

# Music therapy may work where other treatments have failed

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A randomized controlled study published in the current issue of *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* has investigated the role of music therapy in the mental health of patients.

Music therapy (MT) has been shown to be efficacious for [mental health](#) care clients with various disorders such as schizophrenia, depression and [substance abuse](#). Referral to MT in clinical practice is often based on other factors than diagnosis.

The study aimed to examine the effectiveness of resource-oriented MT for mental health care clients with low motivation for other therapies. This was a pragmatic parallel trial. In specialised centres in Norway, Austria and Australia, 144 adults with non-organic mental disorders and low therapy motivation were randomised to 3 months of biweekly individual, resource-oriented MT plus treatment as usual (TAU) or TAU alone.

TAU was typically intensive (71% were inpatients) and included the best combination of therapies available for each participant, excluding MT. Blinded assessments of the Scale for the Assessment of Negative Symptoms (SANS) and 15 secondary outcomes were collected before randomisation and after 1, 3 and 9 months.

Changes were analysed on an intention-to-treat basis using generalised estimating equations in longitudinal linear models, controlling for diagnosis, site and time point. MT was superior to TAU for total

negative symptoms (SANS,  $d = 0.54$ ,  $p$  mental health care clients with low motivation.

**More information:** Gold C. et al. Individual Music Therapy for Mental Health Care Clients with Low Therapy Motivation: Multicentre Randomised Controlled Trial, *Psychother Psychosom* 2013;82:319-331, DOI: [10.1159/000348452](https://doi.org/10.1159/000348452)

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