



ARTS
& HEALTH
SOUTH WEST

Musica workshops in care settings

Musica

ARTS & HEALTH SOUTH WEST PRIZE 2015 LONGLISTED CASE STUDY



Name of organisation:
Musica

Title of project/programme:
Musica workshops in care settings

Dates of project/programme:
2010 - present

Summary

Musica provides interactive music workshops for all ages in community and healthcare settings. Our sessions are designed to improve the overall wellbeing of the participants, and each workshop is tailored to suit the needs of the groups we are working with. We base our session plans on extensive research into the benefits of music in everyday life, and we work closely with each client to ensure our services meet their requirements. The over-arching aim of our Musica workshops is to use music to enhance the wellbeing of older adults in care settings, particularly those living with dementia.

Demands on care settings to motivate and stimulate their residents/patients are ever increasing, and we understand the daily challenge of providing residents with a variety of activities which is highly important for both the wellbeing of the residents and the reputation of the care setting. Our music workshops in healthcare benefit both the care setting and its service users, providing an affordable solution for an in-house activity programme which promotes health and well-being.

Since it began in 2010, Musica has become a respected brand, providing musical services to improve the wellbeing of the young and older generations. Through our highly trained and experienced representatives, we have built a proven track record of delivering projects across the UK. All of our representatives have received training in arts and health and/or education, and they bring these skills to the sessions they deliver. Through the use of franchisees we are able to deliver Musica workshops in care settings across the Southwest.

Overview

Musica was founded in 2010 by Rosie Mead whilst studying for a BA in Music with English Literature at Bath Spa University. Whilst at University Rosie wrote about the benefits of music for older adults, particularly those living with dementia. It was through this that Rosie discovered the need for stimulating and meaningful activities within care settings.

Research suggests that taking part in musical activities can improve the health and well-being of older adults, particularly those living with dementia. Music can be used as a means of communicating feelings that people with dementia might otherwise have difficulty expressing. Musical interventions have been advocated as a beneficial activity for people with dementia. It can reduce anxiety (Sung, 2010) and agitation (Park, 2009), enhance motivation, improve language pathways, boost appetite, improve social interaction (Sixsmith, 2007) and can reduce the need for medication.

Music is a powerful tool that can enhance communication with a resident on a more personal level, providing a greater depth of understanding about their wellbeing. Previous projects run by Musica have seen residents who, usually unable to speak, sing solo songs from start to finish. This can give staff an insight into the individual's life story, stimulates the speech centre in the brain and creates opportunities to communicate without frustration or agitation.

The over-arching aim of our Musica workshops is to use music to enhance the wellbeing of older adults in care settings, particularly those living with dementia. Further aims are as follows:

- Provide older adults with a chance to experience something new and fun. Participating in musical activities can have beneficial properties such as improving brain function, boosting confidence and self-esteem.
- Encourage social-inclusion reducing loneliness and anxiety.
- Foster a strong community within the care homes with a view to improve the relationships between staff, residents and their family.
- Create a safe environment for residents to express feelings
- Integrate music into the care provision within each setting

Our Musica workshops last one hour, and involves singing, reminiscence, and live performances. Each session involves active participation between the music facilitator and the participants. We work closely with the care staff in each facility to learn about the needs of the participants we are working with, and to work towards implementing music as part of their usual care.

Musica operates a franchise system. Specially selected musicians work with Rosie to develop their exclusive territory, providing Musica workshops in care settings within their area. The franchisees then undergo a training programme, covering: how to run their business; the benefits of music in healthcare; the design and implementation of music workshops for older adults; writing funding applications; and reflective learning. Each franchisee is a dementia friend, and some are dementia champions.

Due to the large territories, many franchisees take on local freelance musicians to deliver the Musica workshops (undergoing the training on workshop delivery to ensure the high quality of sessions in all territories). The Musica team consists of:

Rosie Mead (Managing Director, Area Manager Blandford and Surrounds, Dorset)

Gemma Perrin (Training and Development Manager, Music Therapist, freelance facilitator Dorset)

Alis Eaton (Area Manager Bournemouth and Surrounds)

Frankie Simpkins (Area Manager Wiltshire)

Natasha Willis (Freelance Facilitator Wiltshire)

Kathryn Tarrant (Area Manager Hampshire)

Claire Stobie (Area Manager B&NES and Bristol)

Frances de Bosdari (Area Manager Somerset)

Hannah Woolmington (Freelance facilitator Somerset)

It is our short-term aim to expand into Devon and Cornwall.

Musica currently delivers around 70 workshops per month, reaching over 1,000 participants. We currently provide sessions in care homes and hospitals across the southwest. In May 2015 we are launching a new arts on prescription service, providing Musica workshops in the community, working with GP surgeries to refer patients whom they feel would benefit from participating in our sessions. This will initially be piloted in North Dorset, and eventually rolled out across other areas of the Southwest.

We have worked with a variety of partners including Care South; Hartford Care; Cedar Care; Somerset Care; and the Order of St Johns Care Trust. We provide services for large care home chains and small independent care homes.

Innovation

Our work is innovative as it is different to the usual 'entertainment' provided in care homes. We design our sessions based on the current research into the benefits of music within healthcare, and each session is designed with this in mind. We pride ourselves on our flexible approach, and ability to adapt our sessions to suit the needs of the participants we are working with. For example in some homes we noticed that certain residents were being excluded from our sessions as they were unable to leave

their rooms for various reasons; we now provide extra bedside performances to accommodate the needs of these residents who are at risk of social exclusion.

We work closely with the care staff, and we are developing a training programme to teach staff about the benefits of music for their residents, and assist them in implementing music into their daily care.

Participation

We provide monthly (sometimes fortnightly) music workshops in care facilities. As the participants become familiar with the workshop leader they often request songs or musical pieces they would like to hear. Likewise staff are able to request changes to the workshops to meet the needs of their residents. Our sessions involve on average 15 participants and 2 members of the care staff, plus visitors.

Outcomes

The aims and objectives of our workshops are as follows:

- To improve the wellbeing of participants.

Objective: We use interactive music workshops to enhance care settings, in order to improve mood and wellbeing.

Output indicator: Changes in participant behaviour during the workshop; participation and engagement in the workshop; changes in the participant's mood after the workshop.

- Improve relationship between participants and staff

Objective: Music to be used as a discussion prompt between the participants, and staff.

Output indicator: Number of staff that interact with the workshop; increased communication between participants and staff.

- To enhance the care environment for residents living with dementia

Objective: Work with care staff to include participants with dementia in the sessions

Output indicator: Number of residents with dementia taking part in the workshops; changes in behaviour and mood before and after the workshop.

- To encourage memory recall with participants with dementia

Objective: Use of familiar music; provision of reminiscence resources e.g. photographs, video clips.

Output indicator: ability to reminisce; changes in levels of communication.

We evaluate our sessions on an ongoing basis; collecting verbal and written feedback from participants and staff. Below is a selection of quotes:

"Due to residents disabilities it is often difficult for them to read or talk but music reaches the areas of the brain they can't normally access. With our dementia residents they recognised the music and found the words to speak. Music is deeply rooted in peoples being!" Staff member

"It makes us happy to see them enjoying themselves and that they are well. The lift in mood and memory triggers encourage discussion and made it possible for me to find out more about a new resident who is very musical. We discovered she was once a very skilled piano player and had passed on those skills to her daughter. This knowledge is really helpful for me in caring for her as an individual". Staff member

"They always seemed very relaxed and happy after the sessions so I greatly feel they helped with their emotional wellbeing" Staff member

"Residents appear happier after a session and are often singing songs from the session and are often singing songs from the session later that day" Staff member

"It's good to sing out loud" Participant

"It was fun wasn't it" Participant

Rosie Mead is conducting research into the benefits of live music for people living with dementia, as part of her PhD at the University of Exeter. Her research findings influence the design of our sessions. It is our longer term aim to work with an evaluator to conduct an independent in depth evaluation of our workshops.

Learning

The main challenge has been learning to be flexible and adapt the sessions to suit different needs, one size certainly doesn't fit all. Over the years Rosie has learned always to have a plan B, C, and D! She has passed these skills on to the Musica team, and through their training they learn a range of skills which they can draw upon in different situations with a variety of participants.

Responding to feedback we now provide more reminiscence prompts to compliment the music and this has been very well received. We are continually learning and adapting our sessions to suit the needs of the group we are working with. In the future we would like to work more closely with care staff and provide training in using music as part of their day to day activities; and integrate music into their care.

Critical success factors

We have delivered two long-term projects providing Musica workshops in care homes over the course of a year. These projects have been in partnership with Care South and the Order of St Johns Care Trust. It is our aim to deliver more projects such as these. The projects were successful because we worked closely with senior management within both chains of homes, and they understood the importance of music for their residents. The projects have led to further work in the homes within each chain, and brand awareness through word of mouth recommendations.

Funding and Resources

Generally the care homes pay for our music workshops themselves either through a centralised budget or via local fundraising. For homes that have small budgets and are a charity or not for profit organisation we have worked with them to apply for funding from local trusts and foundations, or larger funding sources such as the Lottery's Awards for All programme.

Images L-R

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