



Music Therapy in Rehabilitation

What is Music Therapy?

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 interventions can be designed to manage stress, alleviate pain, improve communication, improve physical functioning, improve psychological functioning, improve speech and language communication skills, and provide unique opportunities for interaction. Because music therapy is a powerful and non-threatening medium, unique outcomes are possible.

How Does Music Therapy make a Difference for Rehabilitation Patients?

Music therapy has been shown to be an efficacious and valid treatment option for medical patients with a variety of diagnoses. Music therapy is effective in neurological rehabilitation, cognitive rehabilitation, cardiovascular rehabilitation, speech and language rehabilitation, and physical rehabilitation. Research results and clinical experiences attest to the viability of music therapy even in those patients resistant to other treatment approaches. Music is a form of sensory stimulation, which provokes responses due to the familiarity, predictability, and feelings of security associated with it.

What Do Music Therapists Do?

Music therapists use music experiences- instrumental, vocal, and rhythmic- that are designed to facilitate changes that are non-musical in nature. Music therapy programs are based on individual assessment, treatment planning, and ongoing program evaluation. Frequently functioning as members of an interdisciplinary team, music therapists implement programs with groups or individuals addressing a vast continuum of outcomes, including reduction of pain and anxiety, improved physical functioning, stress management, improved cognition, and improved verbal and non-verbal communication.

What Can One Expect From A Music Therapist?

Music therapy utilized in a rehabilitation setting complies with the expectations and requirements inherent in the medical model of treatment. Professionally-trained music therapists design and utilize individualized music experiences to assess, treat, and evaluate patients. Music therapy patient objectives are specific and relevant to medical diagnosis, course of treatment, and discharge timeline. Benefits are described in medical, and not musical, terms.



What are Some Goals of Rehabilitation Addressed by Music Therapists?

- Improve verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- Increase gross and/or fine motor strength, flexibility, coordination & range of motion
- Increase sitting and standing balance
- Increase oral motor strength and functioning
- Improve executive functioning
- Increase attention (sustained, divided, alternating)
- Improve safety awareness
- Improve social skills
- Decrease agitation and increase relaxation
- Improve breath support
- Improve vocal quality, range, volume, and tone
- Improve speech intelligibility and speaking rate
- Improve emotional identification and expression
- Increase orientation to person, place, situation
- Improve memory
- Improve gait parameters

Why Music Therapy?

William Frohlich, President, Beth Abraham Health Services in New York, talks about music therapy as part of the total treatment modality:

"I think that the therapist plays an integral team role when you are talking about a team of physicians, a team of nurses, therapists, physical or occupational therapists and so on... included in that team needs to be a music therapist. The observations where a patient may be singing where they could not speak before or they may be walking or dancing where they could not move before – that is important for the music therapist to bring to the occupational therapist or physical therapist to become part of the total treatment modality."

What does Peak View Music Therapy Provide?

Our Mission: Peak View Music Therapy is committed to providing high-quality, goal centered music therapy services to restore, maintain, and improve the health of children, adults, and seniors in Colorado. Peak View Music Therapy provides individual and group sessions in the community, homes, schools, skilled-nursing facilities, community centers, assisted-living facilities, hospices, and other various locations.

Please contact Deborah Palmer, MM, MT-BC, NMT, for more information about music therapy at (970)-290-5097 or www.peakviewmusictherapy.com.