

# Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease

September 16-17, 2019 | Paris, France

## Personalized playlists for people with Dementia: The development of best-practice guidelines for music use

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Personalized music playlists are increasingly being utilized in health-care settings to reduce the severity of the behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia. However, contrary to popular perceptions, music is not the universally positive 'cure-all' that many believe it to be. People with dementia are particularly vulnerable to negative effects from listening to music, such as increased agitation or depression, particularly if they have a history of mood regulation disorders. In a series of experiments we were able to identify how particular features of music such as the tempo and mode (key) influence affective states of people with dementia. In collaboration with aged care workers, home based carers, and other stakeholders, we have developed a set of best-practice guidelines based on our findings to help carers of people with dementia select music in more strategic ways. This presentation will discuss

the development of the guidelines and preliminary results from its trial in aged care facilities and home care settings. Our findings indicate that in addition to accounting for personal preferences, music for people with dementia needs to be carefully targeted towards the affective outcome desired while taking other mental health factors into account.

### Speaker Biography

Sandra Garrido is an NHMRC-ARC Dementia Research Development Fellow at the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour & Development at Western Sydney University. She has a background in both music and psychology. Her work focuses on translational research involving arts in health contexts, in particular with people with dementia and depression. She has authored over 70 academic publications including a book entitled *Why We Are Attracted to Sad Music?* (2017).

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