



Background and Benefits

Hospice of Central Ohio is a certified in Music & Memory provider. We welcome you to join us in this simple, elegant and effective approach to bring personalized playlists to individuals and awaken their senses.

Music & Memory began with the simple idea of Executive Director Dan Cohen. He thought that if someday he would end up in a nursing home, he wanted to be able to listen to his favorite 60's music. Upon doing research, he found that long-term care facilities were not using iPods or personalized playlist for residents. He began his journey and started a prototype with funding from the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation in 2008, which grew quickly into the creation of what Music & Memory is today. His story is an award-winning documentary film entitled *Alive Inside*.

Music helps individuals to increase their awareness and cognition, and helps them engage with others. This program will help introduce music to clients and work with them one-on-one to create individualized playlists. Music & Memory is all about bringing joy into the lives of people suffering from Alzheimer's, other forms of dementia, and also a wide range of cognitive and physical impairments. The documented benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Someone who has been silent or less communicative may begin to talk and be more social
- Someone who has been sad and depressed may feel happier
- Someone who has been less mobile may become more physically active.
- May be able to use less anti-anxiety meds

The Music & Memory program is an important tool for promoting culture change in care facilities. Music connects us to long-term memories. Songs associated with our past can bring back personal memories of our first love, graduation day, or other moments of our youth. We connect with music, and this connection can trigger memories of lyrics and life experiences associated with those lyrics. Beloved music often calms chaotic brain activity and enables the listener to focus on the present moment and regain a connection to others.

Musical favorites replace confusing environmental stimuli. Personalized playlists distract from boredom or distress with soothing, familiar experiences. Individuals are more cooperative, attentive and willing to accept care. Brighter moods boost staff morale and enable care to be more person-centered. We are hoping that you will see many if not more benefits unfold when introducing music to an individual.

Assessment and Implementing

The assessment process will involve clinical staff. They will do what they do best by asking the questions that are necessary to develop the patient's personalized playlist. After the request for music has been completed, prepared the playlist, loads it onto a HOCO-issued iPod, and assembles the Music & Memory Patient Companion information packet for you.

To set up a personalized play list the first step is to sit down and select the right music. We hope to identify about 10-15 artist that are his or her favorites to enjoy. Asking is the first step in working with a playlist, if they are unable to communicate a good friend or caregiver may be able to help.

- What music did you listen to when you were young?
- Did you sing at religious services? Did you enjoy Broadway shows or musicals?
- Do you still have any records or tapes that were favorites?
- Who was your favorite performer, group, band or orchestra?
- What songs did you dance to at your wedding, or high school prom?

The above questions can also be asked as you use the iPod with your patient, to help further unlock pleasant long-term memories stored in that portion of the brain associated with music.

Introduction to the iPod may be confusing, but the controls are just as simple as a TV remote. Explaining the equipment and helping to adjust the headphones will be the first step, be patient as this may take some time to understand. Once you have started the music, adjust the volume as you see fit, make sure it is loud enough. Practice with the play/pause button as well as the on/off switch so they can gain confidence in understanding how the equipment works. Once a session is complete, make sure to take all the equipment with you and return it to the office location from which it was issued. These tools will be given to you with each assignment, and include instructions on how to use an iPod and information.

Please keep in mind that each patient is different. While there is no guarantee that personalized music will work for every individual, we know that it will help to improve quality of life for most.

Sometimes a playlist brings back positive memories, sometimes negative. If a person becomes emotional while listening, keep in mind it may be just fine for this to happen. If they become more agitated listening to music, it may mean that something more calming may help. Wait and try different music at another time to evaluate. The goal is to help them relax, remember, and find enjoyment – especially if music has been an important role in their life.

Remember, the team and Volunteer Services are your resources and guides though this process. Feel free to contact us any time. You are providing a valuable service to your patients. Thank you for that.