

## Proposal for the Music Therapy Center

Author: Keara Yasko

### **Abstract**

This proposal seeks funding to establish the Music Therapy Center, a physical space to perform music therapy on the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) main campus. Musical therapy utilizes melodies and physical imagery or instruments to aid health related or educational obstacles. This space offers resources that may manage stress, reduce pain, express feelings, improve communication and even enhance memory. Upon acceptance, brainstorming and moving forward with a provided space on campus includes the placement of speakers and other musical interventions, along with the assignment of a monitoring team. The team is composed of professional therapists or psychologists and practicing [psychology] students and will further research the positive effects of music therapy. This proposal will investigate the evidence-based results of the program (feedback on impacts, benefits, or experiences) which may lead to implementation of similar spaces at other college campuses.

### **Introduction**

College students experience high rates of depression, anxiety, and stress. In one published study (Asif, 2020), depression presented in 75% of the participants, anxiety in 88.4% of participants, and stress in 84.4% of participants (*Discussion* para. 1). Students at the University of Pittsburgh suffer from mental illness or poor mental health and Pitt seeks methods to support these students (Bonneau, 2019). Although mental health resources exist, they are limited. Professionals have already demonstrated the use of music to manage stress, reduce pain, express feelings, improve communication and even enhance memory. Music therapy can stimulate emotional, social, and creative development in patients. This type of therapy may treat mood disorders, binge eating disorders, and general cognitive dysfunction, all of which Pitt students and faculty may experience. Even if an individual does not suffer from a mental illness, the average student or employee commonly struggles with pain, anxiety and stress (CMCB, 2022). Practicing clinicians run inpatient centers for individuals to engage in musical interventions (CMCB, 2022). The addition of a musical therapy center or space on the University of Pittsburgh campus may benefit students during pressured times and maintain lower stress levels. Students experiencing sleep issues or suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder may also benefit.

### **Project Description**

This proposal seeks to fund a physical space monitored by trained professionals or practicing students, that offers classical music (for stress), and other types of soothing music through speakers.

Musical intervention activities include listening to melodies, guided imagery, writing songs, and playing instruments. The realistic Music Therapy Center at Pitt would include a space that plays classical music that students can listen to when visiting. Smaller, more separated rooms where selected music plays composes the space. The monitoring actors (professionals or students) will function as help for individuals. More specifically, professional psychologists and practicing students present will monitor the space and provide support and guidance to those visiting the space. The professional actors also have the chance to observe and record information from visitors in an effort to gain more research of the positive effects of musical therapy. Another potential benefit of this proposal is that the practical experience may benefit students studying psychology or aiming to do inpatient clinical work on patients suffering from mental illnesses or chronic pain.

Visitors will have the option to provide psychologists and practicing psychology students to collect information from their visits to the space. If an individual agrees, they will complete a survey about their feelings and mental state after utilizing the space. Feedback may provide further knowledge on the effects of music therapy or even suggestions of activities to add to the space.

### **Methods:**

- Identify the Music Therapy Center coordinator.
- Acquire physical space.
- Remodel acquired space (painting, decor, furnished).
- Purchase equipment for music therapy.
- Prepare research protocol , identify evaluation/measurement tools.
- Submit research protocol to the Institutional Review Board for review and approval.
- Hire monitors (employed, interns, or volunteers).
- Open Music Therapy Center.
- Implement research protocol.
- Perform evaluations.
- Submit publication of results for review.
- Sight sustainability funding, if needed.

### **Budget:**

#### Space:

\$15,000.00/year (includes utilities and cleaning fees)

#### Equipment:

Floor speakers - \$3,300.00 (\$550 each X 6)

MP3 Player - \$320.00 (\$80 each X 4)

Headphones \$500.00 (\$50 each X 10)

Furniture:

Moonpod chairs \$4,500.00 (\$300 each X 10)

Personnel Costs:

Music Therapy Center Coordinator - \$45,000.00 (salary + fringe benefits)

Research staff consultation - \$25,000.00 (includes administering evaluations and analysis)

Total Funds Requested: \$93,620.00

\*Further breakdown of costs are available upon request.

**Conclusion:**

With high rates of depression, anxiety, and stress among college students, universities must provide a physical space for students to relax and unwind. Music and music therapy are known to reduce and manage stress, allow for expression of feelings, improving communication and even enhancing memory. A Music Therapy Center at Pitt will prove a valuable resource for students. Further, the research and evidence-based results derived from the program, may prove invaluable for the Pitt student population, not only those students utilizing the center but also for the students that will receive real life situational experience.

## References

- American Music Therapy Association*. What is Music Therapy? | What is Music Therapy? | American Music Therapy Association (AMTA). (n.d.). Retrieved February 2, 2023, from <https://www.musictherapy.org/about/musictherapy/>.
- Asif, S., Mudassar, A., Shahzad, T. Z., Raouf, M., & Pervaiz, T. (2020). *Frequency of depression, anxiety and stress among university students*. Pakistan journal of medical sciences. Retrieved February 1, 2023, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7372668/>.
- Bonneau, C. (2019, January 23). *Senate matters: When it comes to mental health issues, we all need to step up and help*. utimes. Retrieved February 2, 2023, from <https://www.utimes.pitt.edu/news/senate-matters-when-it>.
- What is music therapy?* Community Music Center of Boston. (2022, August 9). Retrieved January 31, 2023, from <https://cmcb.org/news/what-is-music-therapy/>.