



“You’re never too old for Rock and Roll”

An evaluation summary of the Rhythmix, Wishing Well programme in 4 healthcare settings for people with dementia.



Between March and December we worked in partnership with 3 acute hospitals and 1 residential setting to bring participatory music-making activities to people with dementia and their families. As part of the programme, 4 of our Musicians from the Wishing Well Team mentored 4 apprentices, providing a 9 month learning opportunity for them which built on the Foundation programme we had already delivered. In addition, it upskilled our Musicians as they gained mentoring skills, supported by peer to peer reviews and an Action Learning Set.

Participatory music - making was brought to patients’ bedsides and in some cases, communal areas on hospital wards with the aim of supporting patient/resident wellbeing. Using a vast repertoire of styles and genres from the 1930s to the present day, plus a range of improvisation techniques and music technology, our Musicians found music that was meaningful to their participants, that tapped into the soundtracks retained in their memories. Through this gentle stimulation, a range of positive outcomes were observed by the Musicians, healthcare staff and families.

Outcomes

the participant groups across our 4 settings were large and for the most part, unpredictable as we clearly have no control over hospital admission and discharge. This is a challenging programme to evaluate, compared to say, a group of 10 participants who attend a weekly singing session whose attendance and progress can be easily monitored. Using a range of methodologies (outlined in detail for each setting) we captured some or all of the outcomes below for the majority of our participants. It is important to remember that we “offer” music-making interactions by sensitively approaching bedsides. We will not approach a bedside unless that offer is accepted (however subtly such as eye contact or a change in facial expression).

There were patients on the ward each week that we could not engage; they may have been asleep, in consultation with doctors or we may not have been able to find music that engaged them. Some interactions were for a very brief 5 minutes, others for a 30-40 minutes. We saw some patients for a longer period of 4 or 5 weeks, many we only met once or twice.

Outputs:

Total number of participatory music making sessions delivered: **120**

Total number of beneficiaries reached: **744 people with dementia**

Total number of new Musicians in Healthcare trained: **4**

Outcomes observed include:

- **Reduced anxiety:** music helps our brains and heart rates entrain to a strong, healthy pattern. When offered sensitively, it can distract people from the confusion and agitation caused by dementia, focusing people on a calming activity that brings about a sense of safety. The Musicians captured numerous examples of using music to help people feel more settled, sometimes helping staff to de-escalate potentially dangerous behaviour, enabling the hospital ward to function better.
- **Increased social interaction:** particularly in busy healthcare settings where engagement opportunities are few, people with dementia can become increasingly withdrawn. Musicians in Healthcare take the time needed to create engagement, using music to gently stimulate people with dementia. We recorded countless moments of connection between families during this project - conversation, eye contact, loving touch, where, previous to the music session there had been little interaction.
- **Increased self-expression:** it's particularly important, in health and care settings that people retain their identities and therefore, their dignity. We saw particular pieces of music trigger memories in people that helped them tell their life stories. We uncovered people's hidden musical skills and passions that made them "*light up*". People improvised, learnt new instruments and in rare cases, actually wrote lyrics. All of this helps the patient become a person and our Feasibility Study results show how this can support better care.

Abinger Care of the Elderly Ward, East Surrey Hospital. Surrey and Sussex Healthcare Trust

Musician Zoe Konez and Mentee, Karen Grace created bedside interactions on 35 bed "*Abinger*" ward. As the ward is arranged in a series of large bays, the interactions often rippled out, bringing 4 or 5 patients together in music. The Musicians were incredibly well received by Healthcare staff but found that due to capacity, they had to work independently after they had received their briefing at the start of the session.

Dementia Consultant, Chris O'Connor has applied to the hospital charity for match funding to support the continuation of our partnership. We are working with hospital comms to promote the project internally and aim to involve at least 2 other dementia wards in the next round of work.

Number of sessions delivered: **30**

Number of beneficiaries: **220**

Evaluation methods:

- Feedback from patients, staff and family
- Session notes from the Musicians documenting short case studies and patient outcomes
- Staff survey
- Dementia Care Mapping



Feedback from staff included:

- *'I love them. I think they're wonderful. Can we have them on other wards?'*
- *"Settles agitation in confused patients. Brightens up the day. Improves mood. Calms down end of life patients"*

And from patients:

- *"I was dreaming I could hear music." "It makes us so happy."*
- *"We call this music to get well by!"*

Staff Survey Results (please see attached "staff survey" spreadsheet for more detail)

- **100% said "yes"** patients benefit from having live music on the ward
- **77.8% said "yes"** families and carers benefit from having live music on the ward
- **91% said "yes"** they personally benefit from having live music on the ward

Dementia Care Mapping (DCM) (please see DCM attachment for more detail) Mapping was carried out by Dementia Nurse Consultant, Chris O'Connor.

The framework clearly captures a rise in wellbeing and engagement both during and after participation in music making. Although very time consuming, we feel this is by far the most effective tool available to capture the impact of our work.

Buckingham Dementia Ward, Worthing General Hospital, West Sussex. Western Sussex Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Musician Marina Perryman and Mentee, Gary Cunningham created bedside interactions on 25 bed "Buckingham" ward. At the hospital's request, they also led group music sessions to increase patient motivation to get up and interact socially. Support for our work at Worthing General was wholehearted; all levels of staff from consultants, to nurses to HCAs embraced the music making in a very playful way, often joining the musicians in song. The Musicians were supported by the Activity Coordinator who was able to follow up the Musicians visits by making individual playlists for certain patients and using recorded music himself as an intervention. Nurses from other wards would regularly visit the session and have expressed interest in MIH training for musically oriented healthcare staff as well as the development of the programme for more wards in the hospital.

Number of sessions delivered: 30

Number of beneficiaries: 242

Evaluation methods:

- Feedback from patients, staff and family
- Session notes from the Musicians documenting short case studies and patient outcomes
- Staff survey

We were unable to use the Pool Activity Level evaluation tool as planned - it can only be used by licensed OTs. The OT for Buckingham left shortly after the start of the project and was not replaced.

Feedback from staff included:

- 'Music brings out a side of the patients that we rarely get to see on the ward.'
- "I would like the live music to continue as it is of immense benefit to all"

And from family carers:

- 'I'm sorry for crying but I haven't seen him this animated since he's been in hospital'

Staff Survey Results (please see attached "staff survey" spreadsheet for more detail)

- **100% said "yes"** patients benefit from having live music on the ward
- **100% said "yes"** families and carers benefit from having live music on the ward
- **100% said "yes"** they personally benefit from having live music on the ward

Emerald Dementia Ward, Royal Sussex County Hospital, East Sussex. Brighton and Sussex University Hospital Trust

Musician Russ Callaghan Grooms and Mentee, Lizzy Carey created bedside interactions on Emerald Ward. Work was supported by the OTs with check ins and referrals regularly made. The staff know our work well (this is the only setting which was not new to us in this portfolio), are very welcoming but less inclined to actually join in with interactions than in other settings. The difference the Musicians make to the ward environment is highly valued with ward manager Mary Pannakel reflecting *"They are amazing - I see people singing with them who I don't see engaging with anyone or anything else."* Russ and Lizzy are exceptional Musicians who reflected *"Having a huge bank of songs, both vocally and melodically provides more access to the patients memories, emotions and personalities. We regularly segue from Gershwin to Holst to The Beatles to Ella Fitzgerald, to Little Richard to The Eagles, to Frank Sinatra to Led Zeppelin. It makes the musical side of the work an absolute joy."*

Number of sessions delivered: 30

Number of beneficiaries: 257

Evaluation methods:

- Feedback from patients, staff and family
- Session notes from the Musicians documenting short case studies and patient outcomes
- The OTs at Emerald Ward did not have the capacity to use the Pool Activity Level as planned.

Feedback from patients included:

- "You're never too old for rock n roll"
- 'We grew up on The Beatles, The Eagles... all those sorts of bands. We used to go together to gigs. It's been the thing that's helped us through so much in life'

And from family carers:

- "We were with my sister when your musicians visited the ward, going from bed to bed playing music of the patient's choice. My sister responded well to them and when they came to her bed she gave them a few names of her favourite songs. This was very successful as, even after they had left, she continued to reminisce about her past. Your musicians were very patient, kind and empathetic. Thank you very much for providing this much needed stimulation"

Staff Survey Results (please see attached "staff survey" spreadsheet for more detail)

- **100% said "yes"** patients benefit from having live music on the ward
- **100% said "yes"** families and carers benefit from having live music on the ward
- **100% said "yes"** they personally benefit from having live music on the ward



Clapham Palliative Care Suite, Haviland House, Guildcare Charity.

Musician Bela Emerson and Mentee, Lou Maggs brought bedside interactions to the 14 bed palliative care suite at Haviland House, a residential care home for people with dementia. The 1 to 1 interactions took place in residents rooms and were very closely supported by the Wellbeing lead, Gill Hume. The learning from this collaborative delivery was immense; Gill was an invaluable bridge to the residents and their families, modelled best practice for people in the very late stages of dementia at all times and helped us to understand the subtleties of responses.

In turn, Gill soaked up the learning from our Musicians who gave her and the other staff a new way to reach and support residents.

The music had such a powerful impact on palliative care residents who have so few opportunities to engage meaningfully that although we had planned on moving the sessions to different wards, we were asked to stay.

"These sessions are meaningful and person-centred to each individual family member. They help to encourage a sense of connection to others and reality. A feeling of togetherness is evoked. The music helps to provide relaxation, engagement, empowerment, stimulation, emotional connections. It has been an emotional, heart-warming, and highly enriching experience. Please accept my sincere gratitude." (NB - staff refer to residents as "family members" and the unit as a "household")

Haviland House have begun fundraising for a match contribution towards another music project with Wishing Well. Staff have asked for sessions to continue with the palliative care residents but to create a training programme for staff on other suites (where residents are living with varying degrees of dementia) in the use of personalised playlists and group music making activities.

Number of sessions delivered: 30

Number of beneficiaries: 25

Evaluation methods:

- Feedback from patients, staff and family
- Session notes from the Musicians documenting short case studies and patient outcomes
- Staff survey
- Case Studies using the Making a Difference evaluation tool

Feedback from staff included:

- *"Some of our family members appear to be asleep and/or peaceful and live music makes them appear 'alive inside' even if only for the moments the musicians are with them. A variety of songs and tunes have been heard and our family members respond well to them."*
- *"Music can help us to connect and interact with our family members in the later stages of their dementia journey in a way that other tools and medicines cannot."*

Staff Survey Results (please see attached "staff survey" spreadsheet for more detail)

- **100% said "yes"** patients benefit from having live music on the ward
- **100% said "yes"** families and carers benefit from having live music on the ward
- **100% said "yes"** they personally benefit from having live music on the ward

Case Studies

 (please see attachment 4)

Gill Hume used the *"Making a Difference"* evaluation framework to create case studies of 4 residents who she observed for 6 to 10 weeks at a time. The residents are in the final stages of a terminal illness so we did not expect to see, for example, any progression as such in their responses but it helped us see how people responded over longer periods of time and to maximise engagement with them. It gave us an expert and external evaluation of our interactions.

