

# Social Impact Report 2020/2021





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# Introduction



2020 - 2021 was Dancing for Health's first year trading as a Community Interest Company. It has been a difficult and different year. Yet despite the challenges faced, we have worked really hard to be resilient and diversify our services to continue to support our clients.

When all our in person services had to stop because of social distancing rules, we had to quickly adapt our services for online delivery.

We created an online seated dancing programme which not only supported our existing dance clients, it enabled us to widen our target audience and be able to offer the classes to clients with a disability and elderly clients that had multiple barriers to activity.

Our online chair based activity classes was suitable for all abilities, making it very inclusive. It also helped us reduce social isolation and boost our clients physical and mental health through the pandemic.

Although our activity was reduced to a minimum and our services restricted to only the online seated dancing classes, we have still planned for the companies future.

Our aims and objectives for growth of the company, is through our instructor training programme and widening our reach to support more vulnerable people than we can at this present time. With this goal in mind we completed our instructor training course. This was endorsed by EMD UK the National Governing Body for group exercise.

This report highlights some of the positive social impacts we have made. Including some inspiring testimonials and powerful participant feedback.

We are grateful to our participants for their engagement and hope they will continue to enjoy our services, plus the new sessions we have planned moving forward.

We would also like to thank all our partners for their important and valued contributions, support and opportunities that have enabled us to continue our work in the community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tracey Barnes'.

Tracey Barnes  
Managing Director

## **Our Aim**

Our aim is to make a difference, to positively impact the lives of others and to share the joy of dance.

To make dance inclusive for everyone, and to improve physical and mental well-being and health benefits through the power of dance.

# **DANCING FOR HEALTH STRATEGIES**

## **Our Vision**

It is our vision to assist and help people with many different health issues and to see these physical and social activity programmes rolled out nationwide. We will create sustainable dance intervention therapy programmes, through our endorsed instructor training course.

## **Our Instructor Training**

Through our new instructor training courses, we will build a network of independent Dancing for Health instructors.

We will also train staff who work within the health and social care sector, enabling them to integrate our programmes into their support services.

## **Our Programmes**

- Seated Dancing
- Partner Dancing
- 1-1 Assisted dancing & Supported Standing

***Our programmes truly enable our participants to dance their way to better health!***

## **Our Research**

We have already done evaluation studies with Sheffield Hallam and Manchester Metropolitan Universities on our partner dancing programme, for clients who have an illness with no cure and their partners. We have further research studies planned with Dublin University and The Irish Lung Foundation for our seated dancing programme for clients with a respiratory condition.



# Our Online Projects

# Our Year in Numbers



129 Participants Engaged



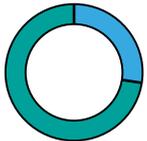
77 Online Sessions Delivered



1,478 Number of attendances



1,816 Number of hours of participant increased activity



74% women  
26% men



Age range from 30-92



36 Participants with a disability



81% Adults 50+



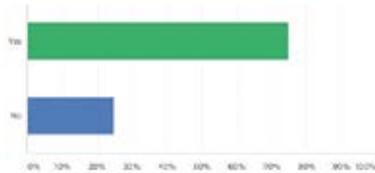
# Participant Feedback

## QUANTITATIVE OBSERVATIONS

Here is a sample of some of the quantitative data collected from a participant feedback survey about the online seated dancing programme.

Do you feel the dancing sessions have reduced your stress or anxiety levels?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

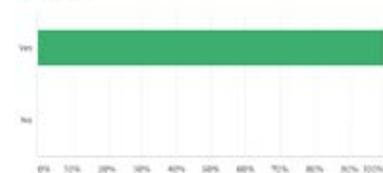


75% of participants that answered the survey felt the sessions reduced their stress or anxiety levels.

100% answered that they had found social and emotional benefits from attending the sessions.

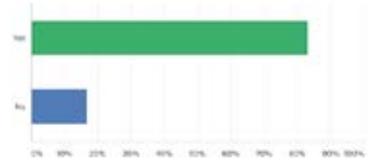
Have you found any social or emotional benefits from attending the seated dancing sessions?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Have you noticed any physical improvements, for example improvements in your mobility or flexibility?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

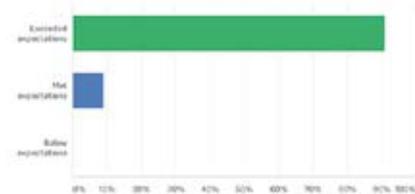


83% of participants noticed physical improvements in mobility or flexibility

90% answered that the dance sessions exceeded expectations

Overall, how happy do you feel with the dance sessions?

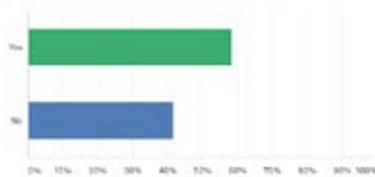
Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



# Participant Feedback

Do you do any other physical activity other than the seated dancing?

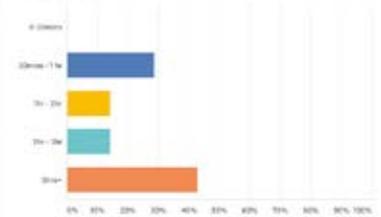
Answered: 12 (100%)



We determined that from the survey results 42% of participants were not participating in any physical activity prior to our seated dancing sessions, therefore we increased their activity by 1-2hrs every week.

If you answered yes to the previous question, how much time are you physically active each week?

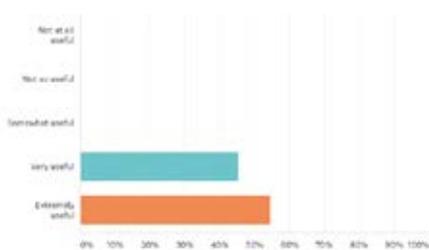
Answered: 7 (100%)



Of the other participants surveyed they were all doing between 30mins and over 3 hours activity each week with a good 43% doing over 3 hours activity each week. All participants therefore had their activity increased by 1-2 hours each and every week, depending on whether they did one or two sessions of the seated dancing.

How helpful did you find the dance sessions?

Answered: 11 (100%)



## QUALITATIVE OBSERVATIONS

Qualitative data was also gathered through providing feedback comment boxes for participants to write their own personal comments. All participants expressed an enjoyment of the dancing programme. They mentioned improvements in their physical well being, mental well being and social relationships. Here are some participant sample comments:

### Physical Wellbeing

Participants had physical symptoms such as breathing difficulties, fatigue, aching limbs and restrictions in mobility. The dancing sessions were designed with these health needs in mind, and dancers appreciated the seated format, the adaptations and feeling comfortable at being able to opt out and rest when they needed to.

*“Improved mobility to left hand side and muscle strength ”*

*“I found the dance moves helpful as my limbs are quite stiff ”*

*“More fun than I expected and lasting benefits on shoulders and neck”*

*“Only exercise I can do by myself, don’t need any one to help me.”*

*“Seated dancing has much improved my shoulder - impingement condition. ”*

*“I suffer with osteoarthritis so am generally stiff with joints, The seated dancing has helped me stay mobile and uplifted mentally ”*

*“I would recommend these sessions to everyone, especially those who have life impacting issues. These sessions help connect us with others at this challenging time. I would also comment that the teacher Tracey Barnes is so empathic towards us the participants and not all dance instructors possess these kind of traits which Tracey practises; I say this as someone who once attended a dance class*

*years ago and thought never again as it was run by a teacher who put me off forever, but Tracey has changed my perception of what a dance teacher can be. Thanks Tracey!”*

### Mental Wellbeing

Participants talked about the dancing being a distraction from their illness and having positive effects on their mental well-being.

*“Future sessions would be very welcome! Something positive to look forward to, that brings physical and emotional benefits, and helps you to leave behind any thoughts of loneliness and discomfort.”*

*“ They help me forget my worries and take me away from my own thoughts, especially the stress associated with not being able to get outside because of the pandemic and having to shield ”*

*“ The sessions increase my feel good feeling, both physically and psychologically by doing , seeing others , thinking , and feeling ”*

### Social Relationships

All the participants talked about the benefits and importance they felt from the social interaction of the group. The whole group bonded very well, they shared experiences, and new friendships have formed that will hopefully continue outside the dance sessions.

*“ The fun and social element of the activity adds to the enjoyment of it ”*

*“ Seeing other people during this difficult time is uplifting”*

*“ As a lover of dance just hearing the music leaves you with a happy feeling and helps to relieve any tension. The social aspect is also of great benefit”*

*" You lose confidence through shielding and lockdown about going out so its been good to have the chance to feel you are surrounded with friends for a time and the music sets you up for the rest of the day, sometimes singing along and dancing round the kitchen. "*

*" Knowing that we are not alone during this strange period and connecting with people who are / have gone / going through similar medical / body experiences as myself "*

### **Other Comments**

*" These sessions have been invaluable to me"*

*"I really enjoy the movement, the music, the exercise. I will never be able to walk or dance again, but it's the next best thing"*

*" I absolutely love it and it's something to look forward to. Puts something in my diary! "*



# Our Partners



# What we have done

Thanks to our partners either through grant funding or purchase of our dance programmes for their service users, Dancing for Health has been able to continue to create and deliver dance therapy programmes to help support vulnerable people in our local community.

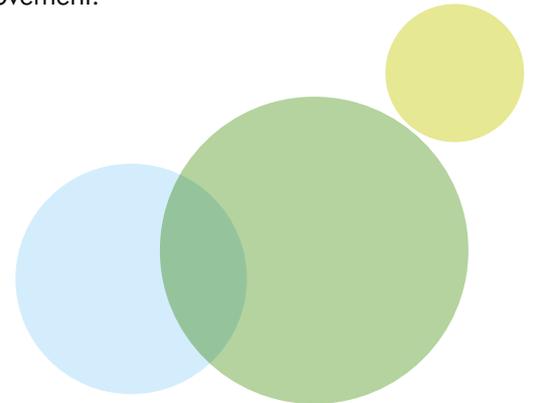
Our beneficiaries include those who may be chronically ill, elderly, bereaved, suffering with cancer, terminally ill or suffering with mental health issues such as anxiety or depression. Some participants may be physically disabled, reliant on a wheelchair or walking aids for their mobility or have co-ordination issues due to brain injury/stroke/Parkinson's Disease.

The multiple lockdowns have markedly reduced activity and boosted isolation in vulnerable adults especially individual's that received guidance to shield. Subsequently they have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19,

and experienced heightened anxiety and depression, and further barriers to physical activity as a result.

Throughout the pandemic, our online seated dancing classes, enabled our vulnerable clients to stay safe and healthy at home. They provided physical movement and social activities, that supported physical and mental wellbeing, providing connection and positive mental health whilst reducing isolation and loneliness.

Overall, the results in our participant surveys demonstrated improvement for all participants of the Seated Dancing programmes. Some participants showed greater change than others but everybody demonstrated some level of improvement.



# Testimonials

Dancing  
for Health CIC



“ I try not to think about my disability and just get on with my everyday life, but when the pandemic hit and I was stuck in isolating, I started to feel depressed, frustrated and isolated. The seated dancing has made such a difference to me. I can't thank you enough! ”

**Kay, from Dronfield**



Dancing  
for Health CIC



“ I cannot stand or walk independently due to a spinal injury. Joining in the seated dancing is something that I look forward to. It's enjoyable and motivating, encouraging me to do my exercises. I have a physiotherapist every week and they have noticed an improvement in my upper body strength and mobility. ”

**Flora, from Sheffield**



Dancing  
for Health CIC



“ The choice of music for the seated dancing is full of energy and uplifts your mood, even on the duller days. And with all this enjoyment going on, you forget the lockdown, your discomfort and pain and feeling lonely, and the hour passes all too quickly. ”

**Sharon, from Sheffield**



Dancing  
for Health CIC



“ I have many side effects from my cancer treatment and initially I thought ...ooh chair dancing... not for me....but roll on a few sessions... my joints feel looser, less painful and my brain is switched on because I'm connecting brain and limbs. Its good for you and fun and it doesn't matter if we do it wrong! ”

**Pauline, from Sheffield**

# Testimonials



“ I would just like to tell you how much my head and neck rotation has improved since joining your seated dancing classes. I love the music and making new acquaintances with other participants. ”

**Mary, from Sheffield**



“ Because I have been diagnosed with chronic rheumatoid arthritis and unfortunately have also suffered three strokes, my mobility and balance is greatly impaired. Since doing the seated dancing both my physical and emotional well-being is amazing. Both muscle strength, particularly on the left side of my body which was affected by my last stroke, and general mobility through my joints is much improved. ”

**Debbie, from Sheffield**



# Dancing for Health CIC™



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