

# AMTA Music Listening Guidelines

## Appendix A

### **Music Listening Safety Considerations**

Research and experience shows us that music can elicit a wide range of emotions, memories, and thoughts. Even within a single song, music can elicit smiling and happiness one minute and tears and sadness or anger and agitation in the next. It is important to be prepared to recognize and support, or obtain support for, any significant emotions and/or memories that emerge from PML experiences. Find below recommendations for safely and effectively supporting PML:

- Monitor the person listening. Ensure the music listener is within your sight and be present. It is impossible to know how the listener is responding without maintaining focus on them. Listeners may display significant emotions or recall of memories that need to be noted or addressed. Listeners may also become increasingly alert and stimulated, and therefore, increase movement. This may be problematic for individuals who are fall risks. Good monitoring helps ensure the benefits of a positive and safe music listening experience. If you are unable to monitor the person yourself, arrange an appropriately trained person who can also successfully monitor the listener. Responses to watch for include:
  - Affect – Positive or Negative?
  - Tears - Positive or Negative?
  - Alertness - More awake/responsive or Sleepier/less responsive?
  - Physical responses - Tapping toes or hand, or swaying body to the beat?
  - Movement - shifting in bed or chair, standing or attempting to stand, walking or attempting to walk, dancing?
  - Verbal expression - More/Less, particular subject or words used in expression?
  - Orientation to correct time, place, person, situation - Better/Worse?
  - Eye contact - More/Less?
  - Change in agitation - Increased/Decreased?
  - Listener self-reports of memories, changes in mood, etc.
  - Changes in breathing or muscle tone (relaxed tone, easy breaths or tense/flexed tone, rapid or short breaths)

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### Appendix B

#### **Responding to Listener's Reactions**

It is important for listeners to have support nearby to respond in the moment to significant changes, emotions and/or memories.

- If you observe a listener having a significant emotional response to the personalized music listening, verbally acknowledge what you are observing and check in with the listener and attempt to have the listener confirm or deny the accuracy of your observation(s) and elaborate on what they are thinking and/or feeling.
- If the listener verbally expresses their response, listen intently and acknowledge what they are telling you until they are done talking. Then ask if they would like to continue listening or stop and talk.
- If the listener is non-verbal, acknowledge what you are observing and let them know you are there with them. Sit next to them and consider appropriate comforting measures for the situation, perhaps placing a hand on the person's arm or hand. If the person can non-verbally communicate yes or no, ask if they would like to continue listening or stop and talk. If the person is unable to verbalize and is displaying what appears to be a negative response, it may be best to stop the music until a professional can determine what is happening with that listener.
- If the listener is having a concerning physical response to music, such as attempting to shift, get up or walk when the person is unsafe to do so independently, respond with assistance if you are trained, or seek assistance from someone who is trained to support the listener safely.

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### Appendix C

#### **Music Listening Frequency & Delivery**

The following are considerations for planning frequency and length of music listening:

- Music listening may be beneficial to individuals suffering from insomnia who demonstrate responses of relaxation to a variety of music stimuli or to specific music stimuli. Individuals may also benefit from PML during patterns of agitation, such as sun-downing periods, to promote soothing and reduction of unpleasant feelings.
- PML prior to activities may allow an individual to demonstrate increased participation and benefit from the activities such as meals, outings, receiving visitors, and therapies.
- Facilities may consider providing PML or BML during shift changes, meals, or other busy times when larger amounts of people are on a unit and background noises increase. Music at this time allows a more pleasant environment for facility patients or residents.
- Listening to self-selected, preferred music as desired has been shown to result in significant improvement in state-mood and cognitive performance scores, as well as increased motivation and productivity, therefore individuals should be able to receive (upon request) music listening devices that will deliver preselected, preferred music with loudness and song selection controlled by the listener.
- Length of listening should be dependent on the length of time the listener is able to process and benefit from music stimuli. Many individuals will need periods of time with less or different stimuli between music listening periods. PML length and periods of time between music listening should be determined based upon the individual's needs and observed responses.
- Population/Need specific listening frequency & duration research indications:
  - **Stress**- Labbé, E., Schmidt, N., Babin, J., & Pharr, M. (2007)
  - **Pain**- Martin-Saavedra, JS. et al. (2018) & Ames, N., et al (2017)
  - **Pre-operative Anxiety**- Jeppesen, E., et al. (2019)
  - **Operative Anxiety**- Vachiramon, V., Sobanko, J., Rattanaumpawan, P., & Miller, C.J. (2013)
  - **Stroke Recovery**- Särkämö, T., et al, (2008) & Särkämö, T., et al, (2014)

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### Appendix D

#### **Music Listening Delivery**

Recorded PML may be delivered through headphones or speakers. The following factors should be considered when determining the best method of music delivery:

- Any hearing impairments;
- Any hearing assistive devices;
- The pitch range, timbre, and decibel level an individual is able to auditorily process;
- Sensitivity to the sensation of various styles of headphones touching their head and/or ears;
- Any behaviors the individual may exhibit that may limit the listener's ability to listen to the music, such as changing the volume too high or too low, hitting buttons that may unintentionally start, stop, or change the music playlist, becoming unintentionally wrapped up in cords and/or the equipment, becoming intentionally wrapped in equipment cords if the individual may be suicidal;
- Other sound stimuli in the environment where music listening is to take place;
- In environments where there are other individuals in the music listening area who do not or may not wish to listen to music or a specific type of music that may be played, headphones are recommended if the listener can tolerate them. If headphones cannot be tolerated it is recommended that the listener be placed in a location away from others who may respond negatively to the listener's preferred music but where the listener may still be monitored for safe listening as appropriate.

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### Appendix E

#### **Music Listening as a Social Experience**

While the recipient of PML can benefit from engaging in this activity individually, music is also a social experience. The following are considerations for caregivers to assist in enhancing relaxation, quality caregiver relationship, reciprocity and caregiver role satisfaction.

- Caregivers can use PML as a method of engagement with those they care for by using a headphone splitter or speakers to share the music listening experience. When listening together, the caregiver can tap their lap in time to the beat, hum, or sing main choruses of familiar songs to demonstrate their own enjoyment of the music. The individual may watch what is being modeled for them and begin to respond to the music as adjustment to the medium occurs.
- Caregivers may also initiate conversation with listeners who are able to effectively communicate based upon the music's lyrics and musical elements, as well as the thoughts, emotions and memories facilitated from the music listening.
- Caregivers can utilize touch and movement to increase listener engagement, e.g. holding the listeners hands and bouncing or swaying to the song. Gently tapping a pulse on the listeners' leg or arm can increase attention and interaction.
- The addition of relevant pictures or photo viewing while listening can also enhance the social experience. Be mindful of sensory overload, and adjust according to the listener's responses.