

Music therapy is a valuable clinical intervention for people of all ages and abilities. It can work where other therapies cannot, making connections and providing vital support.

Music is rooted in our body and it stimulates movements, memories and emotions. People of all ages can use music, song, voice or instruments as a means of self-expression, interaction and communication, providing the opportunity to be heard, listened to and supported.

For people living with acquired brain injuries or a neuro-degenerative condition, music therapy can be very beneficial and influence functional changes and quality of life.

This includes:

- Restorative - using music to regain skills and function, including language and communication skills, concentration, gait balance and control, etc.
- Psycho-socio-emotional - using music to enable emotional expression, engagement in social interaction and adjustment to disability, as well as to connect with self and others and to ease anxiety and isolation.
- Compensatory - using music to compensate for losses in conjunction with tools such as memory/communication aids.



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Music therapy is widely recognised as a highly effective health intervention both locally and internationally. At Northern Ireland Music Therapy Trust, we have wide experience of its value in supporting people with acquired brain injury and neuro-degenerative conditions. Professional music therapists are Allied Health Professionals and are registered with the Health and Care Professions Council.

Contact us to find out more.



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Music Therapy In Neuro-disability

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Charity Number - NIC104523

In a typical music therapy session, a qualified music therapist will use active music-making and creativity to engage and interact with the person referred.

Every music therapy session is tailored to the needs of the person taking part, and this may include:

- Shared musical improvisation or playing pre-composed music.
- Listening to, playing or discussing familiar or meaningful music.
- Song-writing.

Music therapy is recognised as a highly effective health intervention. At Northern Ireland Music Therapy Trust, we have extensive experience of its value in supporting people with acquired brain injury and neuro-degenerative conditions.



James suffered a brain aneurysm which caused severe loss of speech and weakness in his overall mobility.

James was referred to music therapy by the Speech and Language therapist (SLT) because he was not engaging with other interventions. James struggled to get up each morning and the SLT felt music would be motivating. The SLT hoped that music therapy would develop his overall communication and speech impairment.

After assessment the music therapist established the main aim was to improve communication by providing meaningful stimulation and space for self-expression.

Joint working allowed the SLT to create a list of James' favourite musicians, enabling him to make choices. James became more confident as the work continued, speaking more and playing more energetically. Initially he played with his one stronger hand. However, the music motivated him to push through and play with both hands. He enjoyed rock and roll and played the drums. His personality shone when playing the windchimes at the end of a song for timely dramatic effect.

Ward staff were pleased to see James' enthusiasm to attend music therapy and the SLT was encouraged to see him "light up" smiling and actively engaging, compared to other times when he could shut down, not wanting to force communication.

"...became more confident as the work continued, speaking more and playing more energetically"



"...smiling and actively engaging"

