



Since January we have been sharing weekly live music and visual art experiences at Tŷ Lliard, a residential NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Bridgend, South Wales.

The project, funded by the Arts Council of Wales, involves our musicians Haz and Marged on violin and harp, working with visual artist Chris. They share a variety of music along with the opportunities to paint, draw, use chinks and create with air dry clay.

The weekly programme allows the musicians and the artist to develop a relationship with the staff and patients, learning the needs of the young people to personalise the session.

One young person expressed that she needed to have direct instruction on making her art, which prompted Chris to provide an activity with opportunities for both structured and free expression the following week.

These sessions have been working to remove barriers between staff and young people, acting as an equaliser in the space. "They might see you in a certain way because of your age or your

role or whatever, but then when we're making things and they see you might just be a bit rubbish at art it changes it," said a staff member.

Staff are also able to learn more about the young people saying that "it gives an opportunity to connect in a different way". The young people may not be very chatty during the activity, but they are able to express themselves in a different way and show their creativity as well as their interest in the live music.

Young people are given the opportunity to feedback in the form of an evaluation tree, which they add leaves to. They responded about the feeling of peace that the sessions brought, with one patient saying "I feel the combination of paint and music made me feel calm and centered," whilst others described how it brought about "calm in the chaos" of their stay on the ward or simply made them feel "free".

Staff also expressed how they loved the calm and opportunity to join in something creative. Staff feel able to sing along to the live music, talk about their memories and experiences of music and enjoy the chance to create with clay.

A marathon effort in London

All five of our runners completed the 2024 London Marathon in April. We are hugely grateful to them all for raising over £10,000 to share joy through live music with more people in hospitals and care across the UK.



“Being given the opportunity to run the London Marathon for Music in Hospitals & Care was an absolute dream come true. Music has always been a big part of my life and I was really proud to be able to support bringing live music to improve well-being and assist healing.

Participating in it was an amazing experience and the support from the music ensembles was a great reminder of just how important live music is and the impact it can have.”

“I chose to run for Music in Hospitals & Care because I see the impact of this important work every day in my job as a paediatric oncology nurse. Music is so healing for my patients and families and we rely heavily on it in many aspects of our work day.”



“The support was incredible and there was such a variety of live music along the route, with singers, a jazz orchestra, a wind band (great to see some fellow oboists!), a pipe band, a brass quintet, military bugles, samba bands, a lone piper and many more. All reminding

me of what I was running for: to enable brilliant musicians to harness the power of live music to inspire and heal.”

“Music in Hospitals & Care is a cause close to our family’s heart as they gave my mum comfort and a distraction while she was in hospital. It was an incredible experience to both remember her and to give something back.”



If you are inspired and you or someone you know would like to find a challenge, from 5Ks to inflatable obstacle courses, we have places for lots of different events across the UK and abroad to explore at mihc.org.uk/challenge-events.

Pioneering new residency at Coventry Hospital

This year Annie Summers and Helen Wilding have become our first resident musicians at Coventry Hospital. The partnership signifies University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust’s commitment to making live music an important part of patient experience. Violinist Helen and guitarist and harpist Annie share uplifting live music in the oncology (cancer care) and paediatric (children’s) wards once a month.



“A wide variety of reactions, from moving feet under bedsheets to one bay where all four men clapped and called out enthusiastically. Staff and visitors were very complimentary. It was amazing to see the difference 10 minutes made from walking into a bay of seemingly comatose people, to the alert, smiling faces when we left.”



Jamming at The Hive

Between April 2023 and March 2024, 168 hours of live music have been shared in the hospitals in Edinburgh and the Lothians thanks to the partnership between Music in Hospitals & Care and Tonic Arts. With it, the music has brought joy and connection to many, creating positive experiences in times of challenge and pain.

Around a third of this music took place as part of the weekly 'jam sessions' at Royal Edinburgh Mental Health Hospital in The Hive, which have been running for over ten years. It is an activity space in the hospital grounds that patients from all wards can access.

The space is set out with musical instruments including a drum kit, guitars, bass guitars, ukuleles and microphones for singing. Each chair in the space also has some hand-held percussion instruments for anyone who wants to play along from their seat. Patients and staff are encouraged to join the musician to perform a song of their choice. Staff and patients have worked hard to create a positive and supportive environment and the music is well attended with many coming every week during their hospital stay.

One patient from the Orchard Clinic, a medium secure unit, started attending the jam sessions on a regular basis. Staff noticed that he was quite anxious and didn't have a lot of self-confidence but had taken an interest in the live music. After attending a few times and observing the music, he approached staff and asked to perform with the musician but stated that he didn't want to be left to sing or play by himself as he didn't have



the confidence to do that. Rachel Bais, a Café Worker at The Hive, explained that he was a very accomplished singer and guitarist but lacked the confidence needed to perform on his own.

The musician Charlie Gorman used his gently supportive approach to motivate him to perform, slowly encouraging him to take the lead. Gradually, returning each week, he began to sing and play guitar by himself. Rachel said "You could see his confidence growing and his anxieties going away when he was performing because it was just him in that moment."

After recognising his talent and the how much his confidence had grown, staff decided to invite the patient to perform at Hivest, a festival held in the hospital grounds for the wider hospital community and open to the public. The patient successfully performed by himself to an audience of 150 people. This patient has since been discharged and Rachel hopes he is doing something music related as he certainly has the skills, and now the confidence to do so.

Leave a legacy of live music

"It meant so much to Dad to hear the music whilst he was in hospital. It was such a marvellous, magical moment and we wanted others to benefit like we did." Elizabeth Potter, whose father Michael left a gift in his Will

You could make a difference for years to come by leaving a gift in your will. Contact Sarah Gipps on **07428 046300** or **SarahG@mihc.org.uk** to chat about how your legacy could create lasting memories for children and adults through the healing power of live music.



Sharing learning in Northern Ireland

Last year we embarked on a three year project with two health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland to explore regular programmes of live music and the benefits this can have for patients and staff.

Sharing live music on a regular basis builds meaningful relationships between our professional musicians, our health and care partners, and the people they support. It helps our musicians to understand the needs and preferences of those who take part. This approach also allows us to evaluate the impact of music in over a period of time, working towards embedding live music as a vital part of people's health and social care.

During the first year of the project we have worked with the Arts in Health Manager at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, and the Health & Wellbeing Manager at Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

20 hours of live music have been shared so far across four hospital settings for older people living with dementia and adults with drug and alcohol problems. One patient said that they had the "best day, all I did was laughed and smiled" and another said that it "made my anxiety reduce. It was good for my mood and made me relaxed."

The live music has also been beneficial for staff, with many saying it increased communication and interaction on the wards and improved their mental health and wellbeing.

"We as staff value the session. It validates our worth, and undoubtedly brings pleasure and happiness for the remainder of the day. Listening to some of the very skilled musicians is also soothing and relaxing, not just for patients but for staff. It gives time out from a busy day, allowing you to get lost in the music."

Staff member at Holywell Hospital, Antrim

Regular supporters help to keep the music playing



Set up a regular donation today. £5 a month for a year could mean three children in hospital can experience live music to develop their communication skills and make them feel better. Visit mihc.org.uk/donate to get started.

If you already donate regularly, thank you - we are so grateful for your support. Look out for news about our lottery in the next couple of months for a great way to get involved, give regularly and win prizes as you support.

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If you would prefer not to receive our newsletter please get in touch with us at the above address to let us know. We value your support and would like to keep you informed of how you can help share the healing power of live music.

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