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## Background

Caring for people living with dementia presents profound challenges to families and society, and the growing global burden is vastly underestimated. WHO (2019) recommends to integrate the arts in the social care and health sectors to support health and well-being throughout the life course and across the continuum of care.

In this context museums are predestined places for people with dementia because... they are public cultural places, freely accessible and make it easy for them to participate.

Participation in social life and experiencing "**normality**" is a great need of many people who live with dementia. Art is multi-layered and thus also gives possibilities for discussions on a non-cognitive level, as well as it offers a space for communication which is based on perception.

In museum programme “Susitikime muziejuje” we open the space for the experience of „normality“ by developing cross-sectorial partnerships. The programme includes:

- training for museum staff,
- museum tours and workshops,
- evaluation,
- revision of the training programme and museum tours&workshops, based on the evaluation results.

Until now there 32 museum professionals from 15 art museums in Lithuania took part in the training.

## Impact on the Well-being

In 2019 we delivered museum tours and aimed to evaluate the programme’s impact on the well-being of people living with dementia, their carers and family members and their community development.

The evaluation was carried out in from May to August, 2019, in the Museum of Design and Applied Art in Vilnius in Lithuania. The evaluation included:

- observation of the museum activity sessions;
- focus group interviews (n=10) with the participants (in total n=89) after the museum activity sessions. The qualitative data was analysed using the thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the museum activity sessions imagination and interpretations of the art works were fostered through multi-layered experience that included discussions and stimulation of different senses:

- Sight - exploration of the artworks using „Meet me at MoMA“ method (Museum of Modern Art, 2009);
- Touch – exploration of diverse surfaces;
- Sound and Music – creating accompanying sounds and melodies together with the participants;
- Smell – smells accompany visual or tactile exploration;
- Dance and movement – story telling through movement, non-verbal communication.

## Results

The project “Susitikime muziejuje“:

- provided opportunity for people living with dementia, their carers and family members to engage in art activities in a safe, failure free and friendly environment;
- stimulated learning and self – expression in equal participation; increased self-esteem;
- helped to relax;
- enhanced participants’ mood while experiencing a meaningful and joyful here and now moment;
- increased a sense of community
- and improved communication;
- participants learned new things about self and each other with no negative experiences of the participation in the programme were stated.

## Conclusions

Museum arts programming “Susitikime muziejuje” had a positive impact on the well-being of people living with dementia and their carers and strengthened their sense of community.

The programme contributed to the research in dementia care and supported the evidence the cultural sector can play an active role in cross-sectorial partnerships development and supporting person-centred approach in dementia care.



VIEW NOW

“Susitikime muziejuje”, Multi-sensory arts activity programme visit in a museum space.

