



Seeds4Hope

A program of the Windsor Essex County Cancer Centre Foundation

2009 SEEDS4HOPE GRANT RECIPIENT

Dr. Lucanne Magill

“Odes and Odysseys: The Impact of Song Writing and Recording in Music Therapy with Cancer Patients and Their Families”



SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Music therapy is known to enhance comfort and improve well-being and quality of life in cancer and palliative care patients of all ages and in all stages of illness. Therapeutic song writing is a music therapy strategy that is known to positively engage patients and families in communication, while also providing them with meaningful opportunities to share messages and create legacies with and for loved ones.

This “Odes and Odysseys” research project proposes to explore the impact of therapeutic song writing, as song messages and legacies, on the well-being and quality of life in cancer patients and their families. As mood, symptoms and personal sense of life meaning impact well-being and quality of life, this project aims to research the specific short and long term effects of this creative music therapy strategy on participants’ reports on mood, symptoms and sense of meaning. Over a period of two years, 30 patients and their family members receiving care through The Hospice of Windsor & Essex County will be recruited and invited to participate in this study to experience music therapy and therapeutic song writing.

A unique feature of this project is the proposed use of multimedia technology. Participants will be offered opportunities to audio and/or video record their compositions through a portable recording studio that will be brought to homes and to bedsides of cancer patients residing at the Hospice. Likewise, children and adolescents of ill parents may experience using the equipment and various instruments in the recording studio to be in place at the Music Therapy Centre, Hospice Satellite site in Windsor. As songs can be written spontaneously, and are developed within one session, the researchers will be prepared at each session to record for patients and family members. CD covers will be designed by participants, assisted by researchers.

As this strategy has been previously used by this principle applicant and has been found to significantly enhance well-being and quality of life, it is hoped that this project will serve to improve patients’ and families’ experiences in living with cancer.

HOW THIS RESEARCH HELPS ADVANCE CANCER CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

This proposed project would advance cancer care in this community as it would offer patients and families a creative treatment modality known to enhance quality of life and support patients through their journey. As patients, families, caregivers and staff often find inspiration, renewal and hope through times in music therapy, this proposed project could help minimize the influence of cancer on people living in this community, and could improve overall experience of illness.

This research project is innovative in its aim to explore the short and long term meaning of song writing in a cancer setting, and is pioneering in its use of these multimedia strategies within a family context. Thus it is believed that this project would appeal and be refreshing to patients and families in our community. It is also possible for others in broader communities to be reached and to benefit from this project, as patients and families may wish to share their recordings with peers and distant relatives and friends. Likewise the proposed documentaries would serve to help educate others about its benefits, and the innovative work being done in Windsor and Essex County.



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PROGRESS REPORT

This research project, “Odes and Odysseys: The Impact of Song Writing and Recording in Music Therapy with Cancer Patients and Their Families”, has had a productive first year. Three research assistants received in-depth training in the use of therapeutic song writing with the patients and families at the Hospice of Windsor & Essex County. These assistants had quality time to practice these specialised skills - training experiences that were necessary for them to have in order for them to appropriately employ these sensitive music therapy strategies in the research. They produced several practice CD recordings of the songs created by the patients and families, and they have become well-prepared to integrate these skills in the research sessions with participants of all ages. Also, during these past several months, Dr. Lewis purchased a quality digital video recorder and has diligently worked on preparing his students in the use of this camera in the research study. In addition, in May 2010, Dr. Magill travelled to Spain to attend the 8th European Music Therapy Conference. At this conference, she reported the research being conducted under the auspices of the Seeds4Hope grant. Her presentation, entitled “Music Therapy in Oncology” Songwriting and Recording Research with Hospice Patients and Families”, was part of a larger Panel entitled: “Music Therapy and Spirituality in Health Care: Multicultural Theories, Approaches and Research”. The presentation was well attended and there was much interest in the aims and strategies of this current study.

During this next year, Dr. Magill, Dr. Lewis and their research assistants will work closely with the patients and families of the Hospice of Windsor & Essex County to explore and document the use of these music therapy skills in coping with advanced cancer. During the pilot work-to-date, these specialized songwriting strategies have been found to significantly enhance well-being and quality of life; thus this project will continue to work towards improving the experiences of patients and families living with cancer. Also during the next year, Dr. Magill and one research assistant will travel to Seoul, Korea in July 2011 in order to present preliminary work from this study at the International World Congress of Music Therapy. While in Seoul, a documentary film will be developed to explore the multicultural use of therapeutic songwriting in oncology settings. This documentary will be used to help educate the public about these music therapy strategies in oncology and the work being conducted through the Seeds4Hope program.



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FINAL REPORT

Part One

Over the past 11 months, the research team - comprised of Dr. Magill, co-investigator Dr Richard Lewis, and research assistants, Lyndsy Adamson BMT (Chief RA), and Joe Graham BMT (Assistant RA) - have been active in the following ways:

November 2010 - November 2011

-The Research Ethics Board, University of Windsor, granted approval to conduct this research study. The Ethics Committee, the Hospice of Windsor & Essex County, also reviewed the research proposal and approved the study.

-Prior to collecting data, the Research Assistants (RAs) continued to have ongoing training sessions with Dr. Magill to become familiar with and skilled in the songwriting and recording techniques that would be researched in this study. During this pre-study time, they each worked with patients and families, referred for music therapy for several months at the Hospice of Windsor & Essex County, and also through the CCAC, and received supervision from Dr. Magill. In addition to training sessions, the RAs continued to receive training in the procedures to be used in sessions. Meetings were held with staff at the Hospice of Windsor & Essex County to educate them about the study and the procedures for referral.

-Data collection: A total of 30 patients and/or their family members participated in this study. As this study aimed to explore the impact of songwriting and recording on 30 participants, the proposed sample size was achieved and the study was completed. In some cases, patients participated in the research sessions by themselves; in other cases, patients and family members were all participants in the study. The RAs maintained thorough records. The RAs and Dr. Magill are currently beginning to review all complied data.

Part Two

Over the past 12 months, the Seeds4Hope project has resulted in these presentations, projects and programs:

-In November 2010, Dr. Magill traveled to Vienna, Austria to present at the 3rd International conference on Mozart and Science. At this conference, she was invited to speak on the topic of 'Music Therapy in Integrative Oncology: Research with Patients and Families,' within which she reported on the research being conducted under the auspices of the Seeds4Hope grant. Her presentation was well attended and there was much interest in the aims and strategies of this current study.

-In November 2010, Dr. Magill was invited to present Music Therapy Research in Integrative Oncology: Discovering Meaning through Qualitative Methodologies at the American Music Therapy Association 60th Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. This presentation was also well attended and there was much interest in the aims and strategies of this study, especially in the use of qualitative approaches in this type of oncologic music therapy research.



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FINAL REPORT *cont'd*

-Dr. Magill submitted an abstract to present the work of this study to the World Congress of Music Therapy, which was held in Seoul, Korea in July 2011. The abstract was approved for presentation, however, due to an acute illness that prevented her from traveling to Korea, Dr. Magill was unfortunately unable to attend.

-In September 2011, Dr. Magill was invited to speak at the Bhaktapur Cancer Hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal under the auspices of The Music Therapy Trust (TMTT). She discussed the work that was being completed through the Seeds4Hope project. The staff at that hospital were very interested and have consequently asked for Dr. Magill's help in organizing a Music Therapy Internship program to be conducted there under her supervision through TMTT.

-As a result of this study two new collaborations and endeavours are taking place:

- a) A music therapy researcher has asked Dr. Magill to participate in an international interview-based qualitative study involving music therapists who have used/are using songwriting methodologies in their clinical practices. This researcher is based in Australia and interviews are currently being conducted;
- b) Dr. Magill is beginning a similar song-writing and recording project, under the auspices of The Music Therapy Trust (TMTT) with orphans housed in a residential orphanage in New Delhi, India. This study will incorporate similar strategies and research methodologies; however, due to the absence of birth parents and siblings, the concept of family will be extended to include peers. Once the Seeds4Hope data is compiled, processed and summarized, the results will be shared with Indian health professionals interested in the impact of these music therapy approaches on children and families in various settings, including in cancer hospitals and clinics. This new endeavour, entitled "Songs for Hope," which is tailored after the Seeds4Hope project, is being supported by a grant to TMTT by the Brett Lee Foundation.

Future Objectives:

1. To analyse data: The research team will work on analyzing data. Qualitative data will be transcribed and then recursively reviewed.
2. To disseminate research results: a) to music therapists and health professionals at local and international conferences, e.g. at the International Association of Music and Medicine Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, in June 2012; and b) by preparing research results for publications in peer-reviewed journals.
3. To publish a book (currently in planning stages) on the topic "Music Therapy in Supportive Cancer Care"
4. To initiate a songwriting and recording research study with Hindi patients and families in a cancer setting in India. Such study will be tailored after the Seeds4Hope project. The purpose of this study will be to compare results cross-culturally.