



For Immediate Release

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Music & Memory Project Launched in California

SACRAMENTO – In an effort to improve the quality of life for people suffering from dementia, a personalized music program is now available to 4,500 nursing home residents in 300 participating skilled nursing facilities in California. The three year project will use iPods to re-introduce nursing home residents to their favorite, personalized music to improve their day-to-day life and determine if familiar tunes can reduce the need for medication.

The California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF), a professional association representing nursing homes, is now accepting applications for its Music & Memory Project. The \$1.4 million grant program is funded from nursing home fines collected by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Licensing and Certification Division and deposited in a federal Civil Monetary Penalty fund.

“We know anecdotally that music improves the mood and provides pleasure, even in people with severe memory loss who can no longer communicate,” said Jocelyn Montgomery, RN, CAHF Director of Clinical Affairs. “We want to further test whether familiar music can reduce the need for medication.”

Researchers from the University of California Davis, Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing will study and document the impact of the Music & MemorySM program on reducing antipsychotic medication for people with dementia and other cognitive disorders and identify strategies to spread and sustain the program through local community engagement.

The Music & MemorySM programSM was created by Dan Cohen in New York in 2008 to bring individualized music to residents in long term care homes via iPods. His idea was based on a personal desire to be able to enjoy his favorite music of the 1960’s if he was ever placed in a nursing home. His goal was to assist residents to access music in an easy, compact, inexpensive way and so far, thousands of nursing homes in the U.S. and Canada are participating.

Most of California’s 1,250 licensed Medicare/Medicaid certified skilled nursing facilities are eligible to participate in the research project. Participants must receive certification through training webinars. Each facility will receive 15 iPod shuffles, headphones, and AC adapters as well as a lap top computer to build a music library and a \$75 iTunes gift card. Those home already participating in Cohen’s Music & MemorySM program (about 100 in the state) are not eligible to participate.

The project will be divided into three phases with 50 facilities in Phase 1, 150 in Phase 2 and 100 facilities in Phase 3. The project will conclude in June 2018.

Founded in 1950, the California Association of Health Facilities is a non-profit, professional organization representing more than 800 skilled-nursing facilities and 500 intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Each year, our 135,000 caregivers provide short-term rehabilitation, long-term care, end-of-life assistance and habilitative nursing services for 350,000 people. CAHF is the largest provider of continuing education for long-term care providers in California. For more information, visit www.cahf.org