



Focus on personalised music to support people living with dementia

Introduction

Focus on Dementia has been working with Playlist for Life (a UK music and dementia charity) to support personalised music as part of a range of therapeutic interventions to improve the experience of people living with dementia within Specialist Dementia Units and within the community.

As a result of this learning;

- ten Specialist Dementia Units across Scotland have become official 'Playlist for Life Establishments', and
- a bespoke Playlist for Life training session has been developed for post-diagnostic support practitioners.

Positive feedback was received from staff involved in this work who are now continuing to identify appropriate opportunities to include Playlist for Life to improve the wellbeing and experience of people with dementia.

Specialist Dementia Units

Ten Specialist Dementia Units across Scotland have taken up the opportunity to become an official 'Playlist for Life Establishment'. All NHS boards were able to apply to receive certified training to use Playlist for Life. Each of the units developed a case study based on their experience of using Playlist for Life. Staff cited examples of how people with dementia had engaged through singing and dancing, how communication had improved and how the use of medication in some instances had reduced.

Quotes from staff

Singing

"She was singing, telling me it was 'braw'."

"The family's aspiration was to hear their mum sing again and we managed to achieve this before discharge."

Dancing

"She clicked her fingers, tapped her feet, moved her body, laughed, 'danced' and moved both her hands."

"He also became much more animated. Often singing along and dancing with his hands."

Medication

"An audit by senior staff noted that when Playlist was used appropriately medication was not required."

"There was a reduction in the use of anti-psychotics."

Communication

"During these sessions he was able to answer simple questions more clearly."

"There was more eye contact and communication with her husband."

Through the case studies, it was evident that Playlist for Life had a positive impact on some of the people with dementia. Staff also noted that some people became more settled and their eye contact increased. It is also important to note that at times, some people with dementia did not engage with Playlist for Life. Playlist for life is just one of a range of therapeutic interventions for people with dementia and the importance of taking an individualised approach, based on what matters to the person, is key to personalised support.



Quotes from delegates



"I will definitely use Playlist for Life in my area of work."

"I now have the confidence to go out and talk to people about Playlist for Life."

"The best thing learned today - how to incorporate Playlist for Life into the 5 Pillars."

Playlist for Life and post-diagnostic support

A bespoke Playlist for Life training session was developed by Focus on Dementia, Playlist for Life and post-diagnostic support practitioners. This was delivered to 16 post-diagnostic support practitioners through a one-day workshop. The workshop was tailored to help practitioners provide practical information to support those with dementia and their families to develop a personal playlist and understand the value of developing a personal plan. The evaluation of the workshop received positive feedback from attendees with good suggestions for improvement to enable Playlist for Life to further adapt the course for post-diagnostic support practitioners.

Next steps

The sites that participated in this work are continuing to use Playlist for Life as part of a range of therapeutic interventions. Focus on Dementia would like to thank the Playlist for Life team and staff who participated in the sessions for their support and commitment to supporting people with dementia.

Staff working within Specialist Dementia Units receiving their 'Playlist for Life Establishment' awards

"Playlist for Life were delighted to have the opportunity to work in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland. With their support, we delivered three cohorts of certified training during 2017 across many of the NHS boards in Scotland. A joint award ceremony followed, with 10 sites being registered as Playlist for Life Establishments. The partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland was vital in making this a success. Thanks to Focus on Dementia team for all their help and support. The Specialist Dementia Units who took part in this project are now integrating playlists into care, helping to improve the wellbeing of people living with dementia."

- Playlist for Life



For more information on the work of Focus on Dementia, please visit our webpages www.ihub.scot/focus-on-dementia

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For more information, visit Playlist for Life: www.playlistforlife.org.uk/Default.aspx