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Effects of Nostalgia Directed Music Therapy on Residents with Dementia in Nursing Home

Garrett Chan

UVM Larner College of Medicine

Jack Fitzsimons

UVM Larner College of Medicine

Sidika Kajtezovic

UVM Larner College of Medicine

Kristen Keene

UVM Larner College of Medicine

Marc Kostrubiak

UVM Larner College of Medicine

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Garrett Chan, Jack Fitzsimons, Sidika Kajtezovic, Kristen Keene, Marc Kostrubiak, Jessica Sikka, John Vandenberg, Shaden Eldakar-Hein, and Cameron Segal

G. Chan¹, J. Fitzsimons¹, S. Kajtezovic¹, K. Keene¹, M. Kostrubiak¹, J. Sikka¹, J. Vandenberg¹, S. Eldakar-Hein, MD^{1,2}, M. Stutzman, MD^{1,2}

¹Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont, ²University of Vermont Medical Center

Background

- Studies support a beneficial relationship between music therapy and the management of dementia.
- Music therapy intended to activate memory may improve apathy and decrease cognitive decline in patients with mild to moderate dementia (Tang et al., 2018; Daykin et al., 2017).
- Individuals are typically most influenced by music encountered during early adulthood.

Objective

To analyze the effect of nostalgia directed music therapy on the quality of life of nursing home residents with moderate to severe dementia.

Methods

Subjects: Nursing home residents 65 years of age and older who carried the diagnosis of moderate to severe dementia (n=23).

Intervention: A playlist composed of 878 popular songs from the 1940s to the 1960s.

Subscale Domain	Sample Survey Question	Sample Scoring
A Care Relationship	Accepts help from staff	Never (0) Rarely (1) Sometimes (2) Frequently (3)
B Positive Affect	Is Cheerful	Never (0) Rarely (1) Sometimes (2) Frequently (3)
C Negative Affect	Makes an anxious impression	Never (3) Rarely (2) Sometimes (1) Frequently (0)
D Restless behavior	Has tense body language	Never (3) Rarely (2) Sometimes (1) Frequently (0)
F Social Relations	Responds positively when approached by other residents	Never (0) Rarely (1) Sometimes (2) Frequently (3)
G Social Isolations	Is rejected by other residents	Never (3) Rarely (2) Sometimes (1) Frequently (0)

Please note: Indicative items are scored opposite to the contra-indicative items. The response option 'Never' counts as zero for an indicative item, but three for a contra-indicative item. The higher the score on a subscale, the better the person does on this particular domain

Results

- Post-intervention Qualidem scores did not show a significant improvement or decline after administration of the targeted music therapy (Figure 1).
- Qualitative data suggests a subset of the population benefitted from the administration of targeted music therapy

Subscale and Total Qualidem Scores

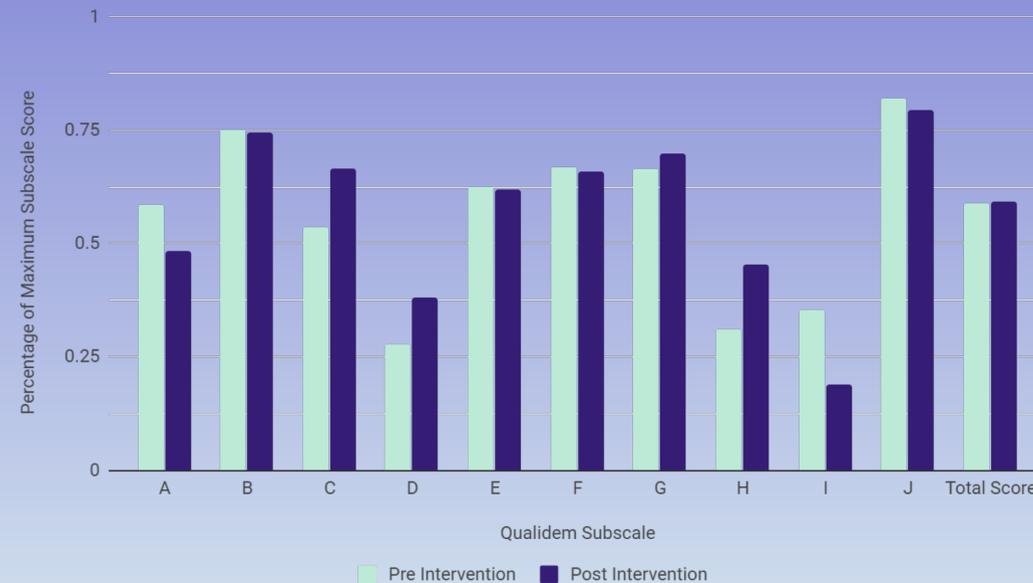


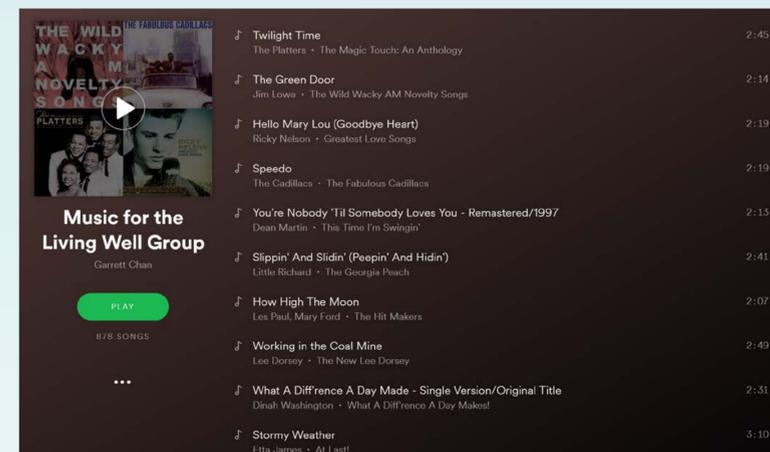
Figure 1. Pre and post-intervention data are compared by Qualidem Subscale

Subscale	Description	p-value
A	Care relationship	0.500
B	Positive affect	0.500
C	Negative affect	0.500
D	Restless tense behavior	0.497
E	Positive self-image	0.424
F	Social relations	0.499
G	Social isolation	0.447
H	Feeling at home	0.493
I	Having something to do	0.335
J	Experimental questions	0.500

Living Well Staff Comments on Perceived Resident Mood

“Is anxious at baseline. Music has a very positive effect on anxiety and mood.”

“Very positive individual who self-reports the benefits of music intervention. Enjoyed music & dancing her entire life & can now reminisce about those days in positive ways.”



Methods Continued

Measurement: Validated Qualidem survey was used to provide qualitative assessment of eight metrics associated with quality of life in subjects with moderate to severe dementia. Survey was completed by 10 nursing home caregivers during the pre-intervention period and one-month following.

Data Analysis: *t*-test comparing the mean Qualidem scores across each quality of life metric pre- and post-intervention.

Discussion

Results indicate there is no significant change in the quality indicators. However, we did find that a subset of the residents did exhibit increases in Qualidem subscores. Dementia is often a progressive disorder. No significant change between pre and post-treatment groups might indicate that music therapy delayed this progression.

Limitations included a small study size, pre-treatment conditioning to music therapy at the nursing home, and variable impact of medications and comorbidities. Future studies to better determine the impact of musical therapy should include utilizing nursing homes that do not have access to musical resources as it will allow one to better assess its true impact on quality of life indicators.

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