

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is Music Therapy?

Music therapy is an evidence-based profession. It uses music as a tool by which to achieve non-musical goals. These goals can consist of communication, social, emotional, cognitive and/or physical goals.

## Who can provide Music Therapy?

Music Therapy is carried out by a trained music therapist who has completed a recognised Music Therapy Master's Degree.

## Do I need to have musical experience or play an instrument to attend Music Therapy?

No musical skills are required by any individual attending Music Therapy. Anyone can benefit from it. The client is given the choice and chance to explore instruments (which are provided), along with discussing and listening to music together.

## Will my child learn how to play an instrument in Music Therapy?

The focus in Music Therapy is not on learning music or learning to play an instrument, but to use music as a medium to achieving other goals such as communication, physical, social, emotional and cognitive goals. Some interventions used in Music Therapy include singing, composition, instrument exploration/playing, receptive listening, musical games and lyric analysis.

## Where do Music Therapists work?

Music therapists work in many settings – educational, clinical, rehabilitation facilities, care facilities, community centres, hospice centres and also offer home visits.

## Can I join in the session with my child/family member?

Family centred music therapy offers an opportunity to explore music therapy as a family. It holds many benefits while fostering connection and building relationships. If it is of interest, it can be discussed with the music therapist during consultation.

## Who can refer a client to Music Therapy?

Parents, guardians, carers, teachers, social workers, special needs assistants, or clinical practitioners can refer someone to Music Therapy. Self-referral is also a common practice. Just email [mbrownmusictherapy@gmail.com](mailto:mbrownmusictherapy@gmail.com) or fill out the inquiry form to find out more.

## Consultation Process

Before commencement of a Music Therapy programme, a consultation takes place between the client(s) and music therapist. During this consultation, data is gathered by the music therapist in relation to the needs of the client. If the client has a diagnosis and is happy to share this with the music therapist, this information will be drawn upon to support the client when designing a

treatment programme for them. There is a standard consultation fee which is a separate fee to the treatment programme. There is no obligation to proceed with a treatment programme post consultation. If a client wishes to proceed with a treatment programme, a contract will be drafted upon which payment is agreed. A treatment programme runs for approximately 10 weeks and may be extended based on the needs and wishes of the client.

## What does a Music Therapy session look like?

**Setting/Duration:** A music therapy session can be one to one or take place within a group setting. Usually groups are no more than 5 for children and 10 for adults. It can take place in many settings – clinical, educational, care/hospice facilities, community centres and in an individual's home. A quiet safe space is provided where interruptions are minimal. A therapy session can take many different forms depending upon the needs of each client. The duration of each session can be either 30 minutes or 1 hour.

**Instruments:** The music therapist supplies the musical instruments for the clients such as shakers, ocean drum, djembe drum, percussion instruments, singing bowls, chimes, xylophone and tongue drum. The music therapist may use a guitar, piano or melodic instrument to support the client as they explore the instruments. Voice is heavily relied upon also. Clients who are not comfortable using their voices can use instruments or listen instead.

## Features of a music therapy session:

- Discussion of various musical genres or shared experiences of musical preferences
- Non-vocal sessions can be receptive and sensory based - the music therapist offers musical experiences using sensory instruments while reflective vocal skills are used to foster connection and communication between the therapist and client(s)
- Music making through improvisational exploration and shared musical experiences using percussion instruments
- Receptive listening and responding or relaxation techniques

**Structure:** Within the first three sessions of a music therapy programme, assessment takes place by the therapist to create goals for the treatment programme. Usually, it is within this timeframe that the client-therapist relationship is nurtured and fostered, however, for some clients this may take longer to develop – there is no rule. Song singing, improvisation, relaxation techniques, song writing and lyrical analysis are significant tools by the music therapist to target the needs and goals devised during the assessment period. Hello/goodbye songs, ice-breakers are also used to provide structure for sessions.

**Termination:** In the final three weeks of a treatment programme, the client will be reminded that termination of the programme is underway. Clients can find this period difficult knowing that the support structure is terminating soon. During these three weeks, a client/group may set an intention/goal to record a composed song or arrangement. This can be very significant for them as it reflects a part of their journey. The termination process can also consist of a review of the current programme with other multi-disciplinary clinicians and a continuation of the music therapy programme with new goals.

