

Live Music In Children's Hospitals and the impact on children, parents and staff

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Evaluation Methods

81 survey respondents (40 parents, 35 health care staff, 6 patients – 66 women and 15 men) took part at Nottingham Queen's Medical Centre and Leicester Royal Infirmary

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected about children's wellbeing, parents'/carers' wellbeing, staff's wellbeing and whether there should be more of this activity available.

Informal interviews with staff and parents were carried out when possible. Photos and video clips of the music activities were taken/recorded where consent was obtained.

*"Chilled me out (didn't think I was in hospital), reminds of "normal life".
(parent/carer, aged 46-55, woman)"*

*"This should be in all hospitals
(parent/carer, aged 26-35, woman)"*

*"I find these activities very calming for worried, bored and agitated children.
It should be a more frequent activity.
(Health Care Assistant, aged 26-35, woman)"*

*"My child was crying, but stopped
and fell asleep to their music
(parent/carer, 26-35, woman)"*

*"It's nice to see all the kids enjoy their music, they
calm the whole ward down. (parent/carer, aged
26-35, woman)"*

*"I was very unsure when I first heard about the musicians but WOW they are
absolutely fantastic! The noise level on the unit during and after the musicians have
been is drastically reduced and remains so for many hours. The staff, parents and
patients (if they are able) all have big smiles on their faces. The musicians are very
sensitive to our environment and the needs of our patients and adjust their choice of
music accordingly. I may be their biggest champion and cannot rate them highly
enough. I have thoroughly enjoyed their visits and have observed heart rates + blood
pressures drop to within normal limits. Parents' shoulders drop as they relax for
the first time in days.
(Senior Sister, aged 36-45)"*

Introduction

20% of children in the UK attend accident and emergency departments at some point in their lives. It has been suggested that perhaps as many as 60% of children are negatively affected when they are in hospitals (Roberts 2010), where some of the effects seen have been separation anxiety, fear of hospitals and doctors, nightmares and aggression towards authority.

Live music in hospitals in America and Europe has increased over the last 10 years. Studies have shown that hearing and/or taking part in music sessions helps children and their families focus their attention external to the illness (Preti & Welch 2004 & 2011; Preti & Schubert 2011). The emotional qualities of music can also reduce the effects of trauma and facilitate coping strategies for difficult environments (Naylor et al 2011).

OPUS Music Community Interest Company (OPUS), a group of professional musicians, have been playing live music in hospitals in Derby and Sheffield since 2010, and in Nottingham, Leicester and at Kings Mill hospital since 2012.

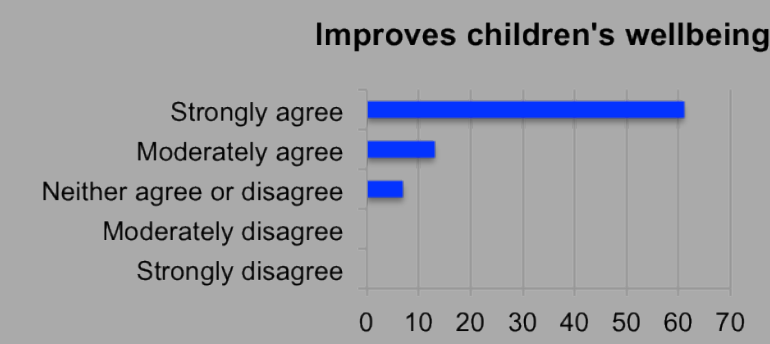
Aims

- To explore the impact of OPUS live music in hospital settings
- To evaluate the project in support of further funding and the expansion into other children's units

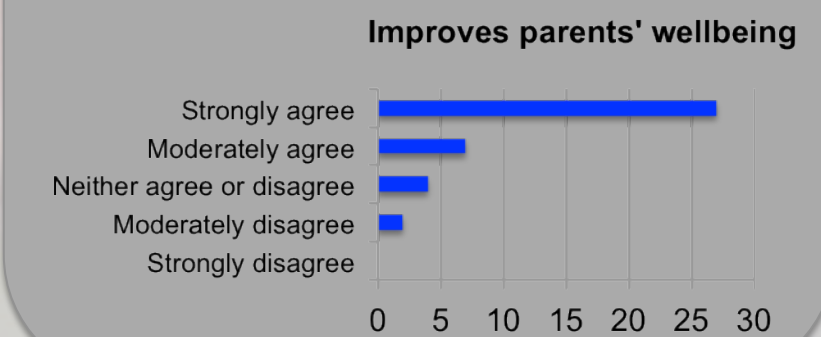
Conclusion

The results suggest that music helped to distract children from illness, enhanced their relaxation, provided stimulation, learning opportunities and gave them an opportunity to momentarily be in control of their environment. Given that a lack of control has been linked to negative effects of hospitalisation in children (Coyne & Livesley 2010), it is possible that this is one way in which music functions and can have positive effects on children's wellbeing.

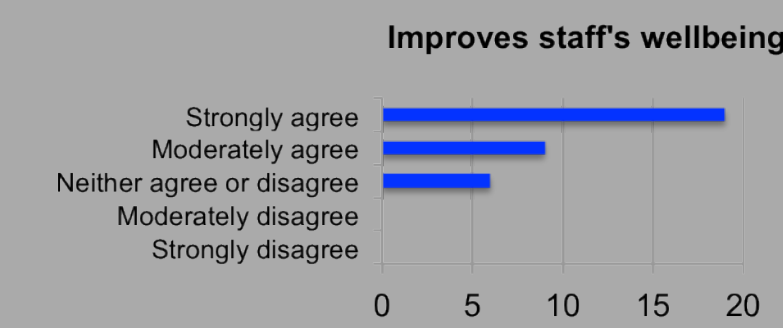
Children's Wellbeing



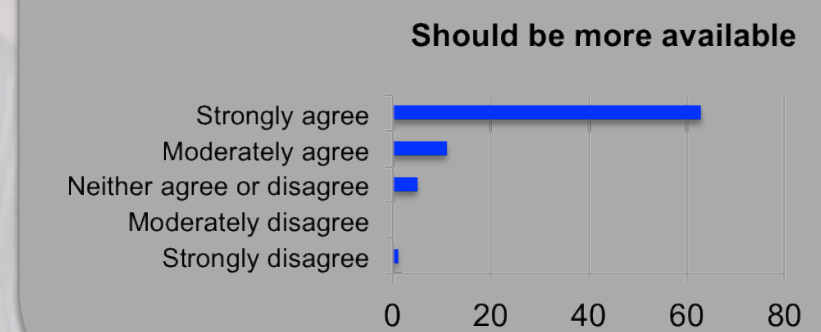
Parents'/Carers' Wellbeing



Staff's Wellbeing



Whether there should be more available



OPUS Musicians are:

Nick Cutts – Piano, Guitar, Bassoon, Voice
Richard Kensington – Percussion, Ukulele, Voice
Sarah Matthews – Violin, Viola, Percussion, Voice
Oli Matthews – Saxophones, Clarinet, Melodeon, Cajon



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