Music Therapy Services
Oncology Program

This cost-effective program would provide non-pharmacological management of pain, relaxation for patients and their families, improvement in patient’s perceived effectiveness of treatment, and an increase in coping skills and self expression through music therapy intervention.

Services can happen individually and/or in a group setting (dependent on medical service areas) and may address varying goals and objectives based on patient population. Music therapy can work with individuals and groups of all ages ranging from neonatal/pediatric to geriatric and serve a variety of medical service areas including but not limited to: oncology, NICU, hospice/terminally ill, pain management, rehabilitation services, behavioral health (including depression/postpartum depression, anxiety, etc.), and community education and wellness programs for prevention.

Individual Services can be offered for all above stated populations/departments.
- Can be offered as inpatient or outpatient.
- Can be offered during various treatments

Group Services can be offered in the form of support groups for related disciplines (typically though not necessarily as outpatient groups) for many above stated populations/departments and may include:
- Support groups for patients
- Support Groups for family members including
  - Children
  - Caregivers
- Enrichment Groups for patients, families, past patients in remission, and community.

Cancer Choir can be offered to patients and survivors as an enrichment option. Benefits include increasing awareness, interacting with patients/survivors in a fun nonthreatening modality while forming new relationships and generating a hobby for patients. Please note common music therapy goals/objectives for specified populations (listed below).

Adult Music Therapy Goals (Oncology, Pain Management, Rehabilitation Services, Behavioral Health, Hospice):
- Decrease pain and anxiety through relaxation/pain coping techniques
- Address apathy, withdrawal, and feelings of abandonment and isolation
- Address active and positive patient cooperation in treatment
- Increase emotional expression/coping (both in group as well as individually)
- Aid in gross and fine motor coordination through the support of physical development and rehabilitation
- Engage in decision making skills and sense of control
- Increase verbal and nonverbal communication
- Maintain/improve compliance
- Decrease need for medication
- Decrease nausea
- Elevate mood
- Engage in creation of lasting memorial
- Celebration of life
- Facilitation of desired communication amongst friends and family
- Support for family members/caregivers
- Work with mother/child to increase positive time/relationship (postpartum/NICU)

Child Music Therapy Goals (as family member):
- Aid in emotional expression
- Give outlet to verbalize/express trauma
- Address apathy, withdrawal, and feelings of abandonment and isolation
- Engage in decision making skills and sense of control
- Increase verbal and nonverbal communication
- Develop coping skills
- Additional goals for pediatric in/out patient music therapy not listed
Newborn Intensive Care Goals: 1

- Pacification of growth and development
- Enhancement of respiration and reduction of need for oxygen
- Reinforcement of non-nutritive sucking
- Parent Training
- Counseling for parents
- Promotion of Developmental skills such as awareness and tracking of auditory and visual stimuli, social reciprocity skills, and language development.


Efficacy of Music Therapy

Feedback of music therapy treatment is generated by

- Documentation of quantitative and qualitative therapeutic outcomes
- Observation of staff and music therapist
- Patient self-reports

Benefits of Music Therapy

- Cost effective
- Reduce nausea during chemotherapy and bone marrow transplants (Frank, 1985, Standley 1992)
- Non-pharmacological reduction in pain (Zimmerman, Pozehl, Duncan, and Schmitz 1989)
- Reduce anxiety (Bailey 1983)
- Relaxation for entire family and transference of skills to home
- Directly effects immune system (as measured by salivary immunoglobulin) (Lane 1993)
- Increase emotional expression (Bunt, Marston – Wyld 1995)
- Improvement in patients perceived effectiveness of treatment
- Aids in encouraging and motivating patient to perform new tasks
- Give outlet for entire family (each family member in relative music therapy support group)
- Improve quality of home life for patient (through family/caregiver support)

Music therapy may also benefit a children and adults in a variety of settings and diagnoses including (in addition to Medical/Surgical) Developmentally Delayed, Elderly/Alzheimer’s, Mental Health, and Neurological Disorders.

Music Therapy and Oncology Bibliography

Chuang, Chih-Yuan Effect of Long Term Music Therapy intervention on Autonomic function in Anthracycline-Treated Breast Cancer Patients. (2011) Integr Cancer Ther Mar?
Lane, D. Music therapy: a gift beyond measure. Oncology Nursing Forum