

Music Therapy

Music therapy is an interactive, primarily non-verbal intervention. The purpose of music therapy is to encourage the individual to explore and enjoy the creative process of making music. It provides a process through which clients can express themselves, become aware of their feelings and interact more easily. Music therapy can provide new insights into a client's functioning. In music therapy sessions, interactive music is spontaneously created by the client and therapist. The client does not need any musical training or experience in order to make use of music therapy.

The aims of music therapy are primarily non-musical, and are determined by the needs of each client. Typically they might include:

- Developing communication and creative expression
- Raising self esteem and confidence
- Encouraging attention and general motivation
- Supporting emotional well being
- Reducing stereotypes and encourage functional hand use
- Improving gross and fine motor skills
- Offering a space for relaxation

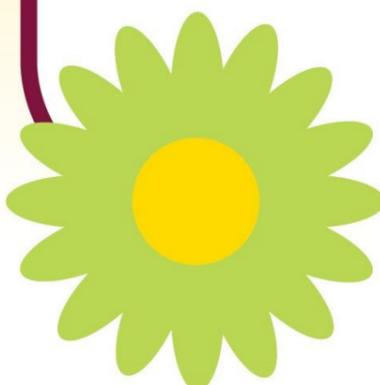
The music therapist facilitates communication through the music, and is skilled in encouraging the individual to play using a variety of percussion and tuned instruments including electric guitars and keyboards. The therapist supports the music with improvised accompaniment thus contributing to the overall development of an individual. Sessions may also include activities that encourage the use the whole body as well as the introduction of music technology such as Beamz, Skoog, SoundBeam, Midicreator and the iPad



During a music therapy session I want to be able to contribute to the development of a relationship that can explore and seek to understand the inner world of the client. Through an awareness of the individuals needs a difference can be made and by using practical music making communication can be achieved. The use of improvisation within this therapeutic relationship can offer an outlet for emotional expression whilst the use of familiar songs opens up opportunities for choice making and turn taking. Each session is tailored to the needs of an individual and may be very free and exploratory or in some cases, more directed. After all, the ability to appreciate and respond to music is a quality inborn in all of us.

Written with thanks by Cindy-Jo Morison, Principal Music Therapist & Music Therapy Advisor to Rett UK

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