

Using music to provide direct personalised care and support to people living with dementia

The relevance of *Music as Therapy International* to the Dementia Training Standards Framework: Tier 2



“ There is a need for education initiatives to show benefits, in terms of increasing staff effectiveness in practice and improved outcomes for people who use health and care services. ”

Alistair Burns, National Clinical Director for Dementia

“ The *Music as Therapy International* project was a great experience - especially seeing it spread throughout the home - a vital tool for all those working in the caring environment. ”

Abbeyfield House

The needs identified by Alistair Burns (National Clinical Director for Dementia) refer to a drive to increase staff effectiveness and improved outcomes for people living with dementia.

Music as Therapy International has responded to this call to action, with training projects tailored to upskilling care staff who provide direct, personalised care and support; those working at Tier 2, as defined in the Dementia Training Standards Framework.

In this leaflet we look at both impact of the training we provide, evidenced with a combination of clinical reporting, feedback, and service user evaluation.

“Working with *Music as Therapy* has given us new insights and skills to enhance the experience of our service users... We can now explore a variety of musical activities and not just hand out musical instruments and song Sheets.” *Haviland House Partner*

Person-centred care (Subject 4)

“I could play that all day!”

Resident

Recognising and promoting individuality

87% of staff and managers attributed benefits to their residents' creativity, emotional expression, and enjoyment resulting from their music sessions.

Independence and choice

“ Sylvia has been attending more group activities and larger music group sessions... this project has really reduced isolation and encourage social participation for her.”

Dignity and respect

“ Music has shown us service users can take the lead and ownership of the group. Staff become members of this unique group, not just staff.”

Understanding and responding to the person as an individual

“ Donna uses techniques learned on the project to help facilitate personal care or moving around... Singing together has really helped to reduce the anxiety and angst that some of them feel.”

Taking into account each individual's unique life history

“ Now every day is a different day – reactions and interactions with the members are always different.”

“ By simply having the time to listen and talk about what Janet liked in our music session, Debbie was able to extend the *Music as Therapy International* experience into daily life for Janet.”

"Oh, you're lovely!"

Resident

Communication, interaction and behaviour (Subject 5)

Effective communication depending upon the needs and abilities of each individual

"Music is an outlet for expression for those for whom communication is perhaps more difficult... it may work better than speech for some withdrawn individuals."

"Downstairs, people are able to hide more behind social conversation, but up here, in music, I can really see how they are."

Non-verbal communication – language, facial expression, and touch

"I've seen positive interactions with residents who are not always able to communicate verbally. Through musical instruments we are able to repeat, take turns and laugh. You can see different parts of residents' humour."

The behaviour (including challenging) as form of communication – indicating feelings and perceptions

100% of managers and practitioners attributed benefits to residents' non-verbal communication and concentration to their music sessions.

"There were many opportunities to strengthen friendships and bonds between members as they shared stories, had 'conversations' on the instruments and took ownership of the group by leading improvisations."

Health and wellbeing in dementia care

(Subject 6)

Recognising and responding to psychological needs associated with delirium, anxiety and depression

"[The training] has changed my perspective... The music really helps the members feelings."

"It releases so much, the music. At home I get so (hunches shoulders) tight and stressed but doing the music session lets it out."
Resident

87% of managers and practitioners attributed a reduction in anxiety and isolation for residents to their music sessions.

Recognising and responding to physical needs such as food, pain relief, etc

"Kim had begun to use that song daily as she helped give Edith her medicine. She commented that Edith had definitely become easier to work with since using, and she was coming out of her room more."

Optimising physical health and psychological well-being

"There has been an auditable reduction in challenging behaviour."

Awareness of the appropriate role of medication

"Music can really bring back memories, for the members living with dementia. It can really uplift their moods, if they feel depressed, anxiety or pain."

"[The training has been] beneficial to both staff and clients... In clients, I noted greater confidence and more eagerness to join in. In staff there was greater ability to work with those who show challenging behaviours, and their ability to calm a situation through movement."

Living well with dementia

(Subject 8)

"I'm at the top of the band! I never knew I could do this!"

Resident

Encouraging residents to maintain the activities they enjoy and continue to be active

"This morning's delight was music session with a 102-year-old, who literally just 'woke up' as we began to play. It was wonderful to see her giggling and smiling."

Promoting independence

"I would often use the techniques learned through music as therapy outside of the session too and sing to help residents get dressed."

Supporting participants to avoid isolation by maintaining a social life

"It makes it easy for relatives to share quality time with their loved ones."

100% of managers and practitioners attributed benefits for social relationships with peers for them music groups, and levels of participation. 87% observed improved turn-taking.

"Janet told me early on that she looked forward to her session and each week would bring an anecdote or a song back from the previous week... Music sessions were opening up wider opportunities for Janet."

To find out more about meaningful music for the people in your care, or to discuss training for your staff, please contact: freya@musicastherapy.org 020 7735 3231