Digital Storytelling:

**Positive Uses in the Training of Health
and Social Care Professionals**

**Silver Stories
Work Package Two – Needs Analysis**

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1.   Introduction

This report will provide a background to digital storytelling work that has taken place in higher education settings, with a focus on working with older people. The report draws upon interviews with current partners and goes further afield to illustrate digital storytelling interventions both in Higher Education settings and in community settings, in which the method has been used with older people, or with students who are training to work with older people in health or social work settings.

The aims of Work Package Two, Needs Analysis are to:

1.   undertake a comparison of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and CPD curricula for those working in the care professions in the partner countries

2.   undertake a detailed assessment of current approaches to the use of ICT in VET and CPD of health and social care professionals

3.   assess the range of therapeutic activities for older people for which the care professionals involved would benefit from being trained in Digital Storytelling techniques

4.   assess the benefits of the support that can be afforded through Digital Storytelling by care professionals who are working with active older people in terms of a) potential continued or re-activated participation in the labour market and b) healthy active ageing through creative engagement with digital technology.

2.   Methodology

The methodology used has included:

•   A survey with partners detailing the use of ICT within VET and CPD curricula in their countries. This was carried out at the Helsinki Transfer Two workshop in February 2014 by interview. [See Appendix One for survey questions].

- Desk research to identify any projects that have used digital storytelling within a VET or CPD context, both formal (institutions) and informal (community or workplace settings). This included online searches and request for information via the Facebook *DS Working Group*, which has a membership of almost 400 practitioners and academics from across the world.

3.   Base Line Survey

The results arising from the needs analysis will inform the Base Line Evaluation survey that will be undertaken by CUCR (Work Package 9).

4.   Findings

The findings below were based on interviews drawing upon expertise across the partnership and desk research. The examples used do not by any means represent the significant digital storytelling work undertaken across the world, especially in Australia and the United States, however they do provide pertinent perspectives on their specific uses of digital storytelling within Higher Education and VET contexts, within the education and training of those who are entering caring and education professions.

4.1   Use of ICT and Digital Storytelling in Higher Education – Silver Stories Partners

The Higher Education experts from the Silver Stories partnership interviewed were:

- Tuula Sarnio – Senior Lecturer, Laurea University Of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland.
- Ossi Salin – Senior Lecturer, Laurea University Of Applied Sciences, Finland, teacher in Education in Social Health Services.
- Balthazar Ricardo Monteiro, Professor and Co-ordinator of the Masters programme in Intervention for Active Ageing, Instituto Politécnico de Leiria, Portugal.

4.1.1 Laurea University of Applied Science, Finland

At Laurea University of Applied Sciences, the Social Work undergraduate programme has 210 credits. Five credits are about working with older people and there are also 20 credits available for optional studies. Special courses relating to the care of the elderly are 'Empowerment and Senior Citizenship'. These run once or twice a year and digital storytelling is included in this programme. The course is not confined to those who are going to specialise in working with older people – digital storytelling is seen as a valuable working method that can be used in many contexts.

The course is underpinned by the [policy for care of the Elderly in Finland](#).[1] According to a new act of parliament, all citizens who are over 75 years of age will receive an individual service plan and a case management plan to enable service provision to be better tailored. Most students are already competent in their use of ICT for accessing online teaching modules and materials and managing their assessed assignments through a relatively recently designed online learning platform. They are also made aware of the e-services available to service users, whether these are older people, or young people at risk, and so on. These include interactive and 'chat' facilities to enable people to find out what is available for them, for example, rights after retirement or availability of activities. Media conferencing is something that is emerging and it is supposed to complement face-to-face services. Some examples of use of this technology can be seen through the [Caring TV](#) model that has been piloted at Laurea for a number of years.

Examples of these kinds of services include an online tool to enable service users to measure their own blood pressure, the results of which are then communicated to health care professionals, such as nurses. These new approaches contribute to cost savings, but they are not meant to replace face-to-face interventions directly. For the team at Laurea, the issue with these kinds of services is that they are very health-focused, but miss the greatest issue facing the elderly, which is loneliness. Social programmes are an effective way to address this, which also contribute to wellbeing and therefore are potentially preventative approaches to health care.

At Laurea, the use of digital storytelling with older people was first piloted during the earlier project *Extending Creative Practice*. This pioneering project trained students in a specially designed module in the practice of digital storytelling and students then worked with a group of older people to produce their stories. One finding from this work was that people enjoyed producing content that could be shown on Caring TV. This is one of the few activities that involves older people directly in the use of ICT as a creative and enabling activity. Students worked one-to-one with the group of participants to help them to create their stories. Not all aspects of the Story Circle activities were incorporated into the work with older people, as it was felt that they already had stories that they wished to articulate and share. Some elements, though, formed part of the training of the students. Laurea has now trained over 100 students in the practice of digital storytelling.

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[1] See also Country Note: Finland *A Good Life in Old Age? Monitoring and Improving Quality in Long-Term Care.* OECD Publishing/European Commission, June 2013.

Extending Creative Practice Participant Liisa Helenius describes her experience of learning how to make digital stories at Silver Stories 'Transfer of Innovation' workshop at Laurea, University of Applied Science, Espoo, Finland.

Watch Liisa's story : <u>Sauna Sisters</u>

Initially the students are trained in the digital storytelling method, so that they can lead on working with the older participants, whilst the lecturers act more like facilitators to support them. Participants are recruited through the lecturers' professional networks and a number come through the service centres that provide activities and social opportunities daily. Up to eight participants are recruited and students provide personal support and mentoring to them throughout the creative process. The digital storytelling sessions are scheduled over two days, between 9am and 4pm, but this can vary. They take place at the university and the participants enjoy being part of that environment[2]. The team at Laurea also worked one-to-one with an individual older person in her home, who was not able to write. They found a way to enable her to tell her story by interviewing her and transcribing her responses and checking back with her to ensure that the story was being told in the way in which *she* wanted to tell it. Participants generally arrive with their stories prior to the workshop (hence the decision not to use the story circle to help to generate a story). An informal warm-up over coffee and cake leads seamlessly into the digital storytelling workshop.

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[2] A short video showing a workshop in progress can be seen <u>here</u>.

Some participants continue to work on their stories at home, and some have attended more than one workshop. One participant has, allegedly, become a 'digital storytelling addict'!

The stories themselves are saved, but not generally published (with the exception of those which were produced as part of the prior project, *Extending Creative Practice*: they are hosted on the [ECP website](#)).

Laurea also uses reminiscence and social drama as well as arts, crafts and handicrafts as activities with older people.

Bookmouse crafts project at Soukka Service Centre (mHealth booster).

Using story as a working method has been proven to be an effective tool in working with older people and has transferred successfully to a digital environment. Within the elderly care studies element of the social work qualification, the reminiscing narratives can also provide a starting point for progressing to digital storytelling. This replaces the Story Circle approach, as the narratives are sourced through the reminiscence activities prior to starting to use the practical elements of the digital storytelling workshop – i.e. getting the participants to find their images, identify their stories and so on.

At the 'Transfer Two' workshop held at Laurea in February 2014, partners were also introduced to an online 'lifestory' tool, [EPOOQ](#),

which enables users to upload text, images, video and audio to create an online story to share with the Epooq community. Access to this was available at the Soukka Service Centre, however users need to already have reasonable ICT skills in order to use the tool. At the Centre, helpers were available to assist with using the tool. However, it varies from the digital storytelling approach in that the stories are not structured and shared in a group environment and the 'craft' of shaping a digital story is not communicated through facilitation.

In feedback from the workshops, we found that the contact with the group in sharing stories and the relationships built with the students brought the most positive responses. Also important is the effectiveness of the workshops in teaching new skills that enable participation in the digital world, by creating stories and sharing them with friends and relatives online.

Epooq is not the only online storytelling application available. There are a number of others, such as Storehouse, which enable users to create digital stories easily and are free as smartphone apps. However, certainly amongst digital storytelling practitioners, the importance of the facilitated workshop is paramount to a quality experience for participants. Upon sharing information about Storehouse with the Digital Storytelling Working Group online community Daniel Weinshaker (Center for Digital Storytelling) emphasises this centrality of facilitation to 'finding the stories they don't yet know they want to tell' (DS Working Group, 13 August, 2014).

Another very cool story building app.
And yet, we still know that it takes facilitation to get people to the stories they don't yet know.

Storehouse: visual storytelling
Welcome to Storehouse. Combine photos, videos, & text to tell a beautiful story. Share what you create with friends & followers or explore stories from around the world.
STOREHOUSE.CO

DS Working Group Facebook Notification, 13.4.14

One consideration to take account of in the context of working with older people in Finland, is that many people do have their own laptops, PCs or tablets, so digital exclusion in terms of lack of access to the technology is not as prominent as in other countries. However, one participant, for example, who was over 80 years old, owned a laptop, but did not even know how to open it prior to the digital storytelling workshop. Finding a purpose for utilising the technology is as important as providing access to equipment – more so in this case.

Laurea is also using digital storytelling as part of students' practice placement. Students are able to produce some assignments in the form of a digital story, which is accompanied by a short paper that provides context and background to the digital story. This use of digital storytelling as a reflective learning tool in Higher Education has been developed in a number of other countries.

4.1.2 Instituto Polytécnico de Leiria, Portugal

At the Instituto Polytécnico de Leiria (IPL), digital storytelling will be introduced for the first time through Silver Stories. IPL runs courses in health sciences and social work at undergraduate level and also a Masters programme on active ageing. IPL also has forward-looking provision for people who are post-retirement, in which they can apply to attend any discipline or class they wish *with the main student body*, rather than as special activities for older people. Prof. Balthazar Ricardo Monteiro, who runs the Active Ageing Masters programme also advises municipalities in Portugal on policy and service provision for older people.

Story Circle at Instituto Polytécnico de Leiria with social work professionals who work with older people, June 2014.

Whilst students use ICT in conventional ways, for research or for presentation of assignments, nursing students do not use computers when they work with older people directly, although social workers do. An example of creative use of ICT has been the documentation of activities with older people (e.g. the preparation of food from their youth) via photographs, which are then presented as a digital film. This is, however, documentation, and not digital storytelling – i.e. the narratives are not stories generated by participants.

Unlike the earlier example in Finland, in Portugal, especially in the rural centre, access to the Internet is poor amongst older people and very few have their own computers, or even know how to use even the most basic functions of computers. IPL sees digital storytelling as a potentially effective way to improve the digital skills of active older people, so that they can continue to engage and even participate in the labour market post-retirement. The team at IPL is also interested in the stories themselves as potential sources of knowledge – comparison of stories, both in terms of content and the ways in which people choose to present themselves and their stories, could provide interesting data that goes deeper than, for example, focus group or survey approaches. IPL is also interested in developing older people in a mentoring capacity and sees digital storytelling as a potentially effective tool to help to do this.

4.2 Digital Storytelling in Health and Teacher Education – Akerhus University of Applied Science, Oslo, Norway.

In Norway, at Oslo and Akershus University of Applied Science (HiOA), digital storytelling has been used in a number of bachelor programmes since 2007, particularly within health and teacher education. Digital storytelling has been used as a tool for reflection, building on the personal characteristic of a digital story. It has been particularly effective in helping students develop their 'professional identity' when they have returned from practical placements (e.g. in teaching or social work). According to Jamissen & Skou (2010), 'three dimensions have been identified as cornerstones of Digital Storytelling for learning: the *narrative approach*, the use of *multimedia* and not least, the *creative process* of the story circle as described by the Center for Digital Storytelling (Lambert, 2009). Students said that the use of images contributed positively to creative thinking and can better communicate emotional dimensions.'[3] Jamissen acknowledges that it is not new to recognise the value of narratives in the work of health professionals. Catherine Kohler Riessman's influential book *Narrative Analysis* (1996) charts the territory of narrative analysis in sociological and psychological fields and provides theoretical approaches as well as a range of case studies to illustrate that value. Jamissen and Skou note the work of Pip Hardy and Tony Sumner in their work with health professionals, in which they demonstrate through digital storytelling the role of emotion in the identity of health professionals. They take this further, stating that 'the recognition of emotional aspects of learning, in addition to the cognitive processes, is a necessity in developing health workers' personal identity and thus also the social and art dimensions of a professional identity'. In short, at HiOA, Jamissen's work stretches the CDS approach to personal storytelling leading to a moment of transformation, to the idea of identifying the 'characteristics of the personal professional story as a tool for learning from practice'.

Jamissen and Skou also emphasise the importance of listening in the process of reflective learning. They quote Lambert's description of the story circle to locate it within the creative process of reflective learning through digital storytelling: '*When you gather people in a room, and listen, deeply listen to what they are saying, and also, by example alone, encourage others to listen, magic happens.*' (Lambert, 2009 p.86). If we are to use digital storytelling within the training of professionals who are to work with older people – or with any marginalised or vulnerable community for that matter – attention to listening is of paramount importance as a professional tool or attribute.

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[3] Jamissen, G (2012) Paper at TIC Educa conference, Lisbon

Is anybody listening to me?

Source: http://cheezburger.com/6085821184

4.3   Arguments for Digital Storytelling in Higher Education in Portugal – University of Aveiro

In Portugal, according to researcher Sandra Ribeiro from the University of Aveiro, in Higher Education 'digital storytelling is still looked upon with scepticism, mainly due to its emotional content, which many teachers argue does not suit our university culture'. Ribeiro argues that digital storytelling, based on the CDS model, can in fact foster higher-order thinking skills as well as developing digital literacy, and helping students to develop closer interpersonal relationships. Ribeiro's research[4] also focuses on students within the higher education system, who are seen as 'numbers' and who are assessed on quantifiable outcomes. The creative digital storytelling process, she believes, not only enables learners to reflect on their own identity and approach to learning, but also reveals something more to their tutors. Both Jamissen and Ribeiro comment that the assumption that 'digital natives' – i.e. young people who have grown up with ICT technologies – are automatically digitally literate has been found to be misguided. Digital storytelling has helped to develop creative digital skills and consolidate understanding and skill in using digital technology. Ribeiro sees digital storytelling as 'the aggregating element capable of turning our students into true 21st Century Learners'.[5]

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[4] Ribeiro, S., Moreira, A. & Pinto da Silva, C. (2011). Humanizing Higher Education through Digital Storytelling. In T. Bastiaens & M. Ebner (Eds.), Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications 2011 (pp. 2799-2804). Chesapeake, VA: AACE. Retrieved October 10, 2014 from http://www.editlib.org/p/38258.

[5] Riberio, S (2012), paper delivered at TIC Educa Conference, Lisbon

4.4 Digital Storytelling with Pre-Service Student Teachers – Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

In South Africa, at Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town (CPUT), digital storytelling is used with pre-service student teachers. One of the motivators for this is the demand of employers in South Africa for graduates to demonstrate the capacity for reflection and 'higher-order thinking skills' (critical thinking), and the failure of many institutions to facilitate opportunities for this. Research has shown digital storytelling to be 'a highly motivating strategy that can make reflection concrete and visible; is a tool that can be used in enhancing teaching and learning of new literacies (language literacy, visual storytelling and media literacy); and can be used to initiate reflective processes in compelling ways.'

In the research project at CPUT that was assessing the benefits of the digital storytelling process to learning, researchers focused especially on 'moments that could be construed as the focal points for reflection' and used the five levels of reflection and stages of cognitive processing from Strampel and Oliver (2007). As seen in the figure below, the link between levels of reflection and learning are demonstrable.
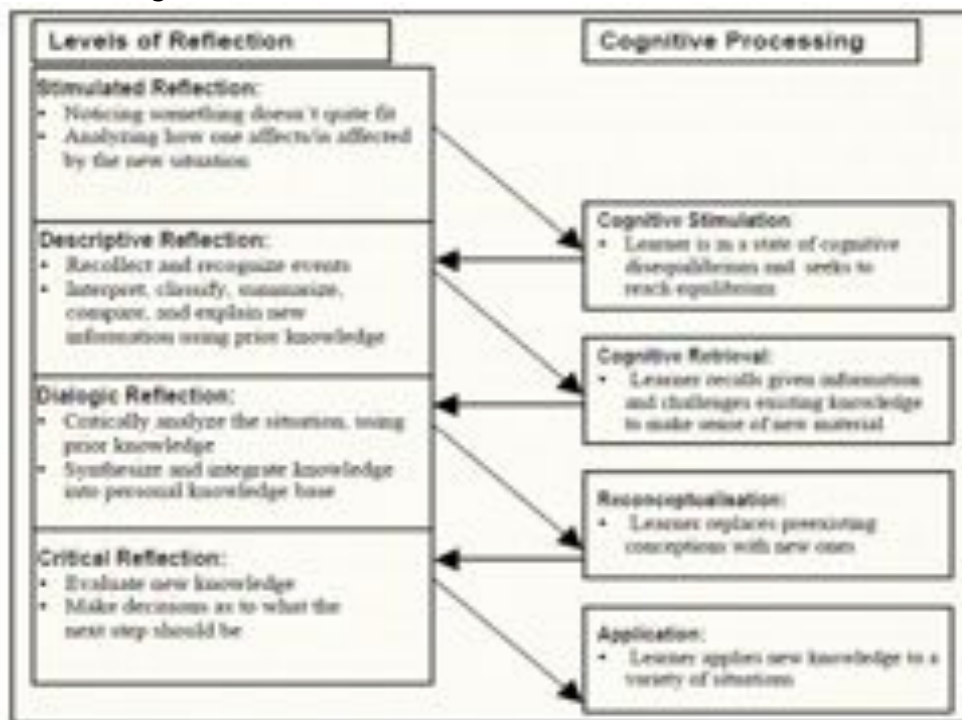

Figure 1. Levels of reflection and stages of cognitive processing

(Figure as used in Ivala, E., Gachago, D., Coundy, J. and Chigona A. (2013), *Enhancing Student Engagement with Their Studies: A Digital Storytelling Approach.* Creative Education 2013. Vol.4, No.10A, 82-89/ Journal of Education and Training Studies Vol. 2, No. 1; 2014).

Digital storytelling can also encourage creativity and writing, improve presentation skills, make a student's voice heard, and nurture lifelong learners (Wakefield, 2010). The research at CPUT, which took place with 60 final year pre-service students in the Faculty of Education and Social Sciences, concluded that digital storytelling provides a 'potentially powerful tool for rethinking and supporting assessment practices in higher education, which can lead to students acquiring high-level reflection and as a result lead to deep learning and development of higher-order thinking skills'. (Ivala, E., Gachago, D., Coundy, J., Chigona A., 2013)

Benmayor (2008) identifies digital storytelling as a social pedagogy, approaching learning as a collaborative process. Recognising that digital storytelling encourages strong emotional engagement with a task (which is indicative of its widespread use in community-based projects), in Higher Education it provides 'opportunities for students to use their own voice … Students recognise the importance of voice in presenting an argument and this is helped in the development of their own sense of agency' (Opperman, 2008). 'Digital stories are a contact zone between the cognitive and the affective'. (ibid)

5.   Digital Storytelling with Older People in Community Settings

Although the focus of this report is on the use of digital storytelling within a Higher Education environment, research has brought to the forefront some examples of excellent practice within the charity and voluntary sectors, which can be used to inform approaches to using digital storytelling both as a creative learning experience for students, or professionals returning to higher education to enhance their skills (continual professional development, or CPD), and in the use of the stories themselves as information or advocacy tools.

A full account of the digital storytelling work in communities undertaken by Mitra in Slovenia and the Progress Foundation in Romania in the Extending Creative Practice project can be found in the Evaluation Report written by CUCR, available on the ECP Website.[6] Further interviews were conducted with representatives from both organisations at the Transfer One workshop in Helsinki in February 2014 to explore further developments in practice since working on the ECP project. Colleagues interviewed were:

Romania – The Progress Foundation:

- Paul Pinzariu – ex-training coordinator in the national programme Biblionet, now working as a volunteer for the Progress Foundation;
- Raluca Istrate, librarian trainer in Satu Mare county library;
- Michaela Vlad – ex-training coordinator in the national programme Biblionet, now working as a volunteer for the Progress Foundation;

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[6] Download: Extending Creative Practice Evaluation Report

- Titina Maricica Dediu – librarian trainer in Galati county library,

Slovenia – Mitra:
- Robert Oven – Organiser of storytelling workshops in Slovenia, trainer

5.1 Working with Older People in the Library Sector – The Progress Foundation, Romania

In Romania, through the Extending Creative Practice project, 14 librarian trainers were trained in how to facilitate digital storytelling workshops. Their task was not only to transfer the method to the training of older people within library settings in Romania, but also to cascade the method by training colleagues. A key priority for the Progress Foundation is the inclusion of elderly people in ICT initiatives, to address the problem of social exclusion that is exacerbated by their digital exclusion. Lack of ICT skills in older people has been described as, in Romania, 'one of the main causes for the rupture ever-growing between generations.' (Rooke and Slater, 2012) This is ascribed not only to the growing tendency for essential public information to be available only online, but also to the fact that many older people have family now living and working overseas and lack of access to, or knowledge of, using email or social media such as Facebook and Skype, factors which contribute to the lack of communication.

Colleagues in Romania found that it was necessary to introduce basic ICT skills prior to running digital storytelling workshops, but that the creative opportunities of digital storytelling made ICT more relevant and enjoyable for participants. A further benefit of digital storytelling is its potential for capturing the heritage of Romanian communities through story and the social element of collaborating and co-creating within a creative workshop environment. The social element was enjoyable for participants and helped combat isolation, another social issue that is prevalent with older people. In the Romanian approach to digital storytelling with older people, participants are also taught how to use Skype and how to open a Facebook account, enabling them to share stories with friends and family.

Now there are over 400 trained digital storytelling facilitators in libraries across Romania, truly embedding this creative practice as a service available through the libraries offer.

Whereas in the workshops offered at Laurea, as described earlier, the Story Circle activities were not used with the older participants (just with students), in Romania colleagues reported that they found the Story Circle activities beneficial, especially activities to 'warm up' participants prior to searching for their stories and they have adapted and added activities to the repertoire, such as the 'welcome' game, which draws specifically on Romanian styles of greeting.

Romanian Colleagues demonstrate the 'How do you do' warm-up game to UK colleagues and participants at Transfer Three workshop in Brighton, July 2014.

Colleagues also mentioned the 'Every Picture Tells a Story' activity[7], in which participants are provided with one image which they have to 'read' in detail to create a story, developing their visual literacy skills and 'Random Word Game'[8], in which participants contribute one word, and then each has to make a story from the group's word collection, which develops narrative skills and demonstrates how the same ingredients can result in very different story outcomes.

The success of embedding Digital Storytelling within the library service can be seen by the take-up of the programme by participants and the enthusiasm of library staff in promoting the method across the country. One library, namely the county library from Constanta followed up the first workshops by publishing an anthology of the stories (undertaken by participant volunteers) with links to the online digitales.

An important departure from the traditional three day intense Center for Digital Storytelling model was the structuring of the programme over five days, for three hours per day, as well as giving prior training in some basic ICT skills. This is important not only to account for the physical demands of intensive workshop activity, but also to recognise that participants have other demands on their time as well. Active older people are not a 'captive audience'!

5.2 Digital Storytelling with Older People in Community Settings – Mitra, Slovenia

Many of the outcomes and findings from the Extending Creative Practice project resonated in Slovenia, especially in the way in which the workshops were organised over a longer period of time and the use of the Story Circle activities as a fertile ground for the creation of stories. In fact, the most important thing for Mitra's approach was the impact of the co-creation process in terms of finding a good story to tell and to share over the ICT

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[7] See *Resources* section of Silver Stories website

[8] Ibid

skills element of digital storytelling. In Slovenia 4 workshops with elderly people were organised (one workshop in Radovljica, north, two workshops in Ljubljana, the capital; one workshop in Maribor, north east Slovenia). In Maribor we also worked with Polzek, an organisation at which where people with special needs live. This group of people were highly thankful to participate in a workshop at which they would have equal rights to express themselves in a creative way.

Robert Oven, who was one of the ECP facilitators in Radovljica, Slovenia, feels that the technology can pose real barriers and frustrations if that is the key focus of a digital storytelling workshop. His particular experience was the common issue of finding different versions of the same programme on the available equipment in one workshop. He feels that a specialised application to ensure that all digital storytelling facilitators were working on the same platform would boost confidence for both trainers and participants.

Also key to a successful workshop is that participants should willingly volunteer to participate. This sounds obvious, however there is much 'arts practice' that is designed for older people that simply imposes activities at Day Centres, for instance.

One element that was felt missing and under-discussed – not just within Extending Creative Practice partnership, but across digital storytelling as a movement – is the distribution of the stories in an appropriate and accessible location. Simply publishing on YouTube is problematic because the story content may not be appropriate for that kind of distribution and, in addition, the stories are not all together and searchable, so they do not present a body of work in that way, nor can they be used as powerfully as they could, as narrative data for research purposes.

6.   Digital Storytelling within Health and Care Settings – beyond the Partnership

As stated at the beginning of this document, there are many examples of excellent practice of digital storytelling interventions within community settings. Queensland University of Technology has a research facility devoted to research through digital storytelling and facilitator training to enable this form of co-creative media that combines 'newly accessible technologies but is based in ancient and universal tradition of storytelling'.[9] Creative Industry Faculty researchers at QUT have adapted digital storytelling for use in a wide range of research contexts, including heritage, youth welfare, health and international development, often collaborating with external partner organisations, since 2005. QUT is a leading centre for research and facilitator training in Australia and the projects and films that can be accessed online demonstrate an impressive range of quality narrative participatory research activity.

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[9] From QUT Website Digital Storytelling at QUT

For the purposes of this research report, three examples of using digital storytelling with older people have been selected as they represent the aims of the Silver Stories partnership activities and offer approaches that are easily adaptable, or have already been used within a vocational education and training setting.

6.1   Patient Voices (UK)

Patient Voices is a programme founded by Pip Hardy and Tony Sumner in 2003 that aims to 'facilitate the telling and the hearing of some of the unwritten and unspoken stories of ordinary people so that those who devise and implement strategy in health and social care, as well as the professionals and clinicians directly involved in care, may carry out their duties in a more informed and compassionate manner'.

The achievements of Hardy and Sumner are gaining international recognition and they are about to publish a book, *Cultivating Compassion – How Digital Storytelling is Transforming Healthcare*[10] to mark the decade of their work in using digital storytelling to transform healthcare. The Patient Voices website also offers an excellent resource for those who are interested in the power of story to effect change.

In terms of the work that Patient Voices has carried out specifically with older people, the 'Dangling Conversations' workshop facilitated seven people with early-stage dementia and one carer to participate in making their own stories in 2011. Participants were supported to overcome challenges through their relationships with facilitators and positive changes were noted including:

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[10] (Hardy and Sumner 2014)

increased confidence, improved speech, a sense of purpose and increased connection. The films themselves provide valuable insights into the personal experience of each participant's response to living with dementia, which are themselves excellent resources to use in the teaching or training of people who are planning to work with people with dementia and, more broadly, as advocacy tools to help to change attitudes towards, and challenge stereotypes of, people with dementia. The films can be viewed on the Dangling Conversations pages of Patient Voices website and the learning from the workshop have been documented and published[11].

6.2   From The Heart – A Collaboration between Center for Digital Storytelling and the Colorado Culture change Coalition, USA

In 2012, Colorado Culture Change Coalition collaborated with the Center for Digital Storytelling to create a participatory storytelling project culminating in not only a series of powerful stories for change but also a discussion guide to enable the stories to be used in communities and in long-term residential care homes, to change perceptions of, and attitudes towards, working in the caring profession and the environment and culture of care homes. A three-day workshop was held with ten staff members from six different nursing homes. Ten stories were produced that showed personal and professional transformations. The staff members then helped one resident from each of their homes tell their own story about a moment of change.

The guide and the stories challenge the stereotypical notion of nursing homes as places where people go to live out their last days, to 'homes where people are actually growing, thriving and living. And they're places where people want to work in community.' They are used with staff in residential care homes, with residents themselves and with communities to stimulate discussion about the change in the culture of care delivery in nursing homes.

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[11] *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* as *Dangling conversations: reflections on the process of creating digital stories during a workshop with people with early-stage dementia*.
The article is available at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22413774
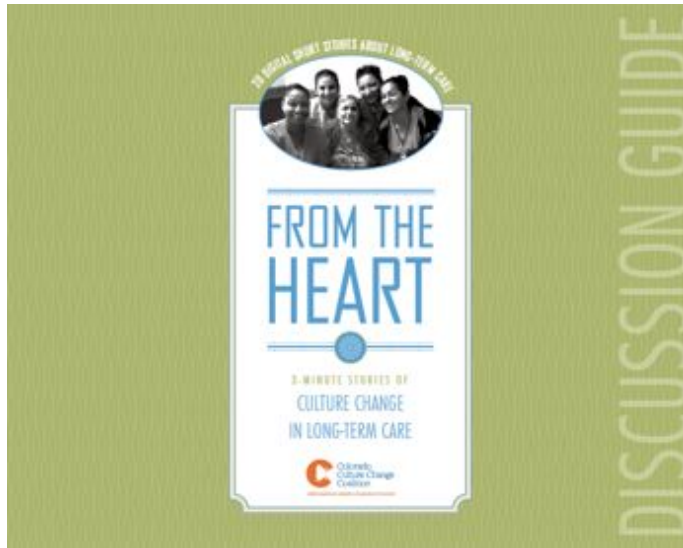
View the stories and download the discussion guide

The films are available to view and the guidebook can be downloaded from the Colorado Change Coalition website. The stories and the suggested discussion questions are a valuable resource that could be adapted for use with students who are training to work in the care sector in a vocational or higher education setting.

6.3   Digital Storytelling and Older People – Does it have to be about Health or Reminiscence?

There are many examples of digital storytelling projects that have worked with older people in a therapeutic or reminiscence context. The UK Government Department 'DEFRA' – the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs commissioned a pilot project with the University of Bath: 'Piloting Digital Storytelling and Action Research as an Approach to Stimulate Pro-Environmental Advocacy and Behaviour Change.' DEFRA identified the 'over 50s age group as an untapped source of potential pro-environmental advocates who might influence other people towards increased environmental action. (Collier, Cotterill et al, 2010) The project looked not only to digital storytelling as a means to 'give voice' to older people in a new and engaging way, but also sought to draw upon the wisdom of their experience which could be captured in digital stories, and could 'build momentum for pro-environmental change within audience groups across communities and age groups'. The sample of older advocates was small – eight people – however, the key findings demonstrated that digital stories were found by all audiences to be 'authentic and accessible, and almost universally agreeable'. 'The stories succeeded in representing the views and activities of the older generation in a different and palatable way to younger audiences and in a valid, affirming way to those of a similar age.'

This exemplifies the potential for using digital storytelling to tap into the skills and knowledge of older people, to influence change across generations. It looks to the stories of the participants to influence the now and the future – not simply to reminisce about the past, which is the focus of so much participatory arts activity with older people.

7. **Conclusions**

1. Although all Higher Education institutions which are training people who work in nursing or social work settings do use ICT in their curricula, it is mainly used for research and information retrieval and presentation of assignments and reports.
2. In Finland, at Laurea University of Applied Science, digital storytelling has been used extensively with students who are preparing to work in health or social care roles, with older people and with wider groups.
3. Digital storytelling with older people at Laurea has been found to be beneficial to older people in terms of: providing a creative, social space in which they can develop and share stories with peers; interact with students and enjoy the intergenerational experience; creating a 'legacy' through their digital stories that can be shared online with family and friends.
4. Digital storytelling with the students at Laurea has proved to be beneficial not only as a way to increase their creative toolkit that can be used with older clients/patients/service users, but also as a reflective learning tool.
5. Digital storytelling has been widely used in Higher Education across the globe and the examples cited from Norway, Portugal and South Africa clearly demonstrate the power of the method as a reflective

learning tool for students that can foster 'deep learning and higher order thinking skills'.

6. The evidence of benefit of digital storytelling in community and health settings with older people provides the impetus to develop digital storytelling as part of the professional toolkit of those who are training to work in health and care settings.

7. The evidence presented confirms the need to develop digital storytelling as a module that can be accredited in Higher Education settings so that the practice can evolve from 'one–off' projects to a quality assured learning and assessment tool that can be used both as a reflective learning process for students, and as a means to engage with older people in the workplace.

8.   Select Bibliography and References

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