

# Creative Arts Therapy Practice During Covid 19

## Survey Findings

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## Introduction

The Covid 19 emergency has ruptured the day to day fabric of living in ways that have been both profound and also as yet unseen and never before have the Creative Arts Therapies been forced to evaluate, reconsider and reconstruct the delivery of clinical practice in such an unexpected and fundamental way.

This research sought to establish a clear picture of how many Creative Arts Therapists have moved their practice online and the reasons that may have informed those decisions. It also wanted to determine what percentage of Creative Art Therapists income has been impacted by the suspension of employment or building closure.

This document refers to the statistical elements of the survey only, the debates, comments and contributions will be presented and further discussed in an article to be published in, '*Polyphony*' Journal of the Irish Association of Creative Arts Therapists at a later date.

Finally, thank you to all the Creative Arts Therapists who completed the survey.

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MAAth MIACAT

June 2020

## Methodology

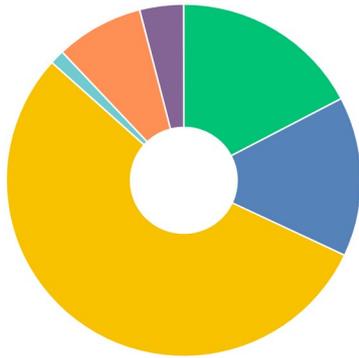
- An on-line survey of Creative Arts Therapists registered with IACAT was undertaken between April 28th – June 2nd 2020 using Survey Monkey. The link was distributed via IACAT's social media including Facebook and Instagram.
- Additionally direct invitations to participate were sent via email using IACAT's members directory.
- The Survey comprised of 10 questions across specific areas including:
  - a) Clinical practice delivery during Covid 19
  - b) Training
  - c) Digital confidence
  - d) Utilising online therapy.
- Respondents were also invited to expand on their answers.
- Submitted surveys were received from 70\* Creative Arts Therapists across five modalities.
- Respondents were invited to expand on their answers in of the questions and 273 comments were contributed.

\* Iacat has approximately 248 active members, 70 represents a response rate of 28.23 % of the registered membership.

## Findings

### 1. MODALITY

The modality breakdown reflected of IACAT’s overall membership with Art Therapy being the largest group 60.29% and Dance Movement Therapy the smallest at 1.47%.

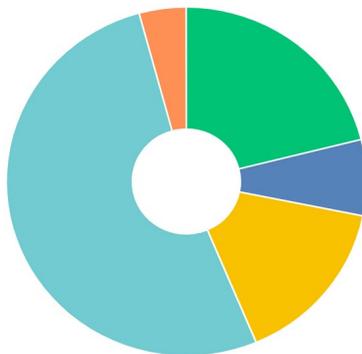


Art Therapy	60.29%
Drama Therapy	19.12%
Music Therapy	16.18%
Creative Art Therapy	8.82%
Dance Therapy	1.47%
Other	3 comments

Figure One: Modality.

### 2. INCOME

Respondents were asked what percentage of their Creative Arts Therapy income has been impacted by the Covid 19 shutdown. The largest group, 54.41% responded that that 75-100% of their income had been impacted. In total 70.59% have had 50% of their income affected while 22.06% have experienced a lesser drop of 0-25%.



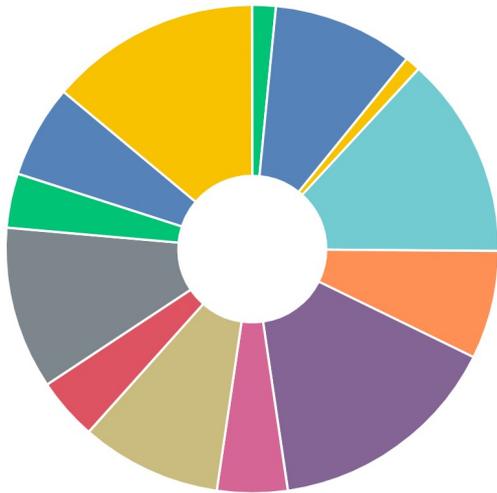
0-25 %	22.06%
25-50%	7.35%
50-75%	16.18%
75-100%	54.41%
Other	3 comments

Figure Two: Percentage of income impacted by Covid 19.

### 3. DELIVERY

Respondents were asked to specify whether during the current situation they had supported existing clients via distance therapy or online therapy and if so via what means. It also addressed supervision asking respondents if they had received or delivered online supervision. There was also an additional 27 written contributions.

4.

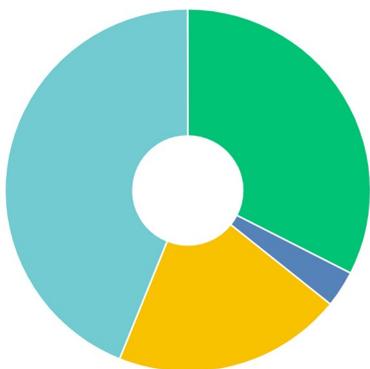


Supported existing clients via telephone	43.48%
Online therapy clients via video platform such as Zoom.	38.03%
Received supervision online.	30.99%
Distance therapy via telephone.	26.76%
Supported existing clients via video platform such as Zoom.	26.76%
Supported existing clients via email	19.72%
I don't currently have access to my clients.	18.31%
Supported existing clients via email.	12.68%
Delivered supervision online.	11.27%
I have suspended my practice.	9.86%
Distance therapy via email.	4.23%
Distance therapy through instant message.	2.82%

Figure Three: Delivery Method and Type.

#### 4. UTILISING ONLINE THERAPY

This area was included to determine whether Creative Arts Therapist thought that the clinical use of online practice should be for the duration of the Covid 19 crisis only or continue as a specific method of practice when and if the situation ends. 58% of respondents thought that online therapy should continue to be utilised, 36.76% stated for the Covid crisis only and 5.88% that it should not be used at all.



Yes	58.82%
No	5.88%
During Covid Crisis Only	36.76 %
Why?	54 comments

Figure Four: Utilising Online Therapy.

## 5. ADDITIONAL TRAINING

This question addressed additional training Creative Arts Therapist may have undertaken both since qualifying and during the Covid 19 situation in order to practice both safely and ethically online.

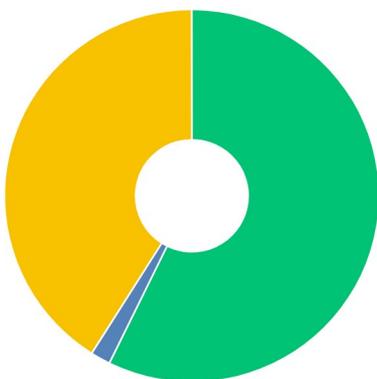


No	53.85 %
Yes	43.08%
In a physical building	0%
Online	36.92%
Description	34 comments

Figure Five: Additional training undertaken

## 6. STUDENT TRAINING

Respondents were asked to consider of future training Creative Arts Therapist should receive online therapy training accompanied by additional training in arising ethical and confidentiality issues. The response was a definitive yes at 98% and no registered at 2.94% with 48 comments contributing to the debate.



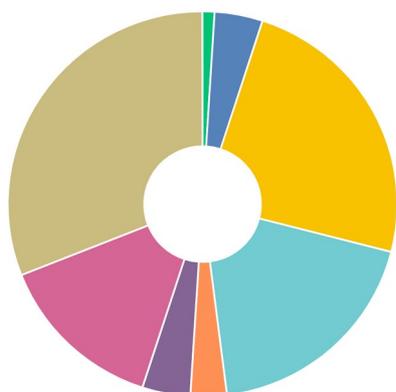
Yes	98.53%
No	2.94%%
Why?	48 comments

Figure Six: Student training

## 7. CLINICAL CONFIDENCE IN THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY.

Creative Arts Therapists were asked to consider their clinical confidence in the use of technology in clinical practice using a rating scale of 1-5 with one being not very confident and five very confident. The majority of respondents reported a technological confidence in the mid-range of three at 34.78%.

6.

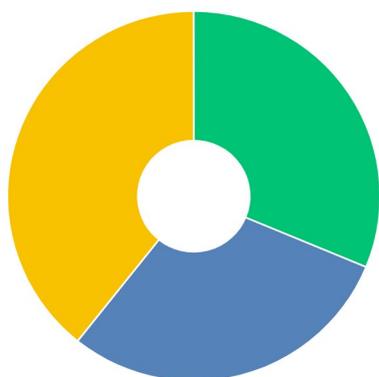


One	1.45%
Two	5.8%
Three	34.78%
Four	27.54%
Five	4.35%
I have not used technology clinically.	5.8%
I have not delivered online therapy	20.29%
Please say more	31 comments

Figure Seven: Clinical Confidence in the use of technology

## 8. DELIVERING ONLINE THERAPY DURING THE COVID 19 EMERGENCY

The overall result for those Creative Arts Therapists who did or did not deliver online therapy during the Covid 19 emergency was very evenly split with 51.47% indicating that they did and 48.53% indicating that they did not.



I delivered online therapy during the Covid 19 emergency.	51.47%
I have not delivered online therapy during the Covid 19 emergency.	48.53%
Please say more.	31 comments

Figure Eight: Delivering Online Therapy

## 9. SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR UTILISING/NOT UTILISING ONLINE CREATIVE ARTS THERAPY

From the 45 written contributions in this element of the survey, respondents identified specific reasons for either utilising or not utilising online Creative Arts Therapy, they are summarised below.

REASONS IDENTIFIED FOR UTILISING ONLINE PRACTICE	REASONS IDENTIFIED FOR NOT UTILISING ONLINE PRACTICE
Connection to clients during Covid 19.	Lack of training.
Accessibility.	No access to clients.
As a support to those unable to attend physically.	Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed
Means to an end.	The therapeutic intervention is diminished.
Useful learning opportunity.	Preference for face to face work
Environmental concerns/ reduces need to travel.	Authenticity of the sessions is lost.
Informs therapeutic process.	Lack of experience at delivering online therapy.
The online platform can itself become a medium that brings a new dimension to the creative space.	Connectivity issues.
Client demand.	Lack of confidence in the use of technology.
Expansion of what can be offered to clients.	Safety of online platforms & conflicting advice on ethics.
Flexibility.	Not the same as, 'real life'.
It gives choice to the client.	It creates a barrier between between client & therapist.

## CONCLUSION

These findings may or may not be tied to a unique and specific time in our history but it will be interesting to see how the use of online therapy and digital technology develops in the Creative Arts Therapies in Ireland. Incomes have been severely impacted, offline access to clients abruptly curtailed, ethical codes expanded and additional training undertaken. There are also implications for future training therapists; will they now also undergo training in online therapy in preparation for a return of, or future emergency or will digital training continue to be primarily self initiated and post qualification?

As the world starts to discover what now constitutes normal, the Creative Arts Therapies will potentially undergo a process of reflection and questioning about what shape it will form itself into; be that a return to face to face therapy only, a combination of offline/ online practice driven by client demand or offline practice only as a reserve. The issues presented through the findings of this survey are only the tip of exploring an emerging practice, fast tracked by the Covid 19 emergency but it's clear that while there may be a wide variation in supporting the use of digital practice within the profession, the Creative Arts Therapies in Ireland are cognisant of the responsibilities, implications, potential and pitfalls that digital practice brings.

***“Our practice maybe changed for ever.”***

**Survey respondent.**

**9.**

