

# Music therapy as procedural support in the hypertonia clinic: Toward the development of practice guidelines

Project Summary

Centre for Leadership in Participation and Inclusion

Andrea Lamont, Music Therapist; Amy McPherson, Scientist; Eunice Kang, Music Therapist, Nancy Campbell, Registered Practical Nurse; Joanne, Downing, Family Leader; Christina Weldon, Music Therapist; Darcy Fehlings, Senior Clinician Scientist

**Holland Bloorview**  
Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

**Bloorview**  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

**CIOTR**  
WITH MUSIC IN MIND

## SHARING OUR WORK

We plan to share the results from this study in a number of ways in the next year or so which may include:

- Publication of a peer-reviewed journal article
- Presentation of results to other professional groups through Holland Bloorview's Practice Councils
- Sharing our findings with key stakeholders including music therapists and the parent advisory committee

## WHAT WAS THIS STUDY ABOUT?

A music therapist is a healthcare professional that assists clients to better think, feel, move, and communicate with the help of music. Music Therapy as procedural support provides a child emotional assistance and encourages coping when they are having a medical procedure.

We wanted to a) learn more about how music therapy can support clients, parents and staff feeling less stressed and anxious during treatment and b) how to assist other healthcare teams to provide care in the same way. To study this idea, we need to understand what research articles exist on this topic. Once this is done, we will ask music therapists from all over the world for feedback on our results and how they support clients during procedures in every day practice. This will help us to compare our practice at Holland Bloorview; what is different and what is the same.

By the end, we expect to deliver guidelines for other healthcare teams and families planning to include music therapy services as a way to help clients feel less anxious and stressed during procedures.

## WHAT DID WE DO?

Our goal was to complete a scoping review which is a research method that finds research articles on a specific topic. This method included:

1. **Developing our research question:** "What is the extent and nature of evidence for music therapy as procedural support in pediatric healthcare?" In this case, procedural support is supporting, distracting, and helping clients cope with music during a medical treatment.
2. **Searching the literature:** we found 6429 articles but in the end the team only kept five articles that best fit our research question.
3. **Study the results:** we are now looking closely at those five articles to understand what useful information they hold and where there are gaps and opportunities. We will put all of this information in a research article for publication.

## IMPACT FOR CLIENTS, FAMILIES AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

By understanding the value of music therapy as procedural support, we are helping clients, families, and teams to better cope with medical treatments that cause stress and/or anxiety in a creative way.

## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The results include the following information:

- The studies found give us insight into acceptable ways of using music therapy as procedural support in the area of pediatric cancer treatment (3 articles) or treatment for burns (2 articles)
- Although there is little to support evidenced based best practices, it does offer some helpful information including:
  - a) Parent insight as to why and how music therapy as procedural support is helpful
  - b) Suggestions as to how music therapy can impact the experience of anxiety, mood, and pain
  - c) An exploration as to whether or not a specific music therapy research protocol would work for a future research
  - c) Discussion as to the needs for outcome measures that accurately assess the impact of music therapy.

It is clear from the small number of studies found that there is opportunity to and value in exploring this topic further.

## NEXT STEPS?

We are now writing a journal article so that we can share our results. In the next year, will ask music therapists around the world for feedback about our results and how music therapy is as procedural support with clients in their practice. We will then compare our results to our practice here at Holland Bloorview in clinic. At that stage, we will have enough information to transform care by offering best practice guidelines on music therapy as procedural support to health organizations around the world.

## TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS STUDY, PLEASE CONTACT:

Andrea Lamont, MMT, RP, MTA  
Music Therapist, Music and Arts  
Holland Bloorview Kids  
Rehabilitation Hospital  
Toronto, ON, M4G 2P6

**Phone:** 416-425-6220, ext. 3646

**Email:**  
alamont@hollandbloorview.ca



## WHO ARE WE?

This dynamic team includes a diverse collection of Holland Bloorview staff and volunteer with an interest in music therapy as procedural support in the hypertonia clinic:

### Music and Arts - Music Therapy Clinical Team:

Andrea Lamont, Eunice Kang, Christina Weldon

### Bloorview Research Institute:

Amy McPherson, Scientist

### Family Leader:

Joanne Downing

### Hypertonia Clinical Team:

Nancy Campbell, Registered Practical Nurse

Darcy Fehlings, Senior Clinician Scientist

## THANK YOU!

Pui Ying Wong, Manager, Health Sciences Library and Archives

Michelle Peters, Research Assistant

## THIS PROJECT WAS FUNDED BY:

Centres for Leadership, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Toronto, ON

The Manfred and Penny Conrad Institute for Music Therapy Research, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON