



Altering Misconceptions Surrounding Subject Disciplines

Using Library Produced Resources to Bust the Myths of Music Therapy

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INTRODUCTION

Library research guides are traditionally created to support academic success and scholarly research by linking patrons to relevant materials. Because online guides are easily accessible beyond the intended academic audience, they can educate a wider audience and alter misconceptions about a profession.

BACKGROUND

The American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) defines music therapy as “the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.”

- A professional music therapist holds at least a bachelor's degree in music therapy from one of 72 AMTA approved colleges and universities.
- Music therapy sessions can include improvisation, songwriting, music listening, movement, and music performance.
- Long term music therapy treatment can help manage stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication, and promote physical rehabilitation.
- In 2014 an estimated 33,330 health care facilities and 1.5 million patients received care from a music therapist.



Percussion instruments and ukuleles are commonly used in music therapy sessions



A music therapy session in Northern Ireland

MUSIC THERAPY MYTHS

Myth: Performing in a nursing home, leading sing-a-longs, or turning on a favorite record are all considered music therapy.

Truth: While potentially valuable, these practices lack the therapeutic relationship with a certified music therapist and goal based treatment found in clinical music therapy.

Myth: I have no musical ability, so music therapy would not be an effective treatment for me.

Truth: No musical talent is required! Music therapy is a personalized experience in which a music therapist will plan a session based on a patient's preferences, needs, and goals.

Myth: Classical music is the best for music therapy because it is the most “relaxing.”

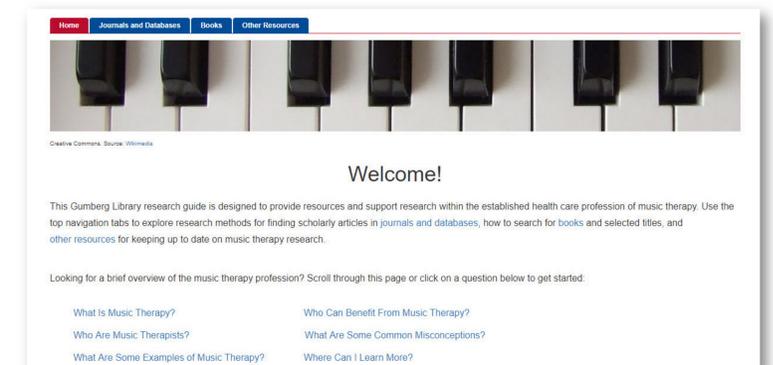
Truth: All styles of music can effect change within a patient’s life. A music therapist will choose the musical instruments and music best suitable for a patient based on current conditions.

CREATING A RESEARCH GUIDE

Gathered from professional organizations and shaped by faculty, the guide’s content strikes a balance between supporting music therapy researchers and educating a wider audience on the profession:

- Overview of the profession.
- Images and videos that demonstrate clinical music therapy practice.
- Databases and high quality journals for music therapy research.
- Support and suggestions for accessing music therapy books.
- Connections to the music therapy community through professional organizations, blogs, and social media.

After undergoing review from library and music therapy faculty the guide was published January 2018.



Research guide provides an overview of profession including common misconceptions

OUTCOMES

Reaction to the guide has been overwhelmingly positive and generated the following outcomes:

- Acceptance by the Duquesne Music Therapy Department
- Incorporation onto other library pages
- Referral to students in outside disciplines
- Described in an article in the Medical Library Association’s *Nursing and Allied Health Resources Section Newsletter*

Ongoing evaluation and assessment for the guide is planned through the tracking of usage statistics and follow-up with music therapy faculty.

http://guides.library.duq.edu/music_therapy