



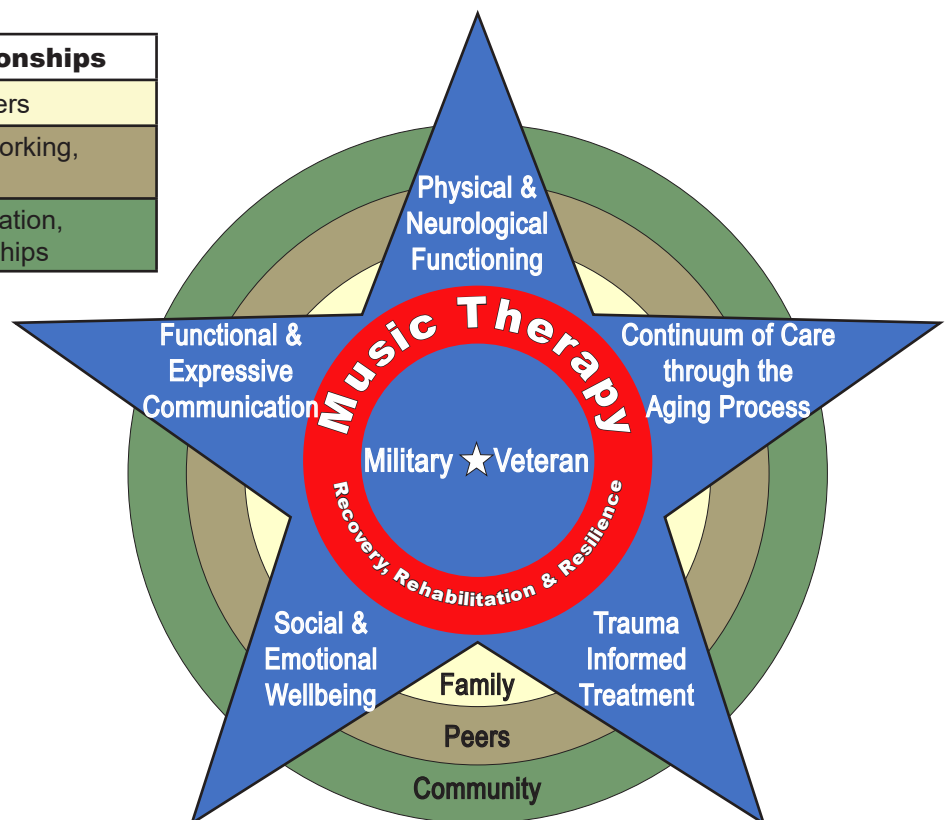
Music Therapy with Military Service Members and Veterans

Music therapy services for military service members and Veteran populations integrate a broad range of evidence-based clinical music interventions to facilitate whole health creative arts treatment aimed at recovery, rehabilitation, and social wellbeing (AMTA, 2014). This is accomplished through board-certified music therapists who work in the Departments of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities as well as community clinics across the United States (Gooding & Langston, 2019). Board-certified music therapists provide inpatient, outpatient, and telehealth services to individuals and groups of military-connected populations from across military service branches (i.e., Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, National Guard/Reserves) including families and dependents (Vaudreuil et al., 2020b). Military and Veteran populations include people with diverse identities, experiences, cultural backgrounds, and service eras that span the World Wars (1914-1918; 1939-1945), Korea (1950-1953), Vietnam (1960- 1975), Persian Gulf (1990- 1991), the Global War on Terrorism (2001-present), and other conflicts.

BENEFITS OF MUSIC THERAPY WITH MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

There is a myriad of benefits to music therapy services that bolster recovery, rehabilitation, and resilience with military and Veteran populations across treatment domains (e.g., physiological, neurological, psychological, social), as indicated below.

Music Therapy Impacts Relationships
Immediate, Extended, Caregivers
Peer to Peer, Group Support, Networking, Camaraderie, Friendships
Engagement, Transition, Reintegration, Return to Work/Military, Partnerships





MUSIC THERAPY INTERVENTIONS WITH MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

Music therapy interventions have shown to be effective in treating individuals, groups, and families in the capacities of in-person and telehealth sessions within the DoD and VA healthcare systems (Vaudreuil et al., 2020b; Spooner et al., 2019). It is important to note that some adaptations may be needed to accommodate telehealth; however this should not affect the provision of services. Additionally, there may be broad discernment between areas of care (i.e., DoD, VA) due to the nature of each populations' demographics.

MUSIC THERAPY INTERVENTIONS USED WITH MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

ACTIVE MUSIC THERAPY INTERVENTIONS

Instrumental Music Making – using traditional or non-traditional instruments to create sound

Improvisation – creating impromptu, spontaneous melody, harmony, or accompaniment

Structured – recreating pre-composed music from notation, lyric sheets, or verbal facilitation

Vocal Music Making – intonation, articulation, singing, breathing, and respiratory exercises

Songwriting – creating and producing lyrical and/or instrumental content within a structured format (Bradt et al., 2019)

Therapeutic Performance – presentation of one or more creative arts mediums for an audience

RECEPTIVE MUSIC THERAPY INTERVENTIONS

Music Listening – using live or recorded music to intentionally stimulate auditory processing

Lyric Analysis – using lyrics to facilitate therapeutic processing of lived experiences

Music-Assisted Relaxation – purposeful application of music to promote a relaxed state

Active Music-Assisted Relaxation – direct engagement of patients in music-based relaxation processes as facilitated by the music therapist

Passive Music-Assisted Relaxation – consumption of music-based stimuli without patient engagement in further behavioral responses, which can be supported by music therapist via verbal guidance or instrumental accompaniment conscious and unconscious contents (Austin, 1996)

Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music – a music-centered depth approach to transformational therapy that uses selected sequences of classical music to support the generation of and movement through inner experiences. The Bonny Method requires additional certification to inform intentional selection of music sequences to stimulate journeys of the imagination (Grocke et al., 2015)



ACTIVE AND RECEPTIVE MUSIC THERAPY APPROACHES

Music-Assisted Sensory Stimulation

– pairing music or sound with sensory processing in the domains of vision, olfactory, tactile, and/or proprioceptive senses

Neurologic Music Therapy – a research-based system of 20 standardized clinical techniques for sensorimotor, speech and language, cognitive, and psychosocial training. NMT requires additional certification (Thaut & Hoemberg, 2014)

Psychodynamic Music Therapy – a creative process that utilizes music and words within a patient/ therapist relationship to facilitate an ongoing dialogue

Music-Assisted Reminiscence – intentional selection and use of familiar music to facilitate therapeutic engagement of integral, remote, and/or pleasant memories

Music and Movement – using live or recorded music to facilitate movement responses

Community Engagement – reinforcing the clinic-to-community continuum towards the end of treatment and/or supporting the transition from active duty to veteran status. Examples include community-based engagement such as performance or attending a concert (Vaudreuil et al., 2019b)

OTHER APPROACHES

Psychoeducation – building awareness of musical tools and resources for independent symptom management (Bronson et al., 2018)

Discharge Planning – identifying therapeutic and community resources for ongoing support of the patient and/or family, as informed by the music therapist and treatment team

GOALS FOR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

Goals for military service members and Veterans are similar to goals of the general population and are dependent upon diagnosis, condition, and needs. A specific goal of military and veteran populations is to successfully transition between stages of military service, discharge, and integration into civilian life.



Other treatment goals include:

- ◆ Strengthening interpersonal skills
- ◆ Building and utilizing regulation, resilience, and coping skills
- ◆ Increasing self-awareness and self-expression
- ◆ Improving/maintaining cognition, communication, and physicality
- ◆ Developing/utilizing non-pharmacological pain management skills
- ◆ Developing/enhancing individual and community musical leisure pursuits

Potential Contraindications:

- ◆ Heightened physical and/or auditory sensitivity (e.g., nerve or musculoskeletal pain, tinnitus, headaches/migraines, seizures)
- ◆ Trauma-related emotional associations (e.g., past/present, general live events, prior and/or current service experience)
- ◆ Significant comorbid health issues (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), acute substance use)
- ◆ Use of imagery with individuals who experience diminished reality orientation (e.g., dementia, psychosis)

SUMMARY

Music has been an integral part of the U.S. Armed Forces and has been used ceremonially, on the battlefield, and in early music therapy practices in military and VA hospitals in the post-war era (Francis & Faraone as cited in Vaudreuil, 2022). The profession of music therapy is rooted in working with World War II Veterans to address their behavioral health and rehabilitative needs (Davis & Else, 2019). This created a foundation for the application of music therapy to treat military and Veteran populations through direct comprehensive patient-centered care as well as interdisciplinary collaboration (e.g., creative arts therapists, rehabilitation specialists, behavioral health providers) (Vaudreuil et al., 2019a). Events such as the VA National Veterans Creative Arts Festival empowers service members and Veterans to generalize and transfer goals beyond the clinical setting. The AMTA Code of Ethics provides guidance for working with military and Veteran populations across the continuum of clinical treatment and community reintegration with special considerations to the use of technology as part of clinical interventions including telehealth services (AMTA, 2019).



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What is AMTA?

The American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) represents 10,000 music therapists, corporate members, and related associations worldwide. AMTA is committed to the advancement of education, training, professional standards, and research in support of the music therapy profession. AMTA establishes criteria for the education and clinical training of music therapists. Professional members of AMTA adhere to a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice in the delivery of music therapy services. AMTA's mission is to advance public knowledge of music therapy benefits and increase access to quality music therapy services. Learn more at www.musictherapy.org.

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