



Interactive
Music-Making
for People
Living with
Dementia

Musical Activities

A resource pack for UK Partners
working with people living with dementia



music as therapy
international

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Acknowledgements

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Other Activity Booklets available:

- Interactive Music-Making: Musical Activities for the Under 5's
- Music as Therapy for Young Children with Disabilities
- Interactive Music-Making with Adults with Learning Disabilities

Available from info@musicastherapy.org

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Introduction

Music as Therapy International provides training and support for people wanting to embed music into the care and education of vulnerable children and adults worldwide. Over a number of weeks the care setting staff and the charity's music therapists share their skills with each other to find ways music can be made integral to care, activities and social interaction. We call this approach interactive music-making (see page 6).

This resource booklet is a selection of the musical activities that were developed within interactive music-making training projects provided by the charity to settings caring for the elderly and those living with dementia; activities which can be used to address the strengths and needs of your clients.

Normally the activities in this booklet would be reinforced through training provided by *Music as Therapy International*. If you would like to receive training to help you work with people living with dementia or other vulnerable groups (in the UK or overseas), or if you have any questions about the resources within this booklet, please contact info@musicastherapy.org or visit www.musicastherapy.org

What is Interactive Music-Making?

Interactive music-making can be defined as the use of music and sound in a structured setting to promote the mental, physical emotional and social well-being of an individual. It is not music education or music therapy, and while participants may acquire basic music skills, this isn't the aim of the work.

Here, the music is used initially to establish a point of contact with the individuals and group. It can then be used to work with whatever difficulties the person is experiencing within a safe, secure environment. It may be used with people who are withdrawn and unresponsive to draw them into a shared musical activity. It can also be used to channel the energy of active individuals into positive and constructive interactions.

If used in groups, interactive music-making can be used to develop and practice social skills such as the awareness and appreciation of other group members. This can include turn-taking, listening and leadership skills. Individual work can also be used to develop the above. It can also be a way of building positive relationships with carers. Remember: always bring your session planning back to your aims for individuals and for the group as a whole. Think about whether your chosen activities address these aims. If not, can you find a new activity which might do so more effectively?

Making music is usually fun, but it is also a space to address more difficult feelings (anxiety, grief, anger), and it is important to allow all feelings to be present. There is no need to cheer everyone up, or even to encourage everyone too strongly to participate. Allow people the time and space to decide for themselves what to offer.

Guidance for Using this Booklet

You don't need to start at the beginning of the booklet and work your way through every activity here, nor do you need to stick to the activity as described. Think carefully about the aims of your work with your clients, and choose activities that focus on these aims as well as activities that will be appealing to the clients you have in mind.

If an activity does not work the first time, don't give up! Your group members may need time to get used to a new activity and the process of trying it a number of times over a number of weeks will be beneficial in itself. You may find you need to adapt an activity: does your group actually need fewer choices of instrument? Would a different room layout be helpful?

Take your lead on this from your group members - and don't be afraid to try new things or to get creative yourself. This resource pack is not definitive. We have no doubt you have some great ideas for your own activities. Clients can also bring their own ideas along that you can incorporate into your sessions.

Why Music?

Music has long been recognized for the contribution it can make to people's health and well-being. Music Therapy is a recognized clinical discipline with well-evidenced benefits for people with disabilities, emotional difficulties, mental health difficulties and a wide variety of additional needs. In recent years the role of music therapy – and music more widely – for people living with dementia has been examined closely. Why is it so powerful and what exactly can it help us to achieve?

Research has shown that music therapy can significantly improve and support the mood, alertness and engagement of people with dementia; it can reduce the use of medication, as well as helping to manage and reduce agitation, isolation, depression and anxiety, overall supporting a better quality of life.

As well as this music accesses different parts of the brain to language, so music can be used to communicate or engage with someone who has been diagnosed with dementia, even if they no longer speak or respond to other people's words.

If you're interested in the research see our **Music and Dementia Evidence Base** (Appendix 2).

Getting the Most from Your Music Sessions: Clear Aims

Having reminded ourselves why music is valuable, it is worth thinking about how we can maximise on its value. All people, regardless of ability, can appreciate and respond to music. When this music is tailored to the needs of individuals, with live, interactive elements, it becomes a means of communication, self-expression, social interaction and enjoyment. It can help to build confidence and promote independence and decision-making. Your aims for your clients can change and be adapted over time. Some typical aims might be:

- To promote good relationships.
- To create a fun and enjoyable environment.
- To provide a new experience for residents.
- To develop general skills such as turn-taking, listening, waiting and leading.
- To offer a non-verbal outlet for emotional release and exploration.
- To develop opportunities for positive communication and relationships.

Planning your sessions

Think about:

- Who are you seeing, and why? What aims do you have for the individuals you are seeing, or the group as a whole?
- Do you need to find a space for an individual session, a small group or bigger group?
- If you are working with an individual or a small group, find a space that is quiet and as free from distraction as possible. If it helps, create sign that says '*Music session in progress - please do not disturb*' and pop this on the door to remind people.

1) Individual sessions

Set the space up, with two seats face to face. If the resident is in bed make sure you can see them and that you are working at a comfortable angle.

2) Group sessions

Set up the chairs in a circle and make sure the instruments you want to use are nearby.

3) For both kinds of work

Choose instruments that you feel are appropriate for the individual or group you are working with. Some people need smaller instruments to play as they may not have the arm strength or grip to hold larger ones. Also, they may become fatigued from a lot of playing. Use your knowledge of the clients to inform the instruments you offer.

Have a clear structure:

- Beginning (Hello Song)
- Middle (in which you have a familiar activity, which can be built on. Introduce a new activity if people are alert, or reinforce familiar songs and improvise)
- Ending (Goodbye Song)

Always begin with a Hello Song and end with Goodbye.

Always use people's names in a small group, or familiar songs in a larger one to greet people and to close the session, so people know what is happening.

Keep to a regular and consistent time. For example your individual session runs each week at 10.30am for 10 mins. Your sessions don't need to be long. For an individual, you might only want it to be around ten minutes. Ten minutes of really positive work is better than half an hour during which your resident has lost their focus. But for a group, you are likely to need longer as it will take time to bring everyone together and to settle into the session. Each resident will be different in terms of how long they can engage for, but try to maintain the same length of session each week. It's OK if people dip in and out of the activities.

Focus on the residents, and take time to see what they are doing. This is known as a client or person-centered approach, where you are watching and waiting to see what they do. Their responses will help you choose what activities you use.

Have a clear plan prepared that is linked to the aims you have decided, and have the musical instruments or resources you need near to hand.

Remember: sometimes people need more time to process directions and discussions than you might think.

Using the Interactive Music-Making Approach

1) Techniques to help you in your sessions

WAIT

WATCH & LISTEN

RESPOND

Wait to see how your client responds to you and the instruments. These things do not need to be rushed and very often people need more time to process things than you realise. Silence is ok!

Watch and Listen for what the resident or group does – even things such as breathing, and any vocal sounds or body movements.

Respond in a way that you feel is appropriate – stay aware of body language/facial gestures/changes in breathing/changes in mood, and try to respond to these.

If you are leading, encourage freedom. Think of yourself as a facilitator, not a teacher... If you start out with the power, do your best to give it away!

Invite and encourage people to play. Allow them to choose how they want to participate. For some, attending the group maybe all they can manage to start with.

It's not all about the music. Some moments of verbal reflection, reminiscence, observation, can be very valuable.

Accept without judgement¹. Some members may not want to play or may play in unusual ways. Allow them the freedom to participate as they wish.

If a resident chooses not to play, this could be a very conscious choice. Don't take their hand and force them. Instead, ask them if they would like some help to play and, depending on their answer, gently encourage them or entice them by doing it alongside them.

You can also think about the following words when you reflect on the sessions:

... MATCHING FOLLOWING MIRRORING LEADING TAKING TURNS ...

DEFINITIONS

Matching

Matching is when you, as a facilitator, play music that is not *exactly* the same but matches the style and overall mood of the person/people you are working with, with ideas that might encourage someone to join in. *For example, if someone is gently humming to themselves and looking thoughtfully out of the window, you might gently offer the first phrase(s) of, "Somewhere over the rainbow" and wait, watch and listen to see how they respond. Matching can be what you are doing when you choose a song in response to the mood of an individual or a group.*

Leading

As the word suggests, the facilitator would 'lead' the music.

Mirroring

This is essentially copying what the resident is doing with as much attention to detail as possible, including picking up on mood and dynamics. You don't necessarily have to be using the same instrument.

Taking turns

This is really self-explanatory and often happens when you allow space for turn-taking to happen. This will involve waiting sometimes for a response but can very quickly

¹ **Remember:** Making music is usually fun, but it is also a space to address more difficult feelings (anxiety, grief, anger), and it is important to allow all feelings to be present. There is no need to cheer everyone up, or even to encourage everyone too strongly to participate. Allow people the time and space to decide for themselves what to offer.

become and an exciting and spontaneous, playful interaction.

Following

This is where the facilitator would allow the resident to lead and perhaps wait to see what happens, responding if and when they feel is appropriate. In these moments it is important to try to 'support' what the resident is offering through listening, a gentle hum or song.

Another way to do this is to change the words of a song to acknowledge what is happening... E.g to the tune of *My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean*, " Oh Alan I see you are playing, the xylophone here today, Oh Alan I see you are playing the xylophone here today."

Or it might be just gently supporting him/her through playing an instrument or clapping hands, perhaps banging a drum hard if the resident is feeling the need for some strong support.

2) Reflection after the session

Think about what happened. What worked, what didn't and why not?

Think about how to adapt or add to things for the next session.

Make some notes about what happened in your session:

- What did you do?
- Did your session participant(s) say, do or try anything new?
- Did they particularly enjoy or dislike and specific part of the session?
- What was their mood like (e.g. content, distracted, anxious, focused etc.)?
- What aspects of communication did you notice between the session participants or between one participant and yourself?
- What went well?
- What would you do differently next time?

Reading back your notes might also help you to identify themes that are important for particular residents. Perhaps you notice some recurring memories or behaviours, that will help you understand and care for a particular resident. Does a certain song always

calm them down? Do they like to speak about a certain life event? Are there specific triggers for a session participant you've noticed in your music sessions which might help people understand them better in other situations? This might be useful information to re-introduce in your next session or to share with your colleagues.

Your notes will help you monitor progress, change, strengths and areas of difficulty in your session participants.

Music therapist Clare Reynolds has designed a simple **Evaluation Tool** you may find helpful for reflecting on your session (Appendix 1). It provides space for you to consider and rate your residents' engagement with the music session socially, emotionally and physically. This might be a way to assess the immediate impact of a session or to evaluate a participant over time.

Feel free to reproduce the Evaluation Tool from this booklet, or email info@musicasterapy.org if you'd like to request printed copies or a version you can complete on a computer.

Remember: If you have your own record-keeping mechanisms, it is a great idea to incorporate your music session notes (or observations about your participants' engagement in your sessions) into these.

Adapt what you plan to the size of your group

1) Planning for larger singing groups

Space: Make sure you are prepared and set up ready in advance. You may need a different space to the smaller groups.

Choice: Make sure residents have been offered the chance to attend the group or leave the room where it is taking place if they do not wish to stay.

Structure: Ensure you still have a structure as above with a Hello Song, perhaps some more energetic songs and then a Goodbye Song.

Song choice: Choose appropriate songs and try to offer the residents a way of choosing which songs are used.

Memories: You could ask the group if they have a special memory about a song, and incorporate it.

Incorporating instruments: You could bring in small percussion instruments for people to use, like egg shakers or maracas.

Incorporating recorded music: You can use CDs in the group but make sure you are still making the group as interactive as possible. For example, you could also use body movements to encourage singing, move around to different group members, or use small instruments as above. Clapping in time to the music would also be a good way to engage the group.

2) Planning for a small group session

Ideas for structuring a smaller group session:

- Hello Song acknowledging everyone by name
- Everyone plays together
- Opportunities for solo playing
- Activity where each group member is equal
- Activity where everyone has the chance to be leader
- Activity encouraging vocalisation – this could be through singing or other sounds like humming, there is no need to ‘know the words’
- Taking turns, waiting and listening
- Goodbye Song

Include a variety of different activities: Depending on the needs and abilities of the group members, include; lively activities; being still and concentrating; free playing; whole group activities. You don’t need to include all these different types of activities in every session. Think of the group aims and choose activities that will support these.

Mix old and new activities: Each week you can incorporate familiar activities that have worked well in the past alongside one or two new activities. Adapt old activities so they suit the group better, and don’t feel stale.

Activities

The activities below are described for use with groups of participants, but many can be adapted for individual work. Think about the given aims for each activity: They can be relevant whether you are working with a group of participants or with an individual. You may need to adjust how you use your resources (for example, you might share an instrument between the two of you, rather than pass it round) and how to tailor your responses to one person, rather than to many. This can make individual sessions feel quite intimate, whereas group sessions can feel more social.

Hello song

Aims:

- To have a routine for the beginning of the group
- To focus everyone's attention
- To include everyone
- To develop awareness of other group members

How to: Greet everyone by name in a small group and perhaps hold out a tambourine or ocean drum to them. You can use familiar songs such as 'You Are My Sunshine' and change the words, or you can make one up.

Song suggestion:

'Here we are, here we are
Gonna play some music, here we are (repeat)

Here is _(name)_____ here is _(name)_____
Everybody say hello to ___(Name)_____ (repeat)'

The resident being said hello to is encouraged to play an instrument being offered to them.

Tip: Keep the song simple!

Clapping Activities

Aims:

- To support awareness of others
- To give a rhythmic framework
- To encourage motor (movement) skills.

1) Pass the Clap

Each person in turn claps once around the group.

2) Copy Me

One person claps a rhythm and the rest of the group copy in unison. **NB:** This can be difficult for some people.

3) Catch Me Out

This activity is similar to 'Copy Me' but a particular rhythm is chosen which, when heard, must not be copied. The aim is to try and catch people out! **NB:** This is difficult for some people so avoid complicated rhythms.

Tip: Think carefully about the people in your group - some people may have trouble hearing the clapping or understanding the aim of this activity.

For people who find clapping hard: People can participate by tapping their knees (instead of clapping), by watching and listening (instead of joining in), by nodding or noticing the success or contributions of others.

Choosing Instruments

Aims:

- To support decision making
- To enable each person to receive attention
- To offer different sound making choices

1) Choose from a Selection of Instruments

A simple song is sung by the leader and each group member in turn is encouraged to choose an instrument.
2) Choose for Each Other
Group members choose different instruments for each other.
3) Play a Mood
Group members are invited to choose an instrument which depicts their mood. Alternatively, the leader can suggest a particular mood which the group members can try and reflect, both through their choice of musical instrument and the way in which they play.
Tip: Limit the choice of instruments at first. Maybe offer two instruments and hold them up in front of residents so they can choose one to play. You could also ask them to choose which instrument you play if they don't want to play themselves.

Turn-taking

<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn-taking • Concentration • Group awareness
1) Pass the Drum
The leader stands in the middle of the circle and offers each group member the opportunity to tap the drum once. Try to keep an element of surprise by passing the instrument to people at random. This should be repeated several times. You can use a variety of different instruments for this activity.
2) Pass the Ocean Drum
Pass the ocean drum around the group, whilst the leader sings or plays appropriate music.
3) Pass the Sound 1

Each group member chooses an instrument and plays in turn.
4) Pass the Sound 2
Each group member chooses an instrument. Someone is chosen to play by the leader by singing their name. When they have finished playing, they may choose the next person by singing their name.
5) Pass the Sound 3
The same as 'Pass the Sound 2,' but direction is given by making eye contact with another member.
6) Pass the Instruments
An instrument is passed around the group, whilst music is played. When the music stops, the person holding the instrument plays a solo.
7) Pass and Listen:
An instrument is passed around the group. Use a musical cue to indicate when participants should change the direction the instrument is being passed. For example you could sing a song with short verses, passing the instrument while you sing and then change direction at the chorus, or when a particular word comes up in the song.
Tips: Slowly introduce these different activities. Keep the same ones for a while so people can get used to them. See which ones become old favourites!

Leadership Games

Aims:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage confidence and self-esteem • To support social awareness
1) Conducting
Each group member has an instrument. A leader directs the music by indicating to group members when to play through pointing.
2) Loud and Soft

Each group member has an instrument. A leader directs the group when to play loud and when to play softly.

3) Let's Have a Chat!

Two group members are chosen to have a chat with music. They play the xylophone, or other instruments, in a way that represents a conversation. Structure can be added, e.g. the group deciding beforehand what the conversation might be. It could be an argument, or a bit of gossip!

4) Copy Me!

Two group members, sitting opposite each other, share the xylophone, or other instrument. One member plays freely, the other member imitates. The roles are then reversed. This is a great way to get the group listening to the two who are playing.

5) All Change

All group members play while the leader plays. When the leader stops the instruments are passed on clockwise around the group.

Free Improvisation

Aims:

- To encourage creativity
- To encourage awareness of others
- To support playfulness and fun

1) Improvising Sound

Free improvisation offers time for self-expression and encourages group members to become more aware of one another. It can create a sense of group.

During free improvisation each person is important and has a space to explore the world of musical sound. It is also an opportunity for group members to be heard in a non-verbal setting. Playing music freely can help improve self-esteem, increase self-confidence and develop a deeper sense of trust between group members. Free improvisation is a good indicator as to how the group are working together: Are they

listening to one another? How are they responding to each other's musical ideas? It's more about making a sound together than an excellent piece of music.

The development of this sense of group can lead to an increased tolerance and acceptance of each other. Hopefully your group members will be able to transfer their experience of this in the music session to subsequent social situations.

Tip to begin: To start the playing, you could play a drumbeat, or use the ocean drum. Everyone joins in when they want to.

2) Improvising Stories

Improvisations can also be based around a story or theme. Someone may suggest a theme (Autumn, By the Sea, A Journey) and then an improvisation begins inspired by this.

Alternatively, someone may start telling a story and the music is improvised around the story as it unfolds (perhaps told by different people as it is passed around the group, "what happened next, John?").

3) Play a Mood

Turn back to Page 16 (*Choosing Instruments*) for this activity.

4) Tips and Ideas

Tip: Offer a good choice of instruments. It can be difficult to encourage people to play at first, so maybe offer a structure such as a rhythm or sound. You could also suggest a theme such as a storm, or the beach. You might want to give a signal for the music to end by playing a drum or rainstick as a signal.

Be aware of the group dynamic. If you feel that a particular person tends to dominate the improvisations or, on the other hand, withdraws from them, then it might be useful to be sensitive to this in your playing. You may also feel it appropriate to bring it to the attention of the group using words.

Be prepared for a certain level of chaos during a free improvisation! However, it is important to allow the group members this space to be expressive in their music.

Singing

Aims:

- To provide familiarity and orientation
- To build a sense of belonging and connection between people
- To encourage reminiscence
- To find out more about each other
- To contain difficult feelings and effect a change of mood
- To provide emotional support

1) Singing Familiar Songs

Members may suggest songs to sing as a group, or a song may be inspired by a word or phrase, for example:

- “I want to go home” – Show me the way to go home;
- “that’s a lovely smile” – When you’re smiling;
- “It sounds like the sea” – Speed bonny boat;
- “Jane has gone to sleep” – Send me the pillow that you dream on

...be imaginative!

It’s ok if you don’t know all the words – fill in gaps with ‘la’. In fact, it is often a good idea to have an ‘instrumental’ verse where everyone can play and sing along to ‘la’ without having to worry about remembering the words. You can also change the words of a song to reflect what is going on in the group (e.g. narrating what each person is doing ‘and Helen is playing the drum, and David on the bells, and Jo is listening quietly’)

Leave space and encourage discussion after singing a known song. Ask questions like:

- Does anyone have any special memories connected with this song?
- What does it make you think of/how does it make you feel when you sing it?

2) Containing Emotions in Songs

Often people with dementia can struggle with strong feelings of anxiety, frustration, or other emotions that can be difficult to manage. It is important to acknowledge these feelings without reinforcing them such that the member becomes ‘stuck’ in that feeling.

Songs can be a great way of acknowledging difficult feelings whilst also supporting and soothing the person to move towards a more settled state. You can also use an appropriate tune and add your own words to suit different situations.

Some songs that work well in this context:

- **Danny Boy** (This song speaks of loss and nostalgia, but with hope)
- **Scarborough Fair** (You can substitute the words for "Are you feeling angry and sad?")
- **When You're Smiling** (There is scope for lots of different emotions to be referenced)
- **Eidelweiss**
- **As Long as He Needs Me** (There is scope for some grit and determination)
- **I Dreamed a Dream** (...and other songs from *Les Miserables*)
- **Skye Boat Song** (There is room for force at the words, "Loud the wind howls")
- **What Shall We Do With the Drunken Sailor** (More scope for singing with force and energy)

3) Finding Suitable Songs

Playlist for Life has undertaken a phenomenal piece of work, compiling popular songs from different decades. Every decade, from the 1910s to the 2010s, has its own book of songs which you could use for inspiration, or look at to identify songs which might be meaningful to your session participants informed by when they might have been listening to music most. You can download the songbooks from their website for free: <https://www.playlistforlife.org.uk/100-years-a-century-of-song/>



These songbooks are also linked to Spotify, as a way to quickly find recordings of the songs (to listen and learn from, or to play to your participants). Access their webplayer via this link:

<https://open.spotify.com/user/playlistdementia>. You'll find more than just music by the decade, there are playlists about different genres of music, and themed around personal identity (e.g. religious faith, football teams, LGBTQ+, civil rights etc).

These resources have been recommended here as a brilliant way to inspire our singing and music-making. Creating and using a Playlist of recorded music is a different way of working (see below).

Tip: Musical taste and experiences are very individual; the songs that are important to you might not be the same songs that are important to your colleague. Similarly, the songs which are positive for one service user, might be upsetting or meaningless for another.

Creating Playlists

Aims:

- To offer residents the chance to explore their musical preferences
- To support sharing of musical choices
- To create a list of songs for the group or individual that they could listen to outside the group

This is a little bit different to interactive music-making; it is more about song choice and discussion. People can talk about special memories they have that are connected with the songs, and get to know each other personally through music. It is important that this is used alongside interactive music-making, not in its place.

1) Our Playlist

The group chooses a few songs to listen to. This might stimulate a discussion about music and memories of special times.

2) My Playlist

If working with an individual, you could create a personalised playlist for them.

3) Creating a Playlist Safely



Playlist
for Life

We are grateful to *Playlist for Life* (more information below) for the following guidance:



Red Flag Songs: Music can take you to another time or place. That is a great gift, and a great responsibility. Red Flag Songs are tunes that may take someone back to a bad place or bring back fearful or unwanted emotions.

- If someone becomes agitated or distressed listening to a particular piece of music, stop the session immediately. Make a note of the Red Flag Song, so that it's not played again.
- If the person show signs of distress or agitation during future sessions, stop the session and take a break from music for a while.
- In a group setting, look for the effect of someone's music on other people within earshot. One person's Inheritance Track can be another person's Red Flag.



Tears: If you notice tears, remember that tears are not always bad. They are a sign of deep emotion, but sometimes it may be an emotion the person would rather have, than not.

- Tears may have become the only way for someone to express what they are feeling.
- Focus on the person. Why are they crying? Are they distressed? If so, stop the session.
- But if the tears are from some other emotion, be with them in that moment. Hold their hand. If it feels appropriate, put an arm around them. Spend time with them until the moment has passed. In this way playlists can become an opportunity for closeness and deeper caring.



Check the Volume: Whether you're using headphones or speakers, make sure you check the volume before every session.

- Loud volumes can cause a person to start, cause physical discomfort or make someone distressed.
- If the person wears a hearing aid, make sure you check the volume setting on the hearing aids before every session too, and ask their audiologist for guidance.



Silence: Silence is an important part of using playlists well. Avoid constantly playing music, whether a playlist or just the radio.

- Constant noise will be overstimulating. Try to think of playlisting as a shared activity and don't leave a person alone in their headphones.
- Half an hour is a good rough guide for how long a session should last.

Other resources. Use the following resources for further ideas and support for this activity:

- **Playlist for Life:** the charity referenced above! They train carers and independent practitioners to create personalised playlists for people living with dementia. Like us, they work in partnership with care settings. Find out more about creating playlists on their website: <https://www.playlistforlife.org.uk/>
- **BBC Music Memories and Memory Radio:** a great online resource that allows you to play music from different cultures, generations and themes – perfect for creating playlists with your residents. Their memory radio also has playlists specifically for different decades of music. Have a look at their website here: <https://musicmemories.bbcrewind.co.uk/>

Goodbye Song

Aims:

- To indicate the end of the session
- To ensure everyone is included

As for the Hello Song, use a simple structure and include everyone by name. You can use a familiar tune or a very simple song. You could use an instrument that everyone plays in turn as they did at the beginning.

Tip: Keep the song the same so that it is very clear the session is over.

Looking for Opportunities for Spontaneous Music in Everyday Care

Aims:

- To make daily tasks more enjoyable
- To distract a resident from a moment of resistance or preoccupation
- To take advantage of a resident's availability to interact or positive mood
- To help change the mood of a resident
- To promote relaxation and/or reduce agitation
- To provide emotional support

1) Using Singing

These are those moments where using music might be a tool to just help, for example, with personal care, getting dressed or moving to another space.

It could be through a simple song that the resident knows and likes, to just calm them in a moment of confusion or distress. It could also be a familiar song with the words adapted to work with the activity you are trying to do, such as getting dressed. Songs like the Hokey Cokey can be fun for this... “you put your right arm in, your right arm in, pull the jumper down and we’ll get you dressed today” etc.

Example: “We sang “You cannae shove yer granny off the bus” ... Edith responded to this straight away adding the ends of phrases for me initially and gradually singing all the words. It was a wonderful connection to make with her and Kate told me the following week that she had begun to use that song daily as she helped with giving Edith her medicine. She commented to me that Edith had definitely become easier to work with since using the song and music and that she also felt she was coming out of her room more.” (*Music Therapist Feedback*)

2) Using Instruments

It might be that using a gentle instrument such as windchimes or rainmaker helps to distract and create a reduction in anxiety or aggressive behaviour, particularly with day to day activities. If a resident is presenting challenging behaviour, music might just provide the necessary distraction and mood changer that is needed.

We hope this booklet has given you some useful reminders and tips on how to run your music sessions. You are doing an amazing job! Keep going 😊

Do get in touch if you need any further advice or support.

NAME:

DATE:



Appendix 1: Service User Assessment Tool

This is a very simple assessment tool that offers some indication of how the residents present before, during and after their music session. Mark each box between 1 and 10, with 1 being the lowest level of engagement/interaction/responsiveness, and 10 being the highest. You do not have to use the assessment tool to run music groups, but it may help you assess your goals for different residents and give you an indication of your progress.

	BEFORE:	DURING:	AFTER:
SOCIAL <i>E.g. Willingness to engage; motivation to interact; interest in others; ability to lead/initiate musical play; focus and concentration.</i>			
Comment:			
EMOTIONAL <i>E.g. vocal or instrumental responses; memory recall; positive mood.</i>			
Comment:			
PHYSICAL <i>E.g. physical movement; fine and gross motor skills; physical agility; eye contact.</i>			
Comment:			

Appendix 2: The Music and Dementia Evidence Base

THE ROLE OF MUSIC FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA: THE EVIDENCE BASE

Supporting Health and Social Care Professionals Across the UK



Outlining the research which underpins the National Dementia Strategy recommendation for music therapy as a psychosocial intervention; giving us confidence that engaging carers in music based interventions can help them to better understand residents.

“...Music therapy is one of just two forms of [non-pharmacological] intervention for which there is convincing evidence of effectiveness in reducing the behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia.” Commission on Dementia and Music, 2018



The Music Therapy Evidence Base

Music therapy can be very helpful for people living with dementia and often focuses on the use of music as a means to alleviate behavioural symptoms (such as agitation and anxiety), emotional well-being and the reduction of depressive symptoms.

In the UK music therapy has been recommended as a psychosocial intervention in the National Dementia Strategy. There is also much neurological research which supports the value of music therapy for people living with dementia. Supporting all of the above is a wealth of clinical research evidencing the ways in which music therapy can help people living with dementia, including:

- Reducing depression and anxiety
- Decreasing agitated and aggressive behaviours
- Reducing the use of medication
- Eliciting positive changes in mood and emotional states
- Contributing to, maintaining or rehabilitating functional cognitive and sensory abilities
- Aiding recall
- Improve speech and language skills
- Enhancing socio-emotional experiences
- Increasing motivation and stimulate interest in activities

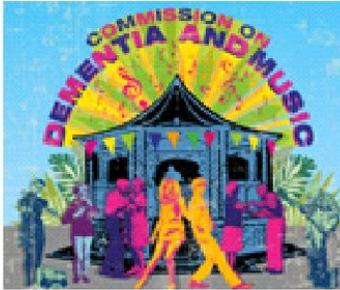
References: Altenmueller (2014); Ashida (2000); Baker & Ballantyne (2013); Brotans & Pickett-Cooper (1996); Brotans et al. (1997); Brotans & Koger (2000); Brotans & Marti (2003); Bruer et al. (2007); Ceccato et al. (2012); Cevasco & Grant (2003); Chan et al. (2012); Choi et al. (2009); Chou & Lin (2012); Chu et al. (2014); Clair (1996); Clark et al. (1998); Clément et al. (2012); Cooke et al. (2010); Creech et al. (2013); Cuddy & Duffin (2005); Department of Health (2009); Devereaux (1997); Erkkilä et al. (2011); Fachner et al. (2012); Gerdner (2000 & 2005); Gold (2013); Greenyer (2003); Groene (1993); Guétin et al. (2009 & 2013); Han et al. (2010); Hanser & Thompson (1994); Holmes et al. (2006); Hong & Choi (2011); Hsieh et al. (2011); Hailstone et al. (2009); Hsu et al. (2015); Hulme et al. (2009); Janata (2012); Johnson et al. (2012); Koelsch (2012); Kreutz (2004); Kumar et al. (1999); Ledger & Baker (2007); Lin et al. (2011); Lipe (1995); Lord & Garner (1993); Mousard et al. (2012); Park & Pringle-Specht (2009); Raglio et al. (2010 & 2008); Ragneskog et al. (2001); Resano et al. (2011); Reuer et al. (2011); Ridder et al. (2013); Salimpoor et al. (2011); Särkämö et al. (2012); Sun (2012); Sung & Chang (2005); Sung et al. (2006a&b; 2008 & 2012); Svansdottir & Snaedal (2006); Svansdottir et al. (2013). Details available on request



“...music can act as a supportive tool, rather than as a burdensome addition to existing workloads.”

Appendix 2: The Music and Dementia Evidence Base

The Commission on Dementia and Music



In 2017 our Director, Alexia Quin, was invited to join the world's first Commission on Dementia and Music. The ILCUK/Utley Foundation Commission scrutinised the evidence and practice in order to understand what music means for people with dementia, and to explore the current and potential role of music-based interventions in the prevention, treatment, care of and quality of life for people with dementia.

The Commission's report explained how music can provide a true lifeline for people living with dementia, even in the most challenging of times. They concluded that service commissioners must take music-based interventions for people with dementia seriously when planning both preventative and dementia care services.

Music as Therapy International's Approach

Music as Therapy International has been delivering skill-sharing projects internationally for over twenty years. We have been working with vulnerable people in the UK in 2016. Providing introductory training to practitioners working with people living with dementia is one of our priority areas, and our approach has been shortlisted for an *Advancing Healthcare Award*.

Drawing on the core principles of music therapy, we provide training to staff working in care settings, equipping them with new techniques to support residents on a day-to-day basis. This is by way of targeted musical activities which allow service users to advance toward social and emotional goals, while enhancing the quality of relationships between all participants.

We are currently collecting evidence to quantify the impact of our training for practitioners and the people they work with. We already have a wealth of qualitative evidence demonstrating the difference our approach to using music with people living with dementia can make.

Qualitative Evidence Overleaf...

Qualitative Evidence from our Dementia Partners

“ I imagined the music would be based on memories and nostalgia, but have found it helps communication... I have enjoyed seeing the smiling and happiness on the resident's faces.. [I've discovered how] music can improve people's confidence and how sound is so important from the earliest parts of life right up to the end of life.”
Care giver, Gill

“It's a real eye opener... Downstairs, people are able to hide more behind social conversation, but [in my music group] I can really see how they are.”
Care giver, Paula

“The training has increased our confidence in the way we can now set up a small group and explore different ways for service users to participate in musical activities.”
Care giver, Mary

“[The highlight of the project was] seeing the benefit of the deepened connections, especially with those with dementia... [I learnt] that even those with advanced dementia can connect with the staff on a one-to-one level through music... [And] in staff there was a greater ability to work with those who show challenging behaviours, and their ability to calm a situation through movement.”
Care giver, Abbeyfield Residential Home

“Working with Music as Therapy International has given us new insights and skills to enhance the experience of our service users. The course has proven to be very beneficial to our practice as we can now explore a variety of musical activities and not just hand out musical instruments and song sheets.”
Care giver, Haviland House

“The change in tempo and level of sound in musical activities has meant service users have had to concentrate and focus on such tasks. There has been a visible sense of achievement and satisfaction when the activity is completed. As everyone is absorbed with following the musical activity it releases them for a moment in time from the frustrations of memory loss and associated difficulties that may hamper and frustrate them in their daily activities of living.”
Music Therapist, Hazel Child

“It releases so much, the music. At home I get so (hunches shoulders) tight and stressed but doing the music session lets it out.”
Person living with dementia

To find out more about meaningful music for your service users or to discuss training for your staff, please contact:

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Notes and Ideas

Notes and Idea

