

Nurse Perception of Music Therapy for Medically Complex Pediatric Patients

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Team Project Abstract 2017-2018

Background: Music therapy is a treatment utilizing music to improve the physical and mental health of recipients. By using improvisation, recreation, composition, and listening to music, patients have improved health outcomes, and as a secondary benefit, their caregivers are provided with coping mechanisms. The positive effects of music therapy on patients with medical needs and their caregivers are well documented. However, the effects of music therapy on the caregivers' perception of the child have not been studied

Objective(s): To describe nurses' perception of and participation in music therapy for pediatric patients with complex medical needs; to determine the extent to which nurses' perception of children in their care are impacted by patient participation in music therapy; and to evaluate whether nurses' involvement in music therapy impacts their job satisfaction.

Methods: A cross-sectional study utilizing an anonymous, self-administered online survey is proposed to obtain the perspectives of nurses who care for pediatric patients with complex medical needs.

Community Partner(s): *Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center (ESPC)* is the largest provider of children's subacute care in the country. ESPC serves children, aged birth through 21 years, with complex chronic medical and neurological conditions from diverse areas within New York. This

facility offers medical, rehabilitative, and palliative care through the coordination of an interdisciplinary team.

Results: During the collection period, 16 respondents have completed the online survey (18% response rate). Of the respondents 64% stated that they were not provided with information about music therapy while in school or have taken any CEU credits on the topic; 35% only heard of music therapy. Thus far, 50% stated that participating in music therapy sessions did not impact their overall job satisfaction, while 37% said it did increase their job satisfaction. Seventy percent of the respondents agreed that music therapy improved quality of life for the patients participating. Lastly, when asked about the importance of music therapy in overall treatment, almost half responded that music therapy was extremely important.

Discussion/Next Steps: While the nurses surveyed did not have much formal training on music therapy, they have generally come to see the value of this therapy for patients with complex medical needs. In addition, a significant proportion of nurses surveyed felt that participating in music therapy increased their job satisfaction. These results provide support for furthering nurses' involvement in music therapy and introducing music therapy during nurse training or continuing education. The interpretation of these results is limited by the small sample size and the nurses all being from a single institution. Future research on nurse perceptions of music therapy should include a wider variety of clinical settings.