**Running groups on zoom- challenges, tips, suggestions**

**Challenges:**

* IT issues, poor audio, which can amplify language barriers, poor wifi, challenges with muting/unmuting, audio cutting out if multiple people speak at once, background noise.
* Engaging people with a lower level of English
* Engaging people who have got childcare commitments
* Making meetings engaging when people turn their microphones off.
* Option to mute people, but reluctance to take away people's voices.
* Issue of network lag means we can't sing together.
* Different experiences with different devices, e.g. not being able to see everyone in 'gallery view' if using a phone.
* Clients joining the group whilst already in breakout rooms (the host has to leave their breakout room in order to bring the client into the main room and then a breakout room)
* Unable to continue sharing screen in breakout rooms
* Different languages in same group – needing multiple interpretors
* Tiring for deliverers – and tiring for attendees struggling to understand English
* Disconnect between audio and visual for people using phones.
* Recent changes to zoom - can’t mute/unmute all…

**What works well:**

* Do a zoom meeting on your phone yourself to know what the experience is like for others.
* Small groups (same language with interpreter where possible)
* Varied topics and length of sessions
* Visual aids and hand gestures (making sure people on a phone can see you)
* Sending a copy of the slides used in the group to staff and volunteers before.
* Share group agreement ( sample below)
* Having two or three hosts/co-hosts allows one person to present, others to monitor who can join/mute as well as managing breakout rooms.
* Asking individual questions to people to prevent people talking over each other
* Test everything you want to do on zoom with friends first!
* Have a whatsapp group for your zoom group so you can share any videos, audio clips, pictures, ideas – to help the group bond too.
* Sharing group rules/zoom guidelines first – using translated resources: [Translated zoom guides](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1EaVbPVOEmBd675QvITHgysh_8HmiaGrB)

**Zoom functions:**

* Use of 'spotlight' to ensure everyone sees the host/co-host ('speaker view’ shows whoever is making the loudest noise)
* Use of ‘Pin’ function to fix one particular person on the screen at a time
* Use of ‘Annotate’ for highlighting/adding information to a shared powerpoint/word doc.
* Use of ‘share audio’ in ‘share screen’- advanced’’- ‘share computer sound’ tab to share music etc.
* Set the settings in advance – turning off annotate, whiteboard etc if you don’t want it being misued.
* Open up all documents you want to share before session starts. Close anything confidential/private!
* Remember that in break out rooms you can’t share your screen.

**Tips to remember for people using Zoom on phones:**

* Carry out practise Zooms with people first where possible.
* Problems downloading the Zoom app might result from lack of memory space/incompatible/old phones.
* Tell people they can turn the phone to landscape and swipe left to see a gallery view. They will see 4 people at a time - keep swiping if there is more than 4 attendees.
* Remember to have readable sized text if you are sharing your pc screen so information can be read on a smaller phone screen.

**Using chat function.**

Disadvantages:

* To get to the chat function on a phone might be hard ( have to tap the screen, find and click ‘chat’) - and people have to find/click ‘close’ to get out of chat. A lot to explain!

Advantages:

* The host can save the text from ‘chat’ to send to people afterwards. Saving text can be pre-set in Zoom settings so you don't have to remember to do it.
* An idea is to ask people to write something simple in the chat ( e.g what they had for breakfast) to see who can do that easily, who has difficulties and then address these individually afterwards.
* Some people have used chat function to help resolve audio problems when people can’t hear anything.
* Using chat function to send messages to people to check understanding/ask them to mute because of background noise etc.

**Super useful links: ( huge thanks Georgia!)**

* The COVID-19 Policy & Ops groups are useful for up to date national info

Ops Group: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/covid19operations>

Policy Group: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/covid19policy>

Or email these email addresses and ask to join:

* [covid19policy@googlegroups.com](mailto:covid19policy@googlegroups.com)
* [covid19operations@googlegroups.com](mailto:covid19operations@googlegroups.com)
* This is from zoom about requirements: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-Requirements-for-PC-Mac-and-Linux>
* This is a review and gives a good explanation about download and upload speeds and amounts of bandwidth: <https://www.reviews.org/internet-service/how-much-data-does-zoom-use/#:~:text=1.2%20GB%2Fhr.,and%2040%20MB%20per%20minute.>

In terms of creating a central place for discussion and resources, I created a tutorial on using padlet for PATH staff which hopefully should be useful: <https://youtu.be/tYgeVUXgf3w>

Also re: using zoom to create tutorials for clients, which I think ties in well to what Tina from Touchstone was saying about having short informative sessions, I created this tutorial on future learn: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCxCCU8zppw8ja9B13OxlLcn66yTBtxgf>

**Sample agreement:**

“\*PLEASE READ\*\*

Please understand that during this session, to cope with the challenges of internet speed, technology and communication via ‘zoom’, we have to mute your audio to ensure clarity of speech and conversation.

We will try to limit this as much as possible but there are a couple of things you can do to help:

* Reduce your background noise - turn off the TV/Radio/Washing Machine
* Take part – if you feel comfortable to do so. If you wish to sit out of an activity you can observe instead. A good way to do this is to turn off your video if you don’t want to be included.
* Listen to others – don’t talk when someone else is talking.
* Respect others – different opinions, different levels of English.
* Please support & help each other. Some of you may share a language and can help explain things to each other.
* Ask questions – if you don’t understand something, or if you want to know more about something.
* Most importantly Have Fun!! We hope you enjoy this session and come back for our next session on \*\*(Insert date and time)\*\*