



MUSIC THERAPY CHANGES LIVES

THE BENEFITS OF MUSIC THERAPY





Understanding

WHAT IS MUSIC THERAPY?

Music therapy is a research-based allied health profession in which music is used to actively support people as they aim to improve their health, functioning and well-being. It can help people of all ages to manage their physical and mental health and enhance their quality of life.

You don't need to be musical to take part in or benefit from music therapy. Qualified music therapists plan and provide musical experiences for their clients. Each session is tailored to the needs and goals of the client.

Music therapists are committed to supporting people of any age, ability or background. They work across the full age spectrum from newborn children through to older adults.

Music therapy is used to actively support people as they aim to improve their health, functioning and well-being.

WHAT IS A REGISTERED MUSIC THERAPIST (RMT)?

A Registered Music Therapist (RMT) is a music therapist who is registered with the Australian Music Therapy Association (AMTA). To be eligible to register with AMTA, a Registered Music Therapist needs to complete a certified university course in music therapy and maintain their skills through ongoing professional development as approved by the AMTA.

Currently in Australia, music therapy training is at a master's level and courses are offered at The University of Melbourne and The Western Sydney University. The course is two years full time.

To enter the master's course, students must have completed an undergraduate degree in music or a related health profession with demonstrated high level musical skills.

WHY USE A REGISTERED MUSIC THERAPIST (RMT)?

Registered Music Therapists are not only skilled musicians, they are trained in understanding the effects music experiences can have on behaviours, feelings, thoughts and actions. Music therapists use their therapy training and musical ability to facilitate interactive musical experiences to help clients achieve goals. These goals may include improved communication, cognition, physical function, mood, wellbeing, and/or spiritual goals.

Find a Registered Music Therapist by visiting austmta.org.au



HOW CAN MUSIC THERAPY HELP?

Research has shown that music therapy can help people in many ways.

Music therapy can improve mental health and wellbeing

It can help:

- Reduce anxiety or stress
- Regulate moods and energy levels
- Increase motivation
- Manage anger and frustration
- Manage challenging behaviour.

Music therapy can improve speech, communication and social skills

It can help:

- Improve verbal and non-verbal communication
- Improve physical speech function
- Increase social communication skills
- Increase social interaction
- Increase independence
- Give positive and new ways to deal with situations.

Music therapy can improve body movement, coordination and physical function

It can help:

- Improve gross motor function and control
- Improve fine motor function and control
- Improve balance
- Increase physical independence
- Help regulate heart rate, breathing rate and blood pressure
- Improve respiratory muscle strength and control
- Improve sleep

Music therapy can improve memory, attention and cognitive function

It can help:

- Increase self-awareness, inhibition, non-verbal and verbal working memory, emotional self-regulation, self-motivation, planning and problem solving
- Increase memory and attention.

Music therapy can improve pain management

It can help:

- Reduce pain perception by increasing the body's production of natural pain killers.
- Support faster recovery from medical procedures.





WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM MUSIC THERAPY?

Music therapy can help support people of any age who might be experiencing challenges (including mental, intellectual, physical, emotional or social) or wishing to improve their well-being.

Music therapy is often used to address a wide range of conditions that affect mood, thinking, behaviour, communication and movement including:

- Autism
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Anxiety
- Cancer
- Bipolar disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Dementia
- Eating disorders
- Personality disorders
- Physical disabilities
- Dementia
- Stroke
- Spinal cord injury
- Neurodegenerative conditions.

Music therapy can also be used in hospitals and health care centres to help patients deal with stress, discomfort and pain. It is used to help patients who have:

- Cancer and diseases of the blood and bone marrow
- Advanced diseases that have little or no chance of cure or recovery
- Experienced a stroke or brain injury
- Mental health illnesses
- Had surgery or other medical procedures.

WHERE IS MUSIC THERAPY USED?

Music therapy is used in many settings such as:

- Hospitals
- Schools
- Residential aged care homes
- Palliative care facilities
- Disability care facilities
- Community health programs
- Child care centres
- Prisons and detention centres
- Private practice.





WHAT HAPPENS IN A MUSIC THERAPY SESSION?

A music therapy session occurs face-to-face either in person or online. Music therapists use a range of music therapy methods. They tailor each session to the needs of the person.

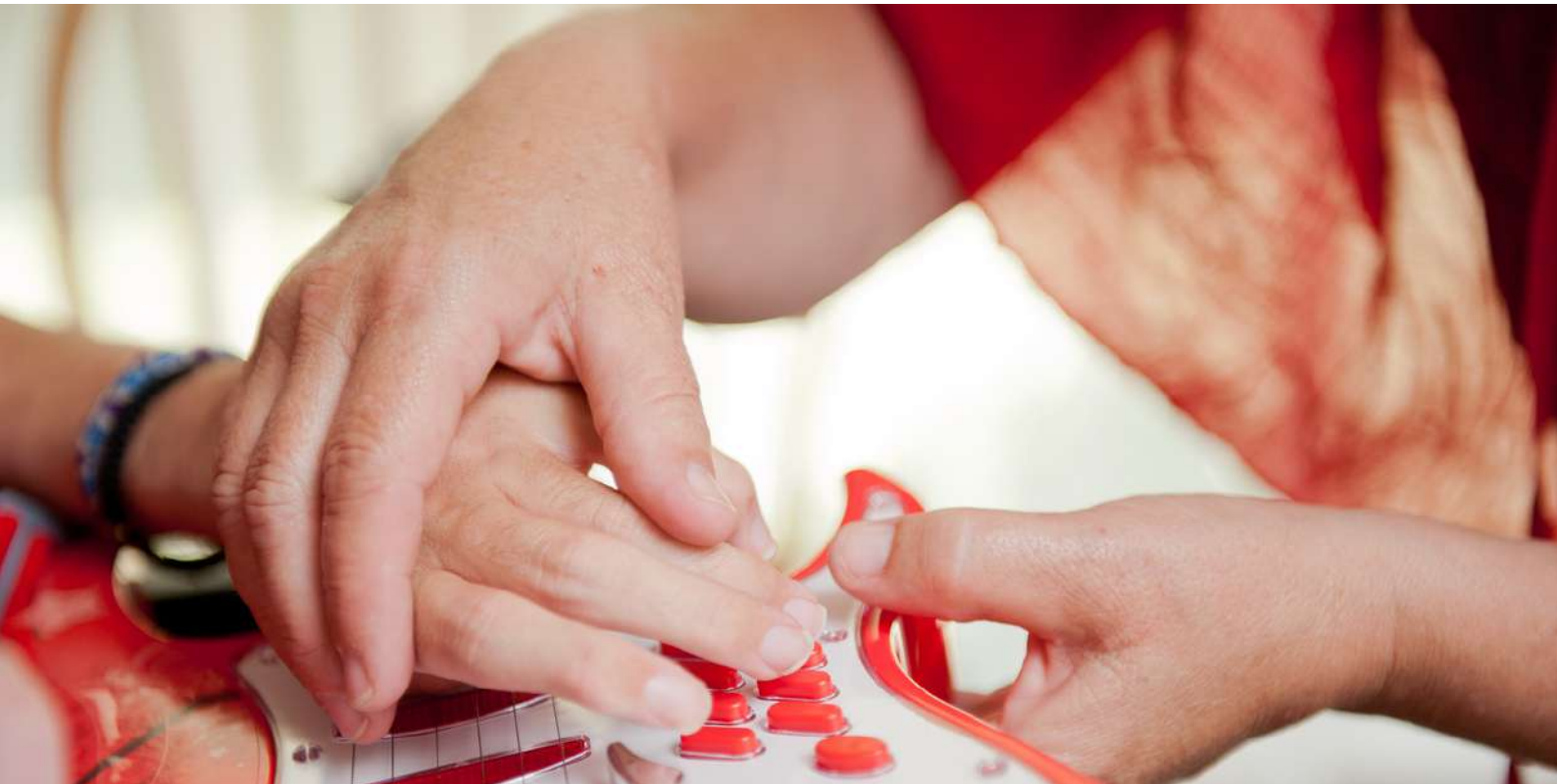
A session may include:

- Listening to music played by the music therapist.
- Listening to recorded music.
- Making music by playing an instrument or singing.
- Using or writing lyrics and songs.
- Getting resources and activities to do outside of your music therapy session.

To maximise the benefit of your music therapy, Registered Music Therapists try to understand your situation and goals. This can involve working closely with your family, carers and other health professionals such as:

- Occupational therapists
- Speech therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Psychologists
- Psychiatrists
- Neurologists and
- Doctors.

HOW IS MUSIC THERAPY DIFFERENT TO MUSIC LESSONS OR MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT?



Music therapy is different to music lessons and music entertainment in that:

- The main goal of music therapy is not musical, for example, to improve fine motor skills, speech or communication skills. Musical experiences are used to achieve non-musical goals. For example, motivating people to use their fingers, or to respond to music emotionally and physically. The added benefits of music therapy are musical, and often include opportunities for musical participation.

- The main goal of music lessons is music focused. For example, to learn how to play a musical instrument, sing or read music. The added benefits of music lessons are not musical, and may include improved confidence, focus and fine motor skills.
- The main goal of music entertainment is entertainment. For example, a person listens to music or watches a concert to be entertained. It is a passive experience that involves listening to or participating in a musical activity. The added benefits of music entertainment can be the relaxation, thrill or an emotional feeling from the experience.



AMTA™ – THE AUSTRALIAN MUSIC THERAPY ASSOCIATION

The Australian Music Therapy Association (AMTA™) is Australia's industry peak body for music therapy. AMTA started in 1975 and now has over 700 members. The AMTA™ represents Registered Music Therapists (RMTs), music therapy students and the community.

The AMTA™ :

- Supports the value and access of music therapy.
- Manages registration of Registered Music Therapists (RMTs).
- Accredits university courses to ensure training and standards are high quality.
- Holds a yearly national conference.
- Manages professional development programs and events.
- Publishes the peer reviewed Australian Journal of Music Therapy.
- Provides a job list for employers and members.

CONTACT US

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AMTA is a member of:





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