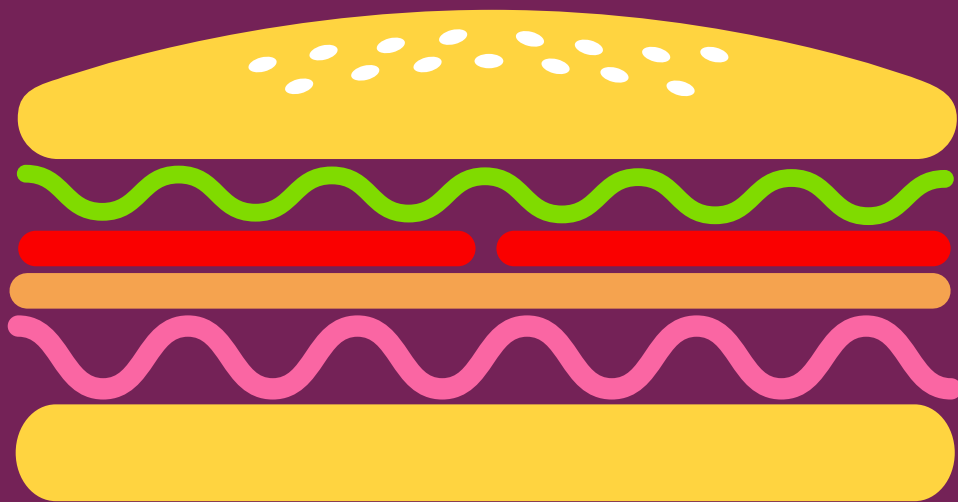


# A Piece About

## HUMAN RIGHT TO PERSONAL EXPRESSION



Over 20 different strands of work took place between March and October 2022 as part of Rights Made Real Phase 2.

Each of these strands was situated under one of 4 Human Rights.

This Slice offers a slice of insight into one of those strands.

# A PIECE ABOUT HUMAN RIGHT TO PERSONAL EXPRESSION

## Introduction

Welcome to this Piece.

The Right to Personal Expression has been understood within Rights Made Real to be central for the realisation of the other rights being explored in this project, in that it is through finding out what is important and valued by the person that we can endeavour to explore how they would like their rights to be realised. Personal Expression may also be understood as an 'end goal', that by working to realise human rights we are ultimately enabling the person to express their choices for their life.

The National Care Standards have numerous statements which pertain to Personal Expression, a number of these include:

1.7 I am supported to discuss significant changes in my life, including death or dying, and this is handled sensitively.

1.9 I am recognised as an expert in my own experiences, needs and wishes.

1.15 My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.

2.8 I am supported to communicate in a way that is right for me, at my own pace, by people who are sensitive to me and my needs.

2.11 My views will always be sought and my choices respected, including when I have reduced capacity to fully make my own decisions.

2.12 If I am unable to make my own decisions at any time, the views of those who know my wishes, such as my carer, independent advocate, formal or informal representative, are sought and taken into account.

4.20 I know how, and can be helped, to make a complaint or raise a concern about my care and support.

The statements above refer to the outputs and outcomes of when a person's right to personal expression has been realised; the work in Rights Made Real outlined below explores some of the processes and practices that can support these outputs and outcomes to be achieved.

## About this Piece

The term 'piece' has been used for two reasons:

Firstly, the ideas and questions presented in this document are 'a piece' of the picture in relation to the human right to participation in cultural life for people living in care homes; and we appreciate that there is much more to be said about this human right.

Secondly, the 'piece' plays with the idea of a Scottish sandwich, where between slices of bread there is a tasty filling.

The slices (structure) in the Rights Made Real project were 6 strands of work (termed 'Opportunities' in the project) which took place under the theme of Right to Participation in Cultural Life. These slices are listed below. There is a full description of these slices available at [www.rightsmadereal.org.uk](http://www.rightsmadereal.org.uk) under the Resources Tab.

The 'fillings' are the key theme, learning, and further curiosities that emerged during the course of the project, this learning is also outlined below.

At the end of each filling is 'an open curiosity'; a question to which there is most likely no one neat answer and is designed to spark further conversation.

All the resources referenced in this piece are also freely available [www.rightsmadereal.org.uk](http://www.rightsmadereal.org.uk) under the Resources Tab- Right to Personal Expression Resources.

## The Slices- Overview of the Strands of Work (Opportunities) that Took Place to Explore this Human Right

### **Elderflowers Visits**

Online, and in-person visits, from Lily & Blossom Elderflower, therapeutic clowns working with Hearts & Minds

### **Gathering Stories of Positive Practices Related to Personal Expression**

Detail of methods used to gather and explore stories from care home staff on the theme of connection & the right to personal expression

### **Magic Moments Activity Boxes & Workshops**

Boxes containing a range of items carefully selected to explore light, touch, colour and sensory ways of working. Online workshops to support staff in introducing the items to residents.

### **Namaste Care Training**

Online workshops introducing care home staff to the Namaste Care™ approach.

### **Personalised Musical Moments**

A residency in two care homes by musician Jane Bentley, developing personalised musical care for people experiencing later stages of dementia.

## Resource Development

Resources which explore the person's sensory environment, as well as reflective resources when responding to concerns & complaints.

## Creating Connections with the Principles from the National Care Standards

A summary of the ways in which the principles were brought to life are listed below; further description is available in each of the individual 'slice' documents.

- Raising awareness of ways in which to tune into how to connect in a range of ways with a person, even if language is not present, where the emphasis is on no one desired outcome, and no right or wrong for the person with dementia
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- It emphasises small and significant invitations to connect that are playful and build on where the person is at.
- Sharing options of different activities which are accessible to everyone including those with cognitive and sensory impairments, and those who spend much of their day in bed
- Encouraging the creation of an enriched sensory environment which in turn can enable the person to experience and express comfort, interest, satisfaction
- Creating opportunities for staff to further deepen their awareness of what the resident values, through noticing their responses
- An invitation to staff to intentionally reflect on the theme of 'personal expression' and celebrate what helps them to tune into and find out more about what is important to residents

## Filling 1- Personal Expression for People Who No Longer Use Words- Lingo of Connection

Across the various Opportunities (slices) within the project, attention was given to ways in which to support connection and personal expression for people with later stage dementia, particularly those who may no longer use words.

From the work in the project, a resource called 'Lingo of Connection' was developed which shares the learning in a way that invites people to reflect, and possibly take some ideas into their own practice.

The 'Lingo of Connection' resource taps into a small number of ways in which to connect with people with later stage dementia, whilst also recognising the skills and expertise of those who work everyday with people with later stage dementia.

There are 3 themes within the Lingo of Connection resource-

### **Eye Spy- What hints can we find in the glint of an eye?**

This theme focuses on small, brief, often subtle moments of connection and so encourages being attentive to noticing responses, however small.

### **We have enough- we are enough, to create connection**

A reflective exercise on existing strengths, within the care home environment and within staff, that support connection and personal expression to happen.

### **The Present of Presence**

3 ideas for connection and personal expression, that originated from collaborators in the project, with a focus on being present to the person with dementia.

### **An Open Curiosity**

Within the Rights Made Real project personal expression for people who no longer use words became intertwined with connecting with people who no longer use words- might there have been other framings that could have been used?

## **Filling 2- Conversations which Support Personal Expression- Express Yourself!**

Within the Rights Made Real project there was exploration of ways in which conversational practices can support people living in care homes to express themselves.

The learning from this work is shared under 3 themes in the Express Yourself document which can be found at [www.rightsmadereal.org.uk](http://www.rightsmadereal.org.uk)- Resources Tab- Right to Personal Expression Resources.

### **Theme 1: The Right to Change Our Mind**

Conversations where the person is supported to do something different, or think differently, than what their normal routine might be.

### **Theme 2: Ask the Experts**

Conversations where we are genuinely curious and eager to tap into the different types of knowledge, skills, experience and wisdom of residents, to support people to feel valued and purposeful.

### **Theme 3: Going with the Flow**

Conversations where moving away from needing to remember facts, details, information opens up room for imagination & playfulness- where all ideas are welcome.

In addition, a resource called Shining a Light was developed which built on work which took place in Rights Made Real Phase 1. The Shining a Light resource offers a process and tools to support people to talk about 'what's new' and 'what's next' in resident review meetings, in a way that is engaging and meaningful for everyone involved. Shining a Light is also available at [www.rightsmadereal.org.uk](http://www.rightsmadereal.org.uk) under the Resources Tab- Right to Personal Expression Resources.

## **An Open Curiosity**

The themes outlined above emerged from stories shared by care home staff and collaborators in the project. There are so many stories, waiting to be told, from the perspective of care home residents and staff, that could help deepen our understanding about the right to personal expression. What spaces could we carve out to hear these stories?

## **Filling 3: Hearing & Including the Voice of Care Home Residents- An Engagement Buffet**

In a time of consultation about the National Care Service and National Dementia Strategy, there was a desire within Rights Made Real to give space to exploring what are some of the important considerations when seeking to hear and include the voices of people living with care homes.

A resource called the Engagement Buffet was collaboratively developed with a range of interested parties. The Engagement Buffet is primarily a reflective tool, which can be used by those when you planning and preparing to carry out engagement work to gather the perspectives of people living in care homes. It can also be used more generally to think about what is important to people in terms of engagement work with people living in care homes.

Engagement Buffet is available [www.rightsmadereal.org.uk](http://www.rightsmadereal.org.uk) under the Resources Tab- Right to Personal Expression Resources.

## **An Open Curiosity**

As part of the conversations that led to the development of the Engagement Buffet we asked the question ‘why is it important to include the voice of people living in care homes?’ – this may seem like an insensitive, inappropriate or unnecessary question, and yet might there be a value in asking it to help us to do engagement work well?

## **Saying Your Piece/ Sharing this Piece**

Is there something else that feels important to you about the Right to Personal Expression for people living in care homes?

Were there any of the ‘Open Curiosity’ questions that stood out for you, that you might like to share and discuss with others?