



**California Association
of Health Facilities**

Dear Administrator:

As a participant of CAHF's Music & Memory Project, we are excited to provide a Media Kit to help you promote this unique program by connecting with your local news media.

Music & Memory offers a great platform to show what's working in our state's skilled nursing facilities and at your center in particular. The project highlights the positive impact of the program on residents and families, as well as the important work of your front-line staff and volunteers who are directly engaged in implementing personalized music.

Reaching out to local media with personal resident stories is a great way to develop relationships with reporters who need to understand your role and commitment to provide the best care possible to your residents.

This Media Kit is designed to help you contact your local media, obtain positive news coverage, and what to expect during the interview process.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like an electronic copy of this material, and thank you for your participation in this important project.

Regards,

Deborah Pacyna
Director, Public Affairs, CAHF
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Enclosures:

Planning a media visit
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PLANNING A MEDIA VISIT

Before you begin

Identify a resident (or two) that has shown improvement after listening to music and contact the family to see if they would be willing to be available for an interview. Families and staff make the best interview subjects.

Consider making a short (one minute) video on your phone showing smiling, laughing, singing or speaking that the resident has experienced while listening to personalized music. It can be sent in advance to the news organization along with your email.

Make sure you have photo and video releases for anyone who may appear on-camera.

Be sure to have copies of the enclosed M&M fact sheet, as well as information about your facility to hand out and be prepared to answer relevant questions about both.

Contact the media

(see Media Outreach instructions).

Don't get discouraged if you don't hear back immediately. In the absence of a newsy "hook" that requires coverage on a particular day (like an event of some sort), it could take some time to get on a schedule. You can always follow up with later emails or a phone call, but know that time is always short in the news business.

During the visit

Once a visit is scheduled, do everything you can to make the process easy for the reporter. Remember, they still have to get the story written in time for deadline, so the better prepared you are, the smoother the process.

Plan a simple display of how an M&M session operates. The media will want to see where you store your playlist, the iPods, headphones, and how the resident interacts to the music. Have appropriate staff/volunteers and family available to discuss the practical, day-to-day realities of the project and benefits they have personally witnessed.

Set aside an hour dedicated to the visit. Notify other employees about the visit and provide them with the proper background information so they understand what's going on.

Remember to ask the reporter when the segment will air on TV or radio, appear in print in the newspaper or be available online. You can share links to online coverage with families and staff (and CAHF) as a follow-up.



MEDIA OUTREACH - EMAIL

The following are some examples of emails that can be sent to your local newspaper, radio or television station or to individual media representatives.

If you have a relationship with a local reporter, reach out to them with an email with a message like the example below.

If not, contact the assignment desk. The assignment desk schedules a newsroom's resources, so a brief email helps them understand what's special about your story and why it is worth covering. To locate the assignment desk or editor on media outlet websites, look for the '**contact us**' link. Most media operations encourage readers or viewers to send in News Tips. You can send the email to that link.

Many radio and television stations also have public affairs shows that air during evening or weekend hours. This programming provides a longer format to share a particular news item of interest, like the Music & Memory project. You may want to send them a press release (see next page).

Sample emails

I work at the Fairview Care Center and we recently started a Music & Memory program for our residents with dementia. It's part of a statewide effort involving 300 nursing homes. We have been amazed to see some of our residents smile, talk and sing out loud after hearing their favorite, personalized music. We invite you to come and see for yourself. We are the only facility in Fairview that is participating in this new program. Regards, Mary Smith, Activity Director

Or

We are celebrating (holiday) by encouraging family and friends to donate iTunes gift cards to our residents who are enjoying personalized music as part of our Music & Memory project. Our local high school has partnered with us to raise money for the gift cards and has raised \$\$\$.

We are among 300 nursing homes in the state participating in a pilot program to bring personalized music to nursing home residents with dementia to improve their quality of life. Some of our residents have started singing and speaking after hearing their favorite music. We invite you to come see for yourself.

Our event will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, May xxx. The high school will be presenting us with a check. Our address is xxxxx. Please contact me at [email] for more information or call xxx xxx xxxx.



California Association
of Health Facilities

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

(usually sent via email)

For Immediate Release

May XX, 2016

Contact: Facility Administrator

administrator@facility.com

MYTOWN – In an effort to improve the quality of life for people suffering from dementia, Facility XYZ is participating in a pilot project to re-introduce residents to their favorite, personalized music. The project will study the impact of music on quality of life and determine if familiar tunes can reduce depression and the need for medication. We have already seen an improvement in some of our residents who are smiling and singing along to their favorite tunes!

The three-year Music & Memory project is being introduced to 300 skilled nursing facilities in California. At the end of the project, 4,500 nursing home residents will have their own personal music playlists and an iPod to listen to their favorite music. **Facility XYZ is the only skilled nursing facilities in the area participating in the program.**

The Music & Memory Project is a \$1.4 million statewide program administered by the California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF), and funded from nursing home fines collected by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and deposited in a federal Civil Monetary Penalty fund.

Additionally, researchers at the University of California, Davis are studying the impact of music on reducing antipsychotic medication for people with dementia and other cognitive disorders.

The project is based on the work already underway in other states as part of the national [Music and Memory Program](#) based in New York, to help nursing home residents re-connect with the world through music-connected memories.

We'd like to invite you to visit Facility XYZ to see this groundbreaking and life changing program in action and to speak with staff and families who have experienced the impact of this program on their loved ones.

[If available click this link to see a video of one of our residents who is part of the program].

Please contact me at (555) 555-1212, or via email administraor@facility.com to schedule a visit.

Regards,

Administrator

MEDIA RELATIONS 101

SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW TIPS

Try to accommodate the reporter's schedule but let them know the best time for a visit depends on the individual resident.

Have family members or familiar staff available to talk about the program benefits.

Notify employees to expect media.

Secure photo release permission before the interview.

Prepare and deliver materials about your facility and the Music & Memory program.

Show/share a good video of the resident experiencing music, if you have it.

Treat every interview as an opportunity to showcase other positive practices.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Speak in headlines - Main point followed by supporting ideas.

Keep your answers short and simple.

Avoid technical terminology. (DON, AIT)

If you don't know, don't speculate.

You are always "on the record" while in the presence of a reporter/photographer.

Be honest. Never lie to a reporter.

Remain positive.



AVOIDING PITFALLS

Set the ground rules - establish where to conduct the interview and what is off limits.

Steer the interview back to Music & Memory if other topics are raised.

Pledge to respond to other issues at a later date.

Smile if appropriate but do not use humor.

Answer the question; then stop talking.

Remember, you are the long-term care expert.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

For TV, stick with solid colors and avoid patterns.

Dress should be casual but professional. Ties and jackets are not necessary.

Digital television accentuates flaws. Use light powder or make-up.

Plant your feet firmly so you don't rock back and forth.

Maintain steady eye contact with the reporter and use natural facial expressions and hand gestures.

Offer to be a resource to the reporter on long-term care issues.

Remain calm, confident and in control.

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH



Social media platforms reach a huge swath of the public. You may not use it yourself, but many people do, and it's a worthwhile means of targeted communication that's free to use.

If you have one of these accounts, try to send your messages between 10am and 5pm. Post consistently, for example once every week or once each month.

Here's a few suggestions on what to share with your online followers and friends. Always include a picture of a smiling resident with headphones or residents with their family members or staff.

Twitter:

Mrs. Smith loves her personalized music, especially country & western
Our Music & Memory project brings smiles to our residents as they listen to favorite tunes
The Music & Memory project helps calm our residents with dementia. They love their favorite music

Facebook:

Fairview Healthcare's residents listen to their favorite music everyday as part of our Music and Memory project

We're having a fundraiser to buy iTunes cards for our Music & Memory project so we can bring personalized music to our residents with dementia. Donations appreciated!

Our Music & Memory project helps our residents connect with their favorite music. Mrs. Smith loves rock 'n roll.



**California Association
of Health Facilities**

The CAHF Music & Memory Project

- Personalized music is being distributed to 4,500 residents in 300 California skilled nursing homes over three years.
- Participation is free to all skilled nursing homes in California and includes training, equipment, iPods and personalized playlists to improve the lives of residents living with dementia.
- The \$1.4 million grant-funded program is being administered by the California Association of Health Facilities, the nation's largest association representing skilled nursing providers.
- Researchers from the U.C. Davis, Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing will study if personalized music can reduce the need for antipsychotic drugs and identify strategies to spread and sustain the program through local community engagement.
- The grant is funded from nursing home fines collected by the California Department of Public Health, Licensing and Certification Division and deposited in a federal Civil Monetary Penalty fund.
- The project is divided into three phases with 50 facilities in phase one, 150 in phase two and 100 facilities in phase three. The program will conclude in June, 2018.
- Personalized therapeutic music has been shown to improve behavior, reduce depressive symptoms and help some residents with dementia to re-connect with others.



May 16, 2016 10:00 AM

Music reaches memories for Sacramento seniors with Alzheimer's

By Claudia Buck cbuck@sacbee.com

Gloria Silott spends most days in her wheelchair, socializing very little and verbalizing only with muffled “yes” or “no” answers. Immobilized by a stroke 15 years ago, she cannot speak clearly or express herself. Typically, say staffers at Eskaton Care Center Greenhaven, she has a flat, sad affect.

That is, until the twang of country-western music pops into her iPod headset. On a recent afternoon, as the chords of Glen Campbell's “Rhinestone Cowboy” were belting out, Silott, 66, was beaming, bouncing her black-velcroed shoes, bobbing her head and even mouthing bits of the refrain.

Therapist Nicole Johnson prepares an iPod mini for Gloria Silott on Thursday afternoon at Eskaton in Sacramento. As part of a pilot study in California nursing homes, Eskaton is using iPod music to de-stress and calm patients with dementia/Alzheimer's. With help from family members, they develop a personalized music playlist of a patient's favorite songs, which are loaded onto iPods and listened to via headsets. José Luis Villegas jvillegas@sacbee.com

“It gives her the ability to relax and connect and engage. It's seeing the brightness in her eyes,” said Eskaton Greenhaven executive director Heather Craig, who views music as a way to calm agitated patients and return a glimmer of normalcy to their lives.

As part of a program underway in nursing homes statewide, Silott is one of dozens of California dementia and Alzheimer's patients who are getting personalized playlists of their favorite songs, a novel treatment launched six years ago by Music & Memory Inc., a nonprofit based in Mineola, N.Y.

It's based on the notion that certain songs are stuck in our brains, like soundtracks to our memories. For patients with Alzheimer's or dementia, those musical memories can unlock – albeit briefly – a connection to their former life, before disease or illness robbed them of their verbal and cognitive capabilities.

“It's incredibly powerful,” said Jocelyn Montgomery, director of clinical affairs for the California Association of Health Facilities, or CAHF, which is running a three-year statewide project to assess the effect of music-and-memory programs on dementia and Alzheimer's patients. “It doesn't bring them out (of their condition), but they become more responsive and aware of the music. They're getting in touch with memories and feelings that are really rich. ... It doesn't fix the dementia, it just helps them be (more) in the present.”

There's also some science behind it.

“It's certainly one of those phenomenon for which the anecdotal evidence is simply staggering,” said psychology professor Petr Janata of the Center for Mind and Brain at UC Davis, who has researched the effect of music on the brain. Memories are stored in the part of our brains – the “pre-supplementary motor area” – that is one of the least afflicted by Alzheimer's disease, he said. “That spared part of the brain can support responding to familiar music,” he said.

CAHF, which represents the state's skilled nursing facilities, considers the music-and-memory project another tool for minimizing the use of psychotropic drugs, which were once commonly used to calm down agitated or restless dementia patients.

As part of a three-year, \$1.4 million grant, CAHF is offering training and free iPods for as many as 4,500 residents in up to 300 skilled nursing homes statewide. Simultaneously, researchers with the UC Davis Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing will document how the music-and-memory program affects the use of anti-psychotic medications, as well as its effect on caregivers and staff.

Currently, 50 nursing homes are signed up and trained, including Eskaton Care Center Greenhaven in Sacramento. CAHF is accepting applications for 150 more facilities through this fall.

Launched in 2010, the Music & Memory nonprofit has trained staffers in hundreds of elder-care facilities in Canada and the United States. This week, a 2014 documentary, “Alive Inside,” on Music & Memory’s work with Alzheimer’s and dementia patients is showing at Sacramento’s Tower Theatre. (See box on Page 6C.)

Dozens of other elder-care facilities in California are already using the music-and-memory program, including Snowline Hospice, whose staffers are loading up 50 iPods with personalized soundtracks for their dementia and Alzheimer’s patients. The hospice, based in Sacramento and Diamond Springs, is asking families to help select the “specific songs that are near and dear to the patient’s heart,” said Bonnie Davis, Snowline’s clinical volunteer services manager.

Because of a patient’s decline, “we sometimes can’t ask (the individual), so we’re asking their primary caregiver and families: ‘What music did your mom or dad really love? What was the song played at their wedding? What song did they dance around the kitchen with you?’ We look for those specific musical memories,” Davis said.

Snowline hopes to pair younger volunteers who can visit hospice dementia patients and engage them through music, Davis said.

Finding each person’s musical history is the key. Sometimes family members will bring in a patient’s favorite tunes on albums, cassettes or CDs. Or staffers will sit down with individual patients and walk through music genres, trying to elicit positive or negative responses.

At Eskaton Greenhaven, finding what meant the most to Silott took some trial and error. Given Silott’s baby boomer age, executive director Craig first started with songs from the ’60s and ’70s: The Beatles, Beach Boys, Elton John, Fleetwood Mac. Gloria turned thumbs down on all of them. It wasn’t until Craig checked with Silott’s husband and discovered that their first date was country-western dancing that she switched tunes.

Today, Silott’s playlist is a compilation of country classics, from George Jones to Patsy Cline to John Denver. For resident Polean Kimball, 79, it’s all Elvis Presley. And for 82-year-old Larry Johnson, the hit list includes Aretha Franklin, B.B. King and other blues musicians.

Until he was selected as one of 15 dementia patients to participate, Johnson, a former communications specialist at McClellan Air Force base, rarely spoke or interacted with caregivers or his fellow residents, Eskaton staffers said. But when headphones were slipped on so he could listen to his blues playlist, he cracked a smile and said a few words. “It was the first time I ever heard him speak,” said Craig.

His ex-wife, who still visits him several times a week, says the difference is dramatic. “He lights up like a Christmas tree,” said Laura Johnson, who was married to Larry for 26 years. “He’s snapping his fingers, tapping his foot. It means the world to him.”

The music memory connection also is a boost for a patient’s caregivers and family members.

“The atmosphere in the nursing home begins to change,” said CAHF’s Montgomery. “Caregivers who lost that connection because (patients) are not responsive, they now feel more of a relationship. Morale improves. Family members come more often; they bring the kids.”

Laura Johnson’s weekly visits to her former husband can be stressful because he isn’t always responsive and she can’t always tell if she’s helping him feel better. “But with the music, it gives me a way to not be discouraged. I see the difference in him.”