



# WORKING ONLINE GUIDELINES

## 1. SCOPE

This guideline applies to all paid staff, trustees, volunteers, freelance staff, sessional workers, trainees, students or anyone working on behalf of Art Refuge (hereafter referred to as “staff”), or coming into contact with service users (directly or indirectly) for the purpose of Art Refuge business.

## 2. PURPOSE

This guideline is intended for all freelance art therapists and artists (facilitators) working online for Art Refuge during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as beyond the pandemic as service provision evolves to suit new ways of working in an increasingly technology-connected world.

## 3. GUIDANCE

### A. CLEAR INFORMATION DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 is a rapidly developing global pandemic with regular changes to official guidance. Many individuals with whom Art Refuge interact during the course of our duties may feel anxious about their circumstances, including the impact of the pandemic on their physical safety and mental health. Sharing information with these individuals should be done in the following manner:

- Be transparent about how you are following current COVID-19 guidance.
- Discuss possible arrangements in the case that the service user and/or provider is required to self-isolate, or if government policy changes to limit face-to-face therapeutic interactions. Discuss how new arrangements will likely affect therapeutic sessions.
- Inform individuals of statutory sources of crisis support where appropriate.
- Ensure individuals are aware of infection control advice, and signpost them to official sources where needed.
- Use language interpreters where possible and needed.

## **B. CONDUCT DURING VIDEO/TELEPHONE PSYCHOSOCIAL GROUP SESSIONS**

Online psychosocial group sessions may be delivered by freelance HCPC-registered art therapists and related professionals (facilitators) alongside partner organisations. All staff should consider the **context** in which they work and act appropriately within the environment and type of service(s) provided. They should continue to act in accordance with their profession's code of conduct (e.g. BAAT for art therapists) and respect work environment ethics while working from home (e.g. dress appropriately, no food or drink consumption during the session). To meet the technological requirements for video group sessions, facilitators should ensure that all parties involved have basic audio-visual arrangements:

- Secure password-protected WiFi network(s) with stable connection of an appropriate speed
- A laptop, PC, tablet or other smart device
- Access to audio and video input and output

## **C. SAFETY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

In line with GDPR requirements and after consideration of various software, Art Refuge has decided to only use the Zoom app to contact individuals via video call. Zoom Video Conferencing is recommended as the preferred Video Conferencing software due to features that protect client data. Some of these features include:

- Chat logs are not automatically stored after a call ends.
- Screen sharing requests more information about what will be shared
- The platform is less integrated with address books, resulting in less pop-up notifications relating to individuals and less tracking of who is online and the timing of their online activity.

Nevertheless, all staff should be aware of the safety and confidentiality risks concerning online methods of service provision. To mitigate the risk of confidentiality breaches, facilitators should:

- Only use Art Refuge's official Zoom account. Facilitators will be provided with the account login details prior to the session, after which they will use the account to invite individuals to join a scheduled session.
- Always work in pairs.
- Choose a room in which to conduct online sessions that is private and away from distractions or interruptions, and ensure all individuals attending the session are comfortable and not overheard or observed by those external to the session.
- Advise all parties in the Zoom call to use headphones to improve the quality of audio transmission and minimise the risk of confidentiality breaches.
- Use secure password-protected WiFi network(s).
- Only the use of an individual's initials (rather than names) in record-keeping and communications.
- Ensure all individuals are blind-copied (i.e. BCC) into email communications with the rest of the group to avoid sharing personal contact information.

## **D. SAFEGUARDING**

All staff members and sessional workers will continue to adhere to the Art Refuge Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. Safeguarding issues and concerns whilst working within a host organisation should be reported in accordance with the host organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures. Safeguarding issues and concerns whilst working on independent or collaborative Art Refuge projects should be directed to the Art Refuge Safeguarding Officer, or in her absence, the CEO.

**Safeguarding Officer:** Sarah Robinson, [sarahrobinson@artrefuge.org.uk](mailto:sarahrobinson@artrefuge.org.uk), 07 939 764 152

**CEO:** Bobby Lloyd, [bobbylloyd@artrefuge.org.uk](mailto:bobbylloyd@artrefuge.org.uk), 07 932 809 816

## **4. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This guideline is fully supported by the Board of Trustees and the CEO of Art Refuge. It will be disseminated to all staff. The guideline will be monitored and reviewed annually.