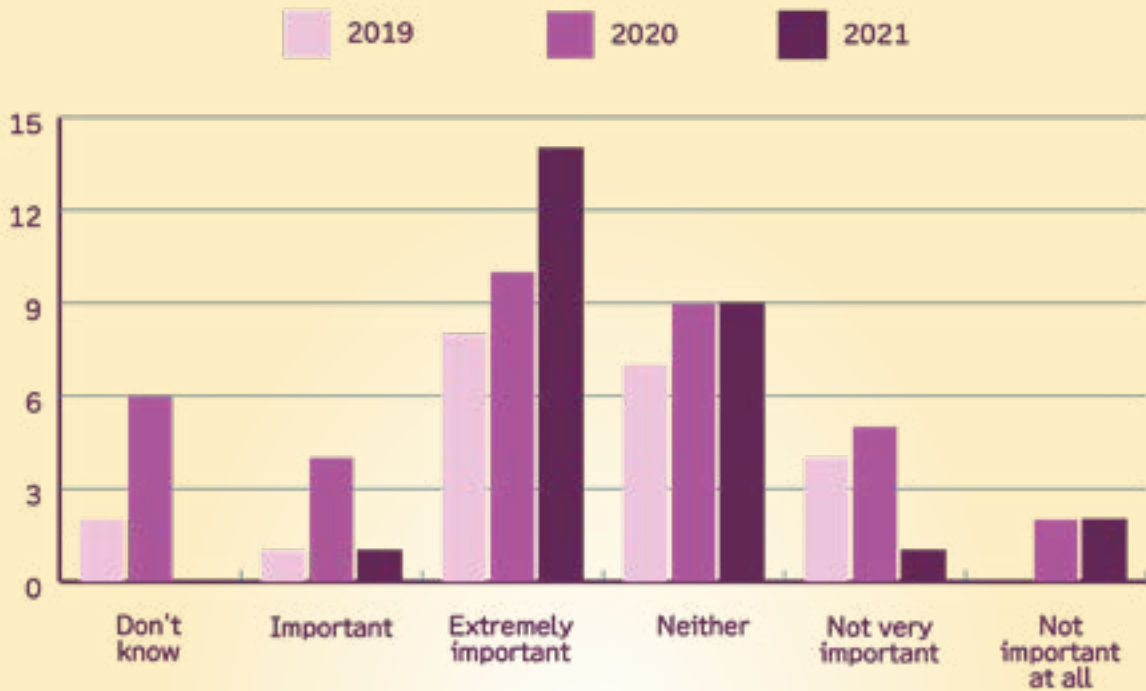


Figure 23 (ii): Meeting outside of A.N.; (iii): Offering advice/support [Social relationships between members 2019-2021]

Communicating outside Arts Network (e.g. texting/social media)



Looking out for each other (e.g. when unwell)

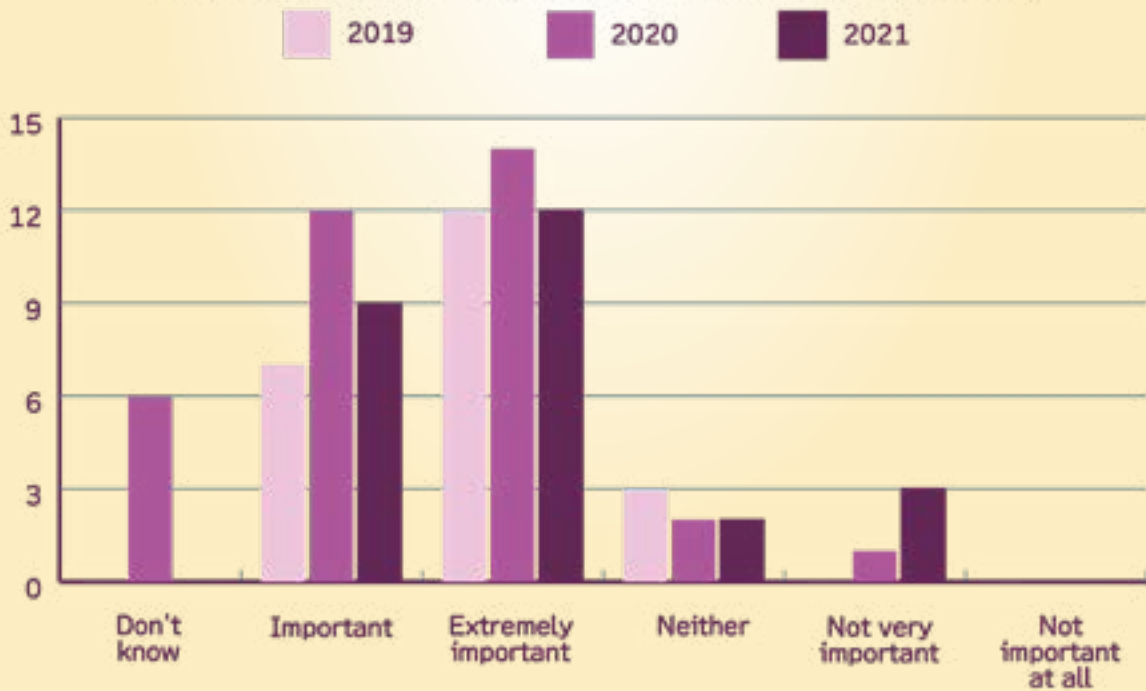


Figure 23 (iv): Communicating outside of A.N.; (v): Looking out for each other [Social relationships between members 2019-2021]

13.3 SELF-REPORTED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USE 2019-2021

We asked Arts Network members about whether, in their opinion, their usage of different types of mental health service has changed due to attending Arts Network (needing it more or less) in 2019, 2020 and 2021. This allows a **comparison of years which may identify the impact of the Corona Virus lockdown on members’ mental health service use**. This data is shown in figure 24. When looking at these figures it should be held in mind that **many factors are likely to affect a member’s use of mental health services beyond their attending Arts Network sessions**. The trends discussed in this section are not definitive and are possibly due to something unrelated to Arts Network. However, whilst holding these caveats in mind, there **does seem to be a trend indicating that attending Arts Network has a protective effect**, reducing members’ needs across the whole spectrum of mental health support.

13.3.1 CPN/care-coordinator/lead professional

Of those who have one, in both 2019 and 2020, **none reported needing them more**. This changed considerably in 2021, where 35% reported needing their CPN more. In 2019 and 2020, 58% and 64% reported needing their CPN less, falling to 25% in 2021. This trend follows the reported deterioration in mental health reported by members. This data indicates that perhaps despite the Corona Virus lockdown leading to worse mental health, attending Arts Network **reduces members’ need for input from their CPN**.

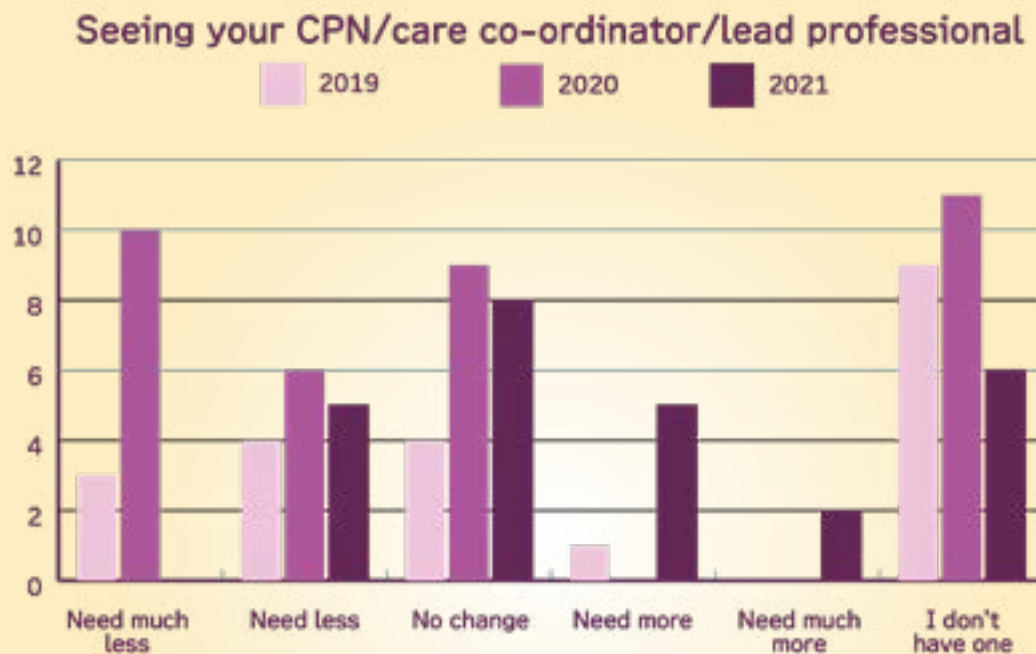


Figure 24 (i): Seeing your CPN/Care co-ordinator/Lead professional [Mental health service use 2019-2021]

13.3.2 Support worker

Of those who have one, a similar pattern emerged in the support worker data. In both 2019 and 2020, **no members reported needing their support worker more**, rising to 34% in 2021. In 2019 and 2020, 55% and 64% respectively reported needing them less, falling to 33% in 2021. Again, this data indicates that while their mental health needs increased during Corona Virus lockdown, attending Arts Network seems to **reduce members' need for input from their support worker**.

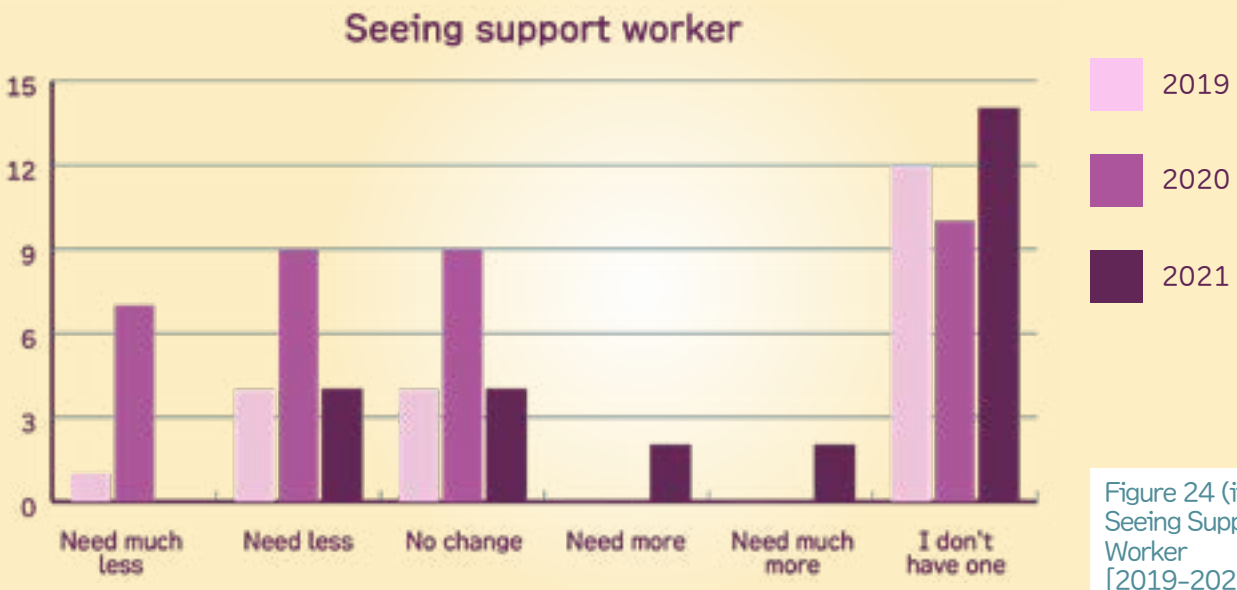


Figure 24 (ii):
Seeing Support
Worker
[2019-2021]

13.3.3 Psychologist/therapist

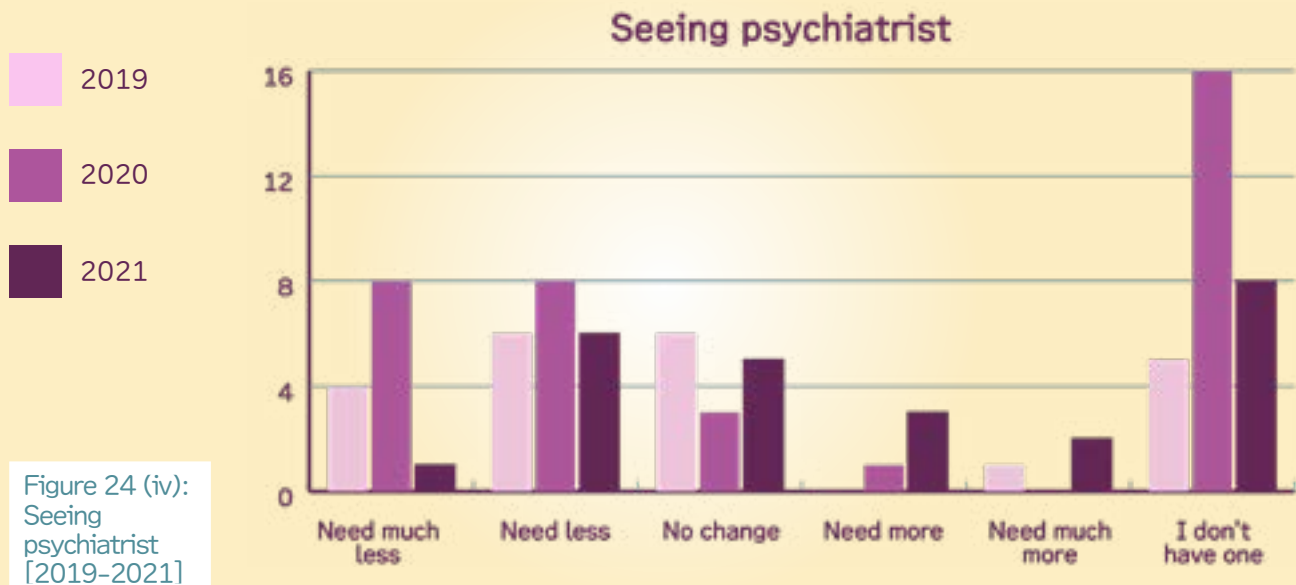
In terms of need for their psychologist/therapist, of those who have one, in 2019 **none reported needing them more**, rising to 8% in 2020, and then to 24% in 2021. The number reporting needing them less was 60% in 2019; 42% in 2020; falling to 24% in 2021. This data again is reflective of worse mental health in 2021, however, there is a trend that **Arts Network seems to reduce the need for input from a psychologist/therapist**.



Figure 24 (iii):
Seeing
psychologist/
therapist
[2019-2021]

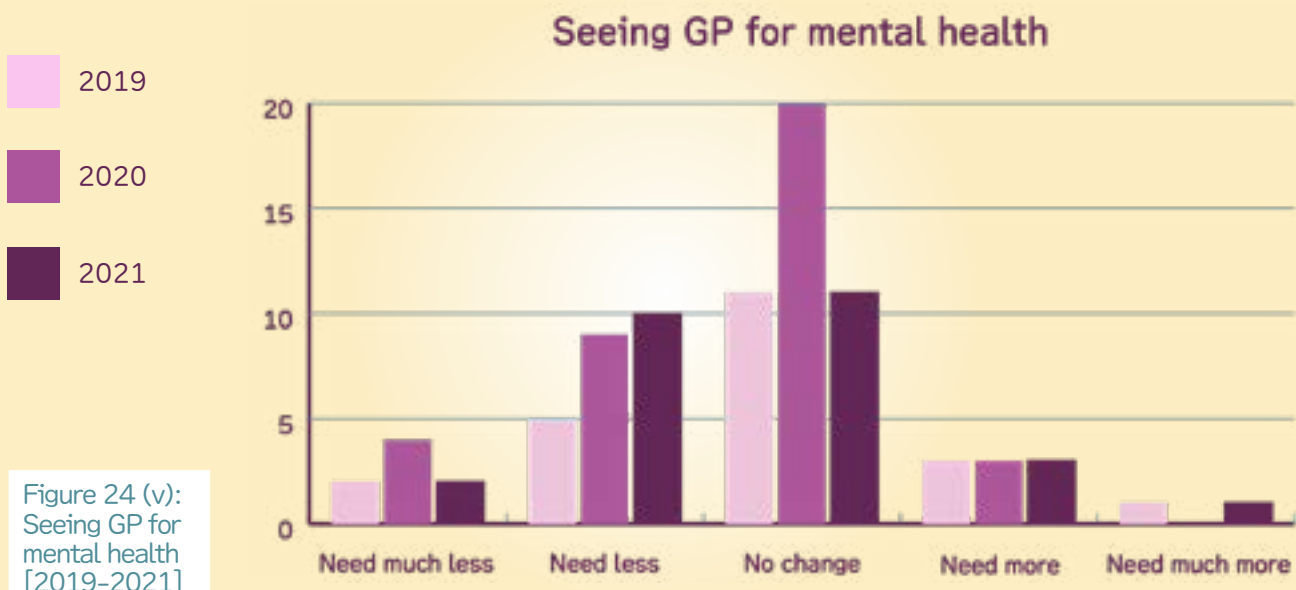
13.3.4 Psychiatrist

Of those who report having a psychiatrist, in 2019 and 2020, 6% and 5% respectively reported **needing their psychiatrist more**, rising considerably to 30% in 2021. In 2019 and 2020, 63% and 80% respectively reported **needing their psychiatrist less**, falling to 41% in 2021. This data reflects that members have **reported much worse mental health in 2021**, but may indicate again that **Arts Network reduces the need for attention from psychiatrists**.



13.3.5 Attending GP for mental health reasons

The number reporting attending their GP due to mental health concerns has also fluctuated between 2019 and 2021. The percentage reporting needing them more was 19% (2019), 8% (2020) and 30% (2021) while the percentage needing them less was 34%, 36% and 44% less respectively. This **slight increase** in the number reporting using their GP less might be due to the **shift from face-to-face to telephone appointments**, and a perception that **appointments are harder to access**, perhaps putting off respondents asking for help.



13.3.6 Attending A&E for mental health reasons

Over the three years, the data suggests that perhaps attending **Arts Network** has a **protective effect** on the number of members reporting attending A&E due to mental health concerns, **reducing the number of attendances**. In 2019, 0% needed it more, but 62% reported needing it less; in 2020, 3% reported needing A&E more, while 33% reported needing it less; and in 2021, 7% reported needing it more and 43% reported needing it less.

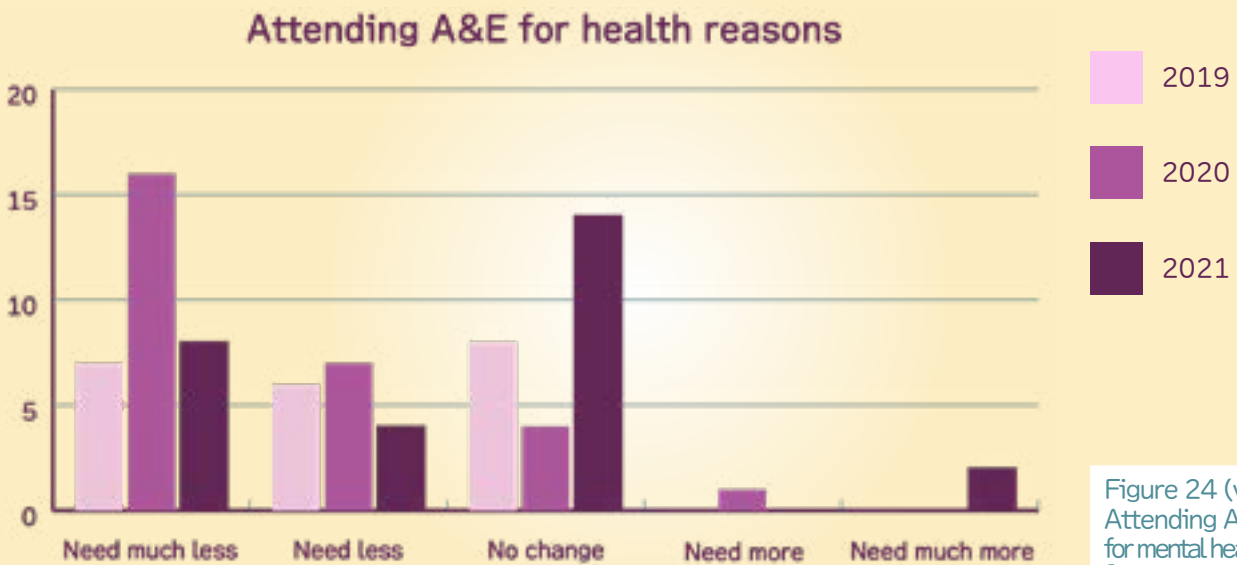


Figure 24 (vi): Attending A&E for mental health [2019-2021]

13.3.7 Use of crisis team/home treatment services

This **protective effect from Arts Network** may also be reflected in reported use of **crisis team/home treatment services**. In 2019, 5% needed it more, compared with 72% saying they needed it less. In 2020, 3% needed it more, while 56% needed it less. In 2021, 11% needed it more, while 37% needed it less.

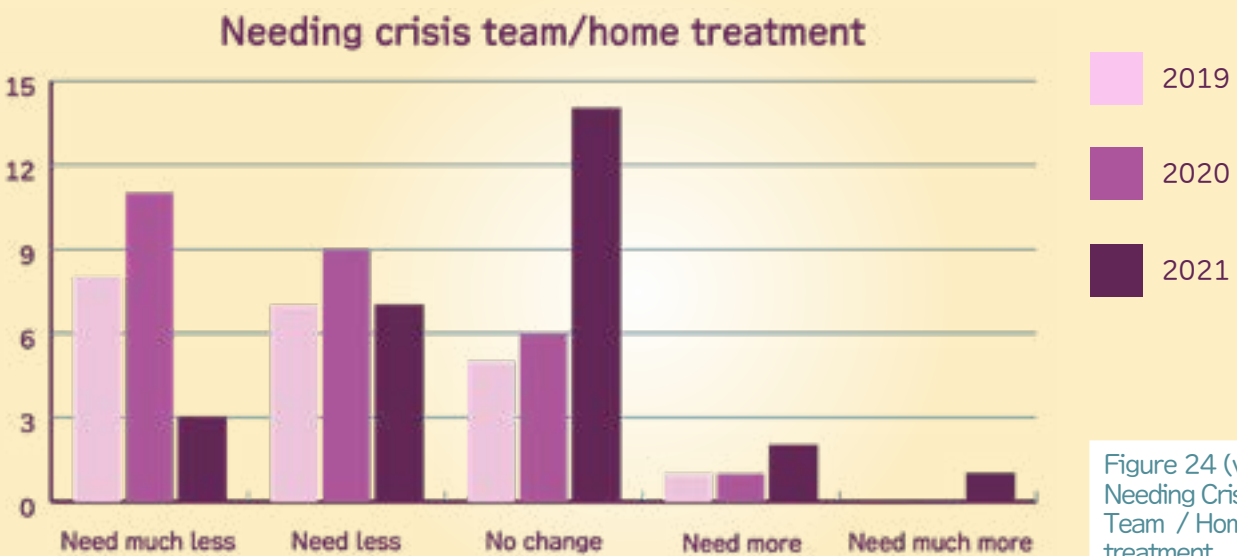
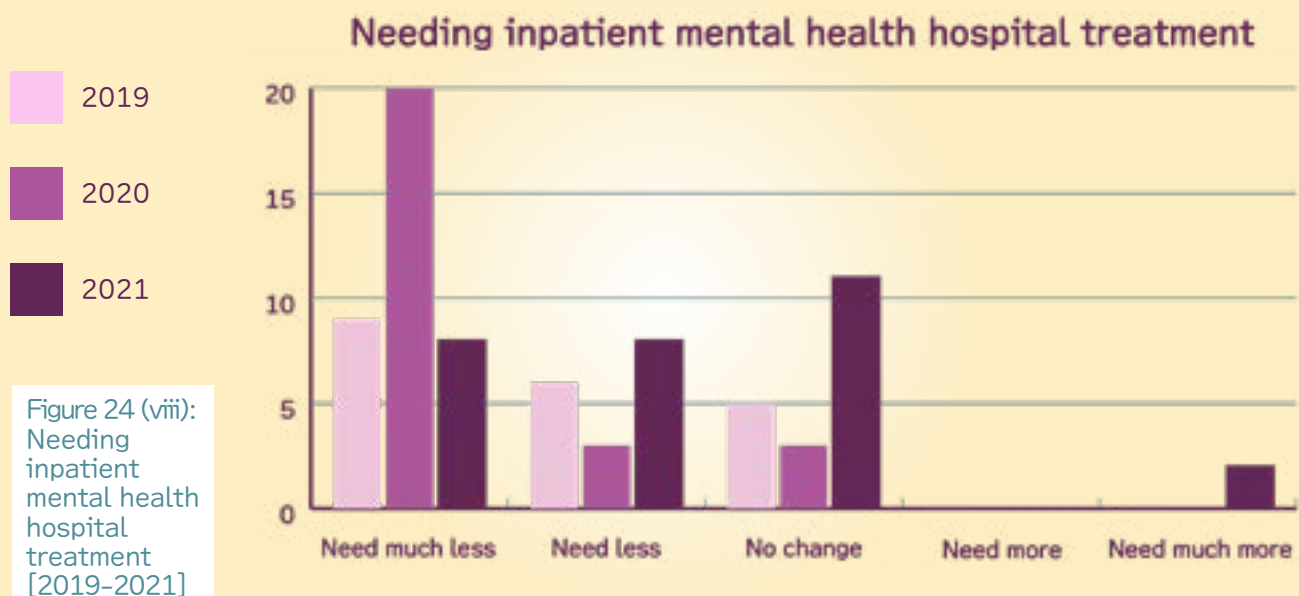


Figure 24 (vii): Needing Crisis Team / Home treatment [2019-2021]

13.3.8 Use of inpatient mental healthcare

A **protective effect of Arts Network** is also suggested by the **self-reported use of inpatient mental healthcare**, even with the lockdown causing members' mental health to worsen. In 2019 and 2020 0% reported needing this type of care more, rising to 7% reporting that they needed inpatient care more in 2021. In 2019, 72% reported needing inpatient treatment less; falling to 64% in 2020 and 56% in 2021.



The impact of the Corona Virus lockdown on mental health services and GP care nationally has been considerable. **Many people have experienced a deterioration in their mental health during this time**, making already stretched services even more thin. This may lead to **services being rationed** – seeing their CPN, support worker or psychiatrist is in the control of services rather than the individual, so **use of services may be a poor indicator of a person's actual need/severity of their mental health difficulties**. All of this is outside of Arts Network's control. Despite this, the data here does **suggest a relationship between attending Arts Network and a reduction in members' self-reported use of the whole spectrum of mental health services**. This protective effect seems to be particularly strong for unplanned emergency care for example, A&E attendance, crisis team/home treatment services, and inpatient mental healthcare.

14. Conclusions

Arts Network have **worked extremely** hard to support their members throughout a very challenging and uncertain time. Through *Stay Connected* magazine and their online social media activities, they were able to **maintain a sense of community among their members** during the enforced lockdown; social relationships remain important to members. In terms of mental health service use, despite 74% reporting worse mental health, Arts Network seems to have **retained its protective effect, apparently reducing members' self-reported mental health service use**, which was most obvious in use of unplanned emergency mental healthcare, such as A&E, crisis team/home treatment, and inpatient services. Arts Network is now more **financially secure**, allowing it to **plan for the future** in different ways. It's growing list of partnerships will allow it to **share expertise**, and perhaps offer more **possible roles for members in voluntary and paid opportunities**. The new workshop, which they will move to in 2023, is an extremely exciting development. However, alongside all of these many opportunities, Arts Network should be aware of the possible **risks posed by over-expansion** in terms of focusing too much on future developments and possibly neglecting the day-to-day offerings. Care will also need to be taken **supporting members to get back to the workshop after extended isolation**.

