

Allegretto

allegretto | ali gretōl Music adjective & adverb (esp. as a direction) at a fairly brisk tempo.



challenging preconceptions

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Final report:

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Catherine Bray working out with a group of Parkinson's patients in the day hospital at Slough's Upton Hospital. (above)

Art Beyond Belief's Allegretto project has continued to prove a big favourite with patients attending Catherine Bray's physiotherapy sessions for Parkinson's sufferers.

Funded by the Trusthouse Charitable Foundation, the project uses live music so that tempo can be changed to match the gait of the patient. The response has been entirely successful with noticeable improvements in walking ability and strength of stride. It has also been seen to produce a very real sense of *group bonding*. Says Marti Hewitt, former Swiss National high jump and running National Champion "The rhythm has a lot to do with it; when I watch the others, it's clear that it makes a vast difference to the way they walk. I prefer it in a group; it makes you more determined, you feel less inclined to give in to your body ... I love this [Irish] music. I call it *pub music* and it makes you want to *get up and go*. It gets into your soul and bones. The effect is very real, and it's something we should be doing more of." All the patients agree, and support comes from their

partners too, who have taken to sitting in a position that enables them to watch, and listen to the musician. Initially the project took place in the Physiotherapy Room, but was later moved to the more spacious Day Hospital.

Towards the end of the year we had good news when we heard that on 3rd December 2007 the Upton Day Hospital team consisting of Catherine Bray, Sarah Dean and Josie Donohoe won the *Extra Mile Team Award* at a ceremony

hosted by Berkshire East PCT. The award to the team was a popular one, awarded on the grounds of creativity. Indeed the team faced stiff opposition from many more costly projects. Our belief is that the music generates a real feel-good sensation that permeates the ward, and the corridors beyond so that the project had a great deal of goodwill. The team themselves were delighted of course.

Marti Hewitt, "I call it *pub music*, and it makes you want to *get-up-and-go*. It gets into your soul and bones." (Below)



Catherine's application to East Berkshire PCT for the Extra Mile Award was as follows:

"Since July 2007 I have been working on a creative innovative project in partnership with Art Beyond Belief. I am a senior physiotherapist at Upton Hospital and in May 2007 I was asked to start a new exercise class for patients with Parkinson's disease. I designed a format for the class based on an evidence-based programme from the PD society and included the use of equipment such as gym balls, and Tai Chi sessions.

"I had previously had contact with Art Beyond Belief, an organisation which produces innovative projects in healthcare settings, during their Music into Upton project and discussed with them my idea of using live music for walking practice with my Parkinsons patients. Patients with this condition have problems initiating their gait, and with the rhythm and fluency of their walking. Trials such as the 'RESCUE 2007' have shown that '... cueing training may be a useful

therapeutic adjunct to the overall management of gait disturbance in Parkinson's disease. Rhythmical cues such as tones given at a steady beat are also useful. These can be given with a metronome or alternatively by using music with the appropriate rhythm to step in time to'. Following discussion with Art Beyond Belief it was agreed to provide 30 minute sessions with a live musician at the classes so that patients can practice walking at a tempo that suits their needs. I am assisted by my two physiotherapy technicians who contribute to the planning of the sessions and provide additional support to those patients with more severe mobility impairments. Sessions are videoed to enable me to fully analyse the effect of the music on walking training and as a means of evidence in gaining further funding. Staff, patients and their carers have been very enthusiastic about the project with patients commenting:

'The music is a very good idea. It makes you feel better.'

'The music definitely improves my steps.'

'The whole session is uplifting.'

"I have observed that the use of music facilitates social participation and peer support, while improved physical ability leads to gains in confidence and independence. The Upton Day Hospital Team feel that they go the 'extra mile' to ensure our patients are walking that 'extra mile', step by step to the beat of the music."

The local Parkinson's Disease Society also donated money for equipment, so the project has been an excellent PR vehicle as well as being of considerable benefit to the patients.

In January this year, the key figure

(Below) The Upton Day Hospital team: (left - right) Sarah Dean, Catherine Bray, and Josie Donohoe, who "...ensure our patients are walking that 'extra mile', step by step to the beat of the music."



in the musical side of the project, Frank Doherty, took up the offer of a job in Ireland; by the end of the month, he had relocated - leaving a Six foot Six inch hole in the project. Big Frank had been with Art Beyond Belief during the original *Music into Upton* (Hospital) project, and there was no doubt that people from all backgrounds and cultures responded to his music, and also to the man himself, a gentle giant of a man who always had a word of encouragement for everyone he met. Often, at the end of a session, Frank would take out his guitar and sit with the group singing songs with which they would inevitably join in.



(Above) - People from all backgrounds and cultures responded to Frank's music. Big Frank Doherty with Catherine and the team after Frank's final session. (below)



We have been very fortunate to find a replacement for Frank in Natalia Czerska. Originally from Poland, Natalia is in her final year at the Royal College of Music. Natalia has been able to bring a different kind of music and the patients have been very understanding of the difficult nature of the change. At first, Natalia found it difficult to *just play* to a rather unusual audience whose anticipation was for *something to walk to*. Due to exams, Natalia has sometimes had to arrange for a colleague to



Frank Doherty is joined by Natalia Czerska in an after-session singalong after Frank's last session (above). Right - Frank and Parkinson's patient Harold Aubrey Powell, a devoted fan of Frank and his music. Natalia (bottom left) prepares before a session...

stand in. So it is that we have met Julia and Lucas (both from the RSM) who have brought their own charms to the sessions. The effect the musicians have on the patients is, of course our main concern, but the recent inclusion of young gifted musicians has prompted the question "What effect do the patients have on the musicians?" I am delighted to say that it is something they have enjoyed, and something that has given a little more humanity to their music. Who would have envisaged Parkinson's patients walking to the Can-can from Offenbach's 'Orpheus in the Underworld'?

The benefits to patients, staff and the community are self evident. Our thanks to the Trusthouse Charitable Foundation for enabling us to pilot this wonderful project.

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