



music as therapy
international

Registered Charity No: 1070760

UK SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW REPORT 2018



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Executive Summary

Introduction

In 2016 *Music as Therapy International* launched its 'Bringing it all back Home' initiative, as part of its wider UK Programme. It focused on how the skill-sharing model the charity has developed, proven over twenty years working overseas, could be adapted for use in the UK with a series of **9** Introductory Training Projects undertaken in different care settings from the South of England to the Highlands of Scotland. The Support Visits encompassed three client groups: the elderly & people living with Dementia; Adults with Learning Difficulties (ALD) and the Under Fives (U5s).

In 2018, our Partners from these projects were offered further support from the Music Therapists who delivered their original introductory training: **6 Support Visits** were delivered with **22 practitioners** benefiting and **99 children and adults participating in music sessions**. The remaining **3 settings** faced local practical barriers which prevented their Support Visits being fully delivered.

This report consolidates our learning from the 'Sustainability Visit Programme' and addresses 5 questions at the heart of our core value of Sustainability, summarised in the 'Evidence and Analysis' section below. Our methodology followed five categories of analysis: informal and structured feedback collected from Practitioners and Managers, Music Therapists' written observations of visits, a Competency Framework to assess core skills present in music practice, and the charity's wider learning about the sector, where relevant. The report aims to point us towards more sustainable UK programme; instructing our design of support resources for existing partners, and reconsidering aspects of our programme so to remove barriers to sustainability for future partners.

To obtain a copy of the full Report, please email: freyaqibbs@musicastherapy.org

Evidence and analysis

To what extent did our introductory training enable practitioners to 'get started' with using music?

Managerial and practitioner responses to questionnaire questions regarding the personal and professional impact of our training were overwhelmingly positive: 100% of managers considered the introductory training to have had a 'significant impact' on participating practitioners, and 100% of both managers and practitioners noted a resulting confidence increase in practitioners. Both agreed that participating staff enjoyed more responsibility following the introductory training (100% of managers, 92% of practitioners). These results were echoed in the music therapists' reporting.

To what extent did our Introductory Training enable care settings to establish music within their core offer?

Managerial and practitioner questionnaires also considered the current regularity of music sessions and how embedded managers and practitioners considered music to be in the setting's core offer. 84% of both groups agreed music sessions were embedded within their activities, the remaining 16% both partially agreed. We also learned that 77% of practitioners felt music had influenced their wider care practice, something which was supported by the music therapists' reporting. Using these reports, we judged four out of six settings' to have embedded music in their core provision, which was supported by recurring factors such as the regularity and consistent structure of sessions, colleague support and local ownership and development.

In what way are locally-led music programmes making a difference to the settings and vulnerable children and adults to whom they are providing care or education?

100% of managers told us that service users had benefited from participating in music sessions. Common benefits (identified by managers and practitioners, whose responses were broadly aligned) considered relevant across all client groups were: participation, non-verbal communication,

enjoyment and social motivation. Our findings also gave us the opportunity to identify client group-specific benefits, which are detailed further on pages 14-16 of this report.

What aspects of music have proven sustainable over time, and what challenges to sustainable practice have been identified?

84% of our partner practitioners reported feeling supported by their managers. This undoubtedly has a positive impact on continued music programmes on a practical level, but also on their continued commitment to running sessions.

Using the five categories of analysis described in the introduction, we identified **twelve aspects of sustainable music practice**, ranging from maintaining a consistent routine and a client-led approach, to appropriate activity selection and non-verbal communication. These findings give us greater clarity as to what skills we can be confident participating practitioners will develop during our introductory training. Our findings also enabled us to identify **eleven challenges to sustainable music practice**, ranging from *more staff needing training, to a lack of practitioner confidence and evaluation over time*. This list could help us better monitor and address risks to sustainable practice throughout project development and delivery.

What might be needed in terms of longer term support for practitioners to maintain their music programmes into the future and be the role of Music as Therapy International to provide this?

In line with our aim to provide more targeted support to partners, we asked both managers and practitioners whether they felt they needed continued support from MaST. 100% indicated that ongoing support from *Music as Therapy International* was **important**. When asked what “future training focus could be helpful?” feedback followed three themes: resource-sharing, additional training and further supervision (supported by Music Therapists’ reporting).

We also invited our Partners to feed back on their experiences of working with *Music as Therapy International* itself. 100% of managers said they would recommend our training to others, that it exceeded expectations and was good value for money. 100% of managers also told us that staff participation was easy to arrange, and that staff enjoyed training.

Conclusion and recommendations

Our report ends with the following conclusions, with recommendations included on p.26-28:

- We can be confident in our Introductory Training projects’ impact on practitioners’ personal and professional development, their wider care practice, and ability to establish music programmes and sustain them over time.
- We can be confident that locally-led music programmes can benefit service users with wide ranging needs, within a context that is socially motivating.
- We have identified 12 aspects of music practice which have proven sustainable over time, and 11 challenges to sustainable practice.
- Partners recognise the value of ongoing support from *Music as Therapy International*.

Key to the recommendations made alongside each conclusion is **the Motivation Programme** we will be launching in 2019, specifically designed in response to our learning, to help ensure our Introductory Training has a sustainable impact. This will include a series of quarterly Partner bulletins (sharing news, resources and ideas), to which Music Therapists and Partners will contribute, the latter occasionally incentivised by musical instrument give-aways. We will invite Partner practitioners to register their personal contact details and create a mechanism through which settings can directly request visits or supervisions. We intend to champion our Partners’ commitments to care through national awards, conferences and press, and ultimately intend to use insight gained through the Motivation Programme to inform further targeted support in 2020.

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