



Last month Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge was transformed for Diwali with sparkling lights and candles. We were delighted to celebrate with patients, families, staff and our musician Shem Jarrold, who has been sharing live music with us in the South of England since 2014.

Shem spent the day filling the hospital with the soothing sounds of the Sarangi, a South Asian stringed instrument. The music in wards, waiting areas, and at a special staff event, invited colleagues, patients and visitors to pause and connect.

Akua Obeng-Frimpong, Arts Producer at Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, explains: "We bring live music to the wards and in the public spaces at Addenbrooke's on a monthly basis. One of the things I notice is that it's never expected.

That moment of surprise, curiosity and wonder I think is always amazing to observe. We're not art therapy providers, but we recognise that there are huge therapeutic benefits to the work that we deliver. Music in itself can help to calm people, distract them from pain.

Our Diwali event is really about acknowledging the diversity of the staff, giving staff an opportunity to take time for themselves, have something nice to eat, and participate in a creative activity."

The Diwali celebration brought a happy and uplifting atmosphere to the hospital, with Shem's live music spreading joy and a little extra warmth for the Festival of Lights.

"Music is a form of communication that doesn't require language or a particular prescribed response," says Shem. "So there are lots of ways to engage with it. I think it creates a space in which people have permission to communicate in non-standard ways.

These events are much more immediate. They're community based in feel, and there's less of a divide between performers and audience."

The Sarangi, known for its soulful, vocal quality, beautifully complemented the spirit of Diwali - a festival celebrating light, hope, and new beginnings. The sounds created a moment of cultural connection and reflection, warmly received by everyone who experienced it.

Our impact

2023/24

2,324
hours of live
music shared
across the UK,
reaching over
36,360
people

1,317
in hospitals

563
in care homes

60
in hospices

384
in the community



Around
850,000
people are living with
dementia in the UK



11,565
people experienced
live music in a
dementia setting



Around
200,000
people are admitted to intensive
care units every year

8,812
people experienced live music
while facing a serious illness
such as cancer, a stroke or in
an intensive care unit



1 in 4
people experience
mental health
problems each year



7,500
people experienced
live music in a mental
health setting



Live music can
decrease pain in
serious illness by
27%

80%
of parents
in neonatal care
said that Lullaby
Hour helped
them feel relaxed



It is estimated
12.5%
of NHS staff
are leaving
their roles



The cost of
recruiting a
trained nurse
can be up to
£12,000



6,970+
staff
experienced
live music



90%
of staff had a
better working
day because of
the live music



69%
said it helped to
improve their
own emotional
wellbeing

8,480+
people experienced
live music to support
their wellbeing



We work with
352
professional
musicians

345
hours of staff
training completed



84%
of staff felt the
right amount of
information was
shared at monthly
all team catch ups



Hours of live music
through the decades:
22 hours
of live music in 1947

312 hours
of live music in 1960

3,649 hours
of live music in 1993

In 1977 Sylvia Lindsay's daughter
Elizabeth conducted a survey of
12 mental health hospitals on the
benefits of the live music:



73%
liked joining in



91%
enjoyed just listening



24%
said it made them
feel peaceful

This year's live music experiences were shared by:

70%
Soloists

28%
Duos

2%
Trios

Since 1947, people and live music have been at the heart of Music in Hospitals & Care. 2023/24 was no exception as we celebrated 75 years of joy through live music and everyone who has supported us along the way. Together we have shared 2,324 hours of live music in thousands of places reaching over 36,360 people.

The positive impact of live music continues to be seen every day. "Patients and staff smile easier, look less stressed and feel hopeful within themselves. For a person's mental health and wellbeing, it is medication in itself," said a staff member at Antrim Hospital in Northern Ireland.

Read more in our latest annual report at mihc.org.uk/ar-23-24.



Festive fundraising

As we approach December it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! Below are some dates for your diary and ways you can get involved around the UK to help share the healing power of live music:



Wednesday 11 December

Join the wonderful Companies House choir at St David's Shopping Centre in Cardiff for some fun festive tunes between 1 and 2pm.



Sunday 22 December

We will be gathering under the twinkling lights of the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree once again to sing and fundraise from 2 til 3pm.



Double your donation Tuesday 3 to Tuesday 10 December!



We're excited to share that we have been successful for the Big Give Christmas campaign taking place in December. Make double the difference when you donate between **midday on 3 December and midday on 10 December** through Big Give's match funding. This means twice the amount raised to help share the healing power of live music with seriously ill children and adults. Please visit mihc.org.uk/christmas-appeal-2024 for more information.

Warming up to winter in Edinburgh

On Friday 1 November we hosted our annual Winter Warmer event at Murrayfield Parish Church. Over 100 people gathered on a cold and rainy night to hear our musicians James Dinsmore (singer) and Matthew Brown (pianist), who have each been sharing live music with us for over 25 years. The programme also included James Paige with Movements from Bach's Cello Concerto and bagpiper Hector Robinson. After the music there was an opportunity for some early Christmas shopping with festive stalls from local businesses.

Our musicians visit the church regularly to share live music with Murrayfield dementia group, who we were delighted to welcome at the event. We would like to thank all of our volunteers who helped to make it another fantastic Winter Warmer.



Join us at **John Lewis Edinburgh on Saturday 30 November between 2 and 3pm** to jingle bell rock with some classic Christmas hits from the Throwback Choir!



Musician Spotlight: Bernie Fawcett

Our diverse community of professional musicians play an instrumental role in helping us achieve our mission to create connections and shared, meaningful live music experiences for people in hospitals and care.

We work with over 300 musicians, including some who have been with us for many years and have seen lots of changes to popular music, health and care settings and the charity over the decades.

Singer and guitarist Bernie Fawcett has been working with us in the North of England and North Wales since 2015. Bernie began his musical career playing at weddings, wine bars and on cruise ships, but has found sharing live music with hospital patients and care home residents most rewarding - and a great way to communicate with people.

“Like meditation or prayer, music can transport people to a different place, a happy place. I think everybody enjoys music. It’s a good feeling. It brings people together and can change lives,” says Bernie, who has witnessed first-hand the emotional responses that live music can evoke.

“Occasionally you see people crying or tapping and singing along. You notice with some dementia patients that they know the words – it triggers a memory. Music is really about communication, which is the important thing. As a performer, it’s about the people. We’re just a vehicle to help them get to a good place.”



Bernie regularly visits two mental health services for older adults in Liverpool – Leigh Moss Hospital and Heys Court. He says of his recent live music experiences there for World Mental Health Day: “I felt as though they were very engaged. People have told me that they really enjoy the music and you can see by them singing along to the well-known songs.

I think music has the ability to carry people through tough times, especially those struggling with mental health. It’s like a therapy – a place of solace and reflection. Music can help people find peace.”

You can find out more about our musicians at mihc.org.uk/our-people/musicians.

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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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