

New Study Finds Music & Memory Program Reduces Distressed Behavior and Decreases Need for Antipsychotic Medication in Dementia Patients

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In the most comprehensive study of its kind on the effects of the Music & Memory program, researchers from the [Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC](#)

[Davis](#) found that personalized music is associated with a reduction in the amount of antipsychotic medication taken by nursing home residents and fewer distressed behaviors. The results are published in the [Journal for Post-acute and Long-term Care Medicine \(JAMDA\)](#)

The three-year study of 4,107 residents in 265 California nursing homes found the use of antipsychotic drugs declined by 13% and anti-anxiety medications declined by 17% each quarter for residents with dementia using the music program. The odds of depressive symptoms decreased 16% per quarter and the odds of reported pain decreased 17% per quarter. In addition, the number of days on medications declined by 30% and aggressive behaviors reduced by 20%.

“This Study provides further evidence of the positive impact personalized music programs can have for those with Alzheimer’s disease and dementia – not only on improved quality of life but also on the cost and quality of caring,” said Concetta M. Tomaino, DA, LCAT, MT-BC, Music & Memory Board Member, and Executive Director and co-founder of the [Institute for Music and Neurologic Function](#).



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In Texas, a statewide effort including the use of Music & Memory led to decreased use of antipsychotic drugs in nursing facilities by 58 percent – more than any other state, according to a [report](#) from the National Partnership

to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes. Texas first launched Music & Memory in 2015 as a pilot program in nursing facilities and at HHSC’s state supported living centers and Austin State Hospital in 2016. Since then, more than 1,000 nursing homes across Texas have taken part in the HHSC Music & Memory program.

Given the size of the study and the overwhelming evidence that personalized music reduces negative outcomes, it’s now more clear than ever that adoption of the Music & Memory program contributes to positive outcomes and quality of care for those living with Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia and cognitive loss.

Music & Memory will continue to provide updates on the impact of this study and others like it, as well as share how successful this approach has been (all over the US and several countries). Those interested in supporting Music & Memory, please visit our website: musicandmemory.org. For more information, please contact info@musicandmemory.org.