

Patients' and Health Care Providers' Perception of and Attitudes towards the Use of Music as Therapy in Psychiatric Hospitals

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Introduction: Music is a widely utilized form of complementary therapy. Despite the available literature supporting its positive effect on patients, yet its use in psychiatric clinical settings is still limited. Positive perception and greater understanding of music as therapy may lead to increase use of music, and more opportunities for direct patient care. Little literature indicates that if health care providers are interested in Music as Therapy, this will help in the provision of sound medical advice to their patients. This study investigated mental health professionals' and patients' attitudes regarding the perceived relevance of the music therapy treatment modality. The study focused on attitudinal differences among interdisciplinary team members and also on those between staff and patients regarding their views of music therapy's role, strengths, and weaknesses. In addition, the study investigated whether music therapists' attitudes and expectations matched those of other professionals, whether the psychiatric hospital was a practical setting in which to address music therapy treatment goals and issues, and how music therapists felt about their positions. The "music therapists' job satisfaction" category included areas such as job respect, job recognition, salary competency and educational components, and professional credentials. With respect to health care, music can be an effective intervention with patients of every age. Music offers health benefits throughout life, from those born into the neonatal intensive care unit for whom music mediates medically-necessary stress, Music and Health Care through those in hospice care at the end of life who can use music to transcend physical symptoms and declines. Music is effective with patients with conditions ranging from cancer to schizophrenia to traumatic brain injury, and is used to support patients in staying well by combating the debilitating effects of stress, sleeplessness, and chronic pain. Indeed, today music is integrated into health care at every level. The clinical use of music is now an evidence-based practice that has been proven both to satisfy patients and, very significantly, to lower the cost of care. Additionally, music has the potential to encourage people to commit to routine and necessary preventive care. Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music

interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.

Music Therapy is an established health profession in which music is used within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals. After assessing the strengths and needs of each client, the qualified music therapist provides the indicated treatment including creating, singing, moving to, and/or listening to music.

Aim: This study aimed to explore patients' and health care providers' perception and attitudes towards the use of music as therapy in psychiatric hospitals. Programs that bring professional musicians into hospitals introduce one kind of musical intervention (performances and workshops) into a health care environment where a very different kind of musical activity has long dominated. That activity is called Music Therapy.

Design : The study followed a descriptive research design. Setting: It was conducted at El Maamoura Hospital for psychiatric medicine. The power of music to control the spirit has always been understood, but within the last decade, new technologies have made visible the interaction between music and the physical brain. The making and processing of music involves structures, networks, and pathways throughout the brain, from the highest order of conscious reaction to the lowest unconscious levels of response. Music has been shown to stimulate the brain's primary engines of human capacity. Musical engagement exercises attention networks and executive function, evokes emotional response and stimulates the central nervous system, and appears to activate the human mirror-neuron system

Methods: Four tools were used for data collection. The attitude towards the use of music as therapy survey, the psychiatric health care provider's perception of music as therapy structured interview schedule, patient's perception of music as therapy structured interview schedule, and a socio-demographic and clinical data sheet were used. Survey

forms were mailed to 18 music therapy clinical training directors who were willing to distribute them to psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, social workers, rehabilitation therapists, nursing staff, and patients in NAMT approved psychiatric facilities, or to subjects directly, when the training director provided individual staff names from his or her hospital. Music therapist survey forms were sent to music therapists whose names were listed in inpatient psychiatric units in the 1995 NAMT membership sourcebook.

Most health care professionals reported a positive image about the music therapy profession and music therapists, although significant differences existed among the various subject classes' perceptions. Psychiatrists viewed music therapy as less than essential therapeutic intervention. Psychologists and social workers responded less positively to treatment goals that they considered being in "their" treatment areas, but they valued music therapy primarily for therapeutic recreation. Staff members who have observed music therapy sessions valued music therapy services more highly than staff that had not made such observations. Patients valued music therapy treatment less than other professionals. Music therapists rated music therapy services as having a higher treatment value than other disciplines, including rehabilitation therapy.

Results: 75.1% of the studied health care providers had high knowledge about music as therapy and 81.8% of them had positive perception of music as therapy and of its effectiveness and 70.7% of the studied health care providers had positive attitude towards music as therapy. Additionally, 70.8 % of the studied patients perceived that they could use music as therapy and 66.2% of the studied patients had positive attitude toward music as therapy.

Conclusion: Health care providers have knowledge about music as therapy, they perceive it as helpful in improving patients' condition and they possess positive attitudes towards music as therapy. So the researcher recommended that nurses should assume a more positive role in the implementation of music as therapy. Integrating music as therapy into the nursing and medical curriculum is necessary and psycho-educational programs to develop patients' awareness about music as therapy are needed. When patients and healthcare providers listen and communicate with each other, they are likely to develop a shared understanding that may improve future decision making and quality of care patients receive.