The role of Music Therapy in the context of a Social Work-led parent support service

Elena Schiena
Senior Social Worker

Stef Zappino
Registered Music Therapist
Presentation Outline

- Parent Matters program
- Collaboration with music therapy
- What is music therapy?
- Case study
- Feedback from parents
- Looking to the future
Parent Matters program

Commenced October 2017 – funded by CanTeen

To date: > 490 referrals
> 1000 children

- Breast, 35%
- Haem, 13%
- Gynae, 8%
- LGI, 7%
- Lung, 9%
- B&ST, 6%
- Melanoma, 6%
- UGI, 7%
- Neurology, 2%
- Urology, 3%
Collaboration

April 2019: Development of pilot program, providing music therapy to children of parents with cancer (1 day per week)
Referrals via Parent Matters

Feedback forms provided to parents following 3 music therapy sessions
Considerations: time, ongoing funding, research
To date: 38 referrals
  6 did not proceed
  12 discharged
  16 active
  4 waitlisted
What is Music Therapy

Evidence-based allied health profession

University trained and registered with the Australian Music Therapy Association

Music is a tool to improve health and wellbeing across the life span by employing a range of music making methods within a therapeutic relationship

Not considered entertainment, education or diversional therapy and has a specific clinical focus on health, functioning and wellbeing.
Music Therapy at Peter Mac

Adult service

Adolescent and Young Adult service

Paediatric service

New family service through parent-support program
Parent - 45 F
Diagnosed 2018: Metastatic pelvic recurrence of rectal cancer
Died 18th of March 2019
Single mother to Lucy (7 years old)
Referred to Parent Matters in May 2018 at patient’s request
Referral to music therapy program in the context of grief and disrupted family connection given a complex family situation
"It certainly helps. Helps her talk about her Mum, remember the good times and the best parts of her Mother. It also gives her something to look forward to".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referral Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Grief</td>
<td>• Song writing and recording</td>
<td>• Providing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disrupted family connections</td>
<td>• Grief work through music and art based activities</td>
<td>• opportunities to express grief in healthy and supported ways</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent Feedback

4 year old, 3 sessions
My child feels less stressed and anxious when he is in the Peter Mac building. He is more open to interacting with the staff members when he accompanies Mum to her Peter Mac appointments.

9 year old, 4 sessions
My child is calmer and happier.

10 year old, 10 sessions
My child has autism so communication isn’t one of his strong points. He loves music and having access to music therapy has opened up his communication so much. He’s better at expressing himself and his emotions.

4 year old, 3 sessions
My child loved her sessions. She has told everyone in our family and her Kinder that her Daddy has ladies who sing for her and her Daddy when he’s sick at Peter Mac.

4 year old, 3 sessions
My child has learnt that it is okay to be upset and express her feelings in different ways, without hurting others. She has also learnt that it is okay to leave Mum and that she will be back at the end of the day after work.

12 year old & 9 year old, 4 sessions
Both children were able to put their feelings into words via music. They have been very quiet talking about their issues regarding their Mother. I think the program was excellent and I do hope it keeps going. The program was very flexible to meet our needs relating to appointment times.
Feedback Received

About Child

INCREASED SELF-CONFIDENCE
Agree 37.5%
Strongly Agree 62.5%

IMPROVED COMMUNICATION SKILLS
Agree 50%
Strongly Agree 50%

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR CHANGE
Agree 50%
Strongly Agree 50%

IMPROVED MOOD
Agree 50%
Strongly Agree 50%
Feedback Received
About Parent

REDUCED LEVELS OF DISTRESS RE CHILD'S COPING

INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN COMMUNICATION WITH CHILD

FEELING REASSURED CHILD IS RECEIVING SUPPORT

RECOMMEND TO OTHER FAMILIES
Looking to the Future

- Retrospective Audit
- Develop Research Project
- Funding