Music & Memory Evaluation

Study by Jung Kwak and Michael Brondino, associate professors of social work.

During 2014-15, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services is rolling out the Music & Memory Program to more than 100 nursing homes throughout Wisconsin.

Our school has received funding to evaluate this program.
The following slide show will be amended over time, keeping up with our evaluation and the results.

Here’s what you can view now.

- Introduction to the Music & Memory Evaluation
- A sample research day at Lasata Care Center
- Our undergraduate student researchers
  - Media coverage
  - Team members
  - Funding
  - Contacts

Come back later for...

- Preliminary research results (fall 2014)
- Final research results (spring 2015)
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

Can simply listening to one’s favorite songs improve memory, mood and quality of life for the 5 million people with dementia in the United States alone?
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

Do people with dementia who listen to their favorite songs require less anti-depressives and anti-anxiety medications?
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

When they listen to their favorite music are they more likely to communicate? To recover some of their humanity?
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

These are some of the questions UWM researchers and undergraduate students started to answer in 2014 in the nation’s most comprehensive evaluation of the increasingly popular Music & Memory program.
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

The New-York based Music & Memory program uses personalize music playlists delivered on iPods to nursing home residents with dementia. Nursing home staff who have witness it have described it as magical. However, until the UWM study it has not been rigorously tested.
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

The study is being done in conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services as they roll out Music & Memory to nursing homes statewide.
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

My name is Jung Kwak. I’m an associate professor of social work at UWM’s Helen Bader School of Social Welfare and co-principal investigator of this evaluation along with Associate Professor Michael Brondino. I am bringing the study to Wisconsin nursing homes and gathering data. Later, Professor Brondino and I will interpret the data.
Introduction to Music & Memory Evaluation

Join me, Wisconsin caregivers and UWM undergraduate students as we start to answer the question: Can simply listening to one’s favorite songs improve memory, mood and quality of life for the 5 million people with dementia in the United States alone?
This is Lasata Care Center, in Cedarburg, Wisconsin. It is one of ten nursing homes who have partnered with us to investigate the Music & Memory Program.

In the summer of 2014, we began to intensively follow 60 nursing home residents at these sites.
We are at Lasata in large part because of Angela Tomasino, inservice director. Two years prior, at a healthcare worker conference, Tomasino saw a YouTube video of a nursing home resident named Henry, who became animated and talkative as he listened to his personal, favorite music.
Back at Lasata, Tomasino played this YouTube video of Henry for the department heads during a board meeting. “We have to do this,” she told them.
Tomasino and Kathi Roberts, activity therapy director, brought in two iPods for residents. Meanwhile, something caught their eye—the State of Wisconsin was looking for partners for a clinical study of the Music & Memory Program. Lasata was on board immediately.
When we arrive at Lasata, Holly Neuman, an undergraduate UWM student, teaches the care staff how to use a study device called an accelerometer.
She explains that residents in the study wear the accelerometers on their wrists and that the device records movements, most importantly agitated movements associated with anxiety.
Later, we monitor the care staff as they place the accelerometers on the wrist of the five residents in our study. We remind them, for example, to shake the device ten times before putting it on, and always remove it when bathing.
Meanwhile, John Fennimore, a UWM undergraduate student, works with care staff and me to carefully review patient records. We will do this four times during the study, creating snapshots of each study participant’s medication use over time.
We also directly observe residents during their normal days, noting their social engagements and challenging behaviors.
Sample Research Day at Lasata Care Center

It’s been a fast-paced day for everyone...
Sample Research Day at Lasata Care Center

...and while it was a lot of work, we enjoyed it.

We’ll return to Lasata several more times for data collection.
Our Undergraduate Student Researchers

UWM undergraduate students have been critical in this study. Students have come from several disciplines including nursing, pre-med and psychology.
Our Undergraduate Student Researchers

Student like Holly Neuman, who is studying nursing...
Our Undergraduate Student Researchers

...and John Fennimore, a psychology student, are just two of the 300 undergraduates at UWM who each year participate in paid research such as mine. It is usually an eye-opening experience for students, who are anxious for real-life experiences.
Our Undergraduate Student Researchers

In surveys conducted by UWM’s Office of Undergraduate Research—the office that matches students to the most appropriate research and pays their stipends—almost every student researcher would encourage others to take advantage of such an opportunity.
Media Coverage

Associated Press (video)
October 30, 2014
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVgeNL6qbFs

Associated Press (print)
October 30, 2014
http://bigstory.ap.org/article/eb6a7d92dc5042acaed8d2bfecf2e08/wisconsin-studies-music-and-memory-program

UWM Homepage
October 30, 2014
http://www5.uwm.edu/news/2014/10/30/a-lot-is-riding-on-uwms-comprehensive-study-of-music-memory/#.VFKFxBYIqSo

Milwaukee Magazine
September 2014
Sound Prescription: A groundbreaking local study analyzes the effects of music on our memories

Green Bay Gazette
September 4, 2014
Music reignites memories

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
August 11, 2014
Music & Memory program brightens lives of Alzheimer’s, dementia patients

USA Today
July 17, 2014
Music ignites lost memories in ‘good-news’ film

WUWM
June 12, 2014
If you had dementia, what songs would be on your playlist?
Our Team Members

Co-Principal Investigator: Jung Kwak, PhD, Associate Professor, Social Work, UWM’s Helen Bader School of Social Welfare

Co-Principal Investigator: Mike Brondino, PhD, Associate Professor, Social Work, UWM’s Helen Bader School of Social Welfare

Investigator: Ann Swartz, PhD, Associate Professor, Kinesiology, UWM’s College of Health Sciences

Project Director: Katharine Oconnell-Valuch, MA, UWM’s Center for Aging and Translational Research

Undergraduate Student Assistants

Holly Neuman (senior, Menomonee Falls, WI) Nursing

John Fennimore (sophomore, Milwaukee) Psychology

Samantha Ratzlaff (sophomore, Appleton, WI) Sociology

Priscilla Kennedy (senior, Elm Grove, WI) Biological Sciences

Graduate Student Assistant

Whitney Allegra Welch (doctoral student) Human Movement Sciences
Thank you to our supporters

- The Claude Pepper Center at Florida State University
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- Milwaukee County Department of Family Care
- UWM’s Office of Undergraduate Research

If you are interested in helping to fund this research

Please contact Richard Kessler, Development Director, UWM’s Helen Bader School of Social Welfare

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Thank you for your interest. We hope you check back or contact us directly. There’s much more ahead in this groundbreaking study of a program that aims to help millions of people with dementia.