

Music Therapy and Implementation in Services

This full-day conference brings together leading experts from the *International Consortium of Music Therapy*, including representatives from the **University of Bergen** (Norway), **Norwegian Academy of Music** (Norway), **University of Melbourne** (Australia), **University of Jyväskylä** (Finland), **Anglia Ruskin University** (UK), **Temple University** (USA) and **Aalborg University** (Denmark).

Registration scheme (Registration deadline: October 29 at 3pm)

Participants will explore the latest developments in music therapy and its integration into diverse service contexts — from redefining therapists’ roles in disability care, to pioneering work in dementia, mental health, and addiction services, as well as advances in improvisational techniques and collaborative practice. Through keynote talks, research presentations, and discussions, attendees will gain valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in implementing effective, evidence-based music therapy across clinical and community settings.

Organizing committee: Viggo Krüger, Simon Gilbertson, Eva Vukich and Maren Metell.

Date: 05.11.2025

Time: 09:00 - 16:00

Location: Knud Knaus, Møllendalsveien 61, KMD

09:00 - 09:40: Katrina Skewes McFerran, University of Melbourne, Australia

Reconceiving the role of music therapists in the disability sector

Dr. McFerran reflects on the differing positions adopted by music therapists in working with adults and children with a range of disabilities over the past two decades, highlighting both the highs and lows.



09:40 - 10:10: Jaakko Erkkilä, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Improvisational Music Psychotherapy – Why? For Whom? On What Basis?

An overview of clinical improvisation as understood in the UJy team’s work, covering teaching, clinical practice, and research.



10:10-1030: Coffee break

10:30-1100: Hanne Mette Ridder, University of Aalborg, Denmark

Research on choir singing and the implementation of Person attuned musical interactions in dementia care in Denmark

Following a BBC concept broadcasting a dementia choir - also carried out in Norway and Germany - Denmark followed with a documentary in 2024. Ridder and colleagues carried out a pilot study on the effect of choir-singing on self-reported embodied cognition for the choir singers with dementia. In the presentation, Ridder will explain the background for choosing Embodied Cognition as an outcome measure. Further, she will present an ongoing research study on how music therapists and carers implement person attuned musical interactions (PAMI) in dementia care in six municipalities in Denmark and unfold the theory guiding the intervention and how the carers work with lived experience descriptions.



11:00 - 11:30: Mike Zanders, Temple University, US

Songs as Psychological Resources for Displaced Youth

Youth with lived experiences of displacement—whether navigating foster systems, experiencing housing insecurity, or impacted by forced migration—carry profound stories of disruption and resilience. For many youths, songs serve as lifelines that preserve cultural identity, foster belonging, and open spaces for expression and empowerment. This presentation explores how songs function as mechanisms of change in music therapy with displaced youth, focusing on identity, emotional processing, connection, and agency. Drawing on clinical and research experiences, Dr. Zanders will examine both the challenges and possibilities of implementing equity-centered services, while grounding practice in music-centered and

culture-centered frameworks. Practical applications, case examples, and reflective narratives will illustrate how songs can both anchor and transform the lives of youth navigating displacement.



11:30-1200: Presentation PhD group CMTP: Chair, Eva Vukich.

Emerging knowledge from doctoral music therapy research: a global snapshot



This presentation introduces the CMTP, an international online network for music therapy doctoral researchers, outlining its recent origin and aims in connecting our diverse community for collaboration, mutual support, and knowledge exchange. Our CMTP representatives invite you on a tour of the exciting new research from this diverse and growing group of research-practitioners.

1200-1300: Lunch

1300-1345: Brynjulf Stige, Johannes Medlien, Kaja Elise Enge and Guro Parr Klyve, Bergen University
Activism, Science, and Collaborative Governance: Polyphonic Processes of Implementation in the Context of the Nordic Model of Society



Can music therapy be made available for every person and community that would benefit from such services? Not this year, probably not in a decade or two either. Is it then even worth trying? Polyfon Knowledge Cluster for Music Therapy works with national authorities, local activists and “everything” in between in the pursuit of a substantial national upscaling of music therapy services. What are the benefits of the walk when the journey is so long? And how does the Nordic Model of Society make things both easier and harder at the same time? The presentation works as an introduction to a roundtable with music therapists who have worked with implementation of music therapy in various services in the Bergen area.

1345-1415: Hans Petter Solli, Norwegian Academy of Music, Norway

Implementing Music Therapy in Norwegian Mental Health and Addiction Services



14:15 - 14:45: Annie Heiderscheit and Jörg Fachner, Angela Ruskin, UK

The use of clinical case study research to support implementation of services

This presentation explores the role of clinical case study research in mental health and addiction treatment.



14:45-1500: Coffee break

15:00 - 15:30: Esa Ala-Ruona, University of Jyväskylä

Participant experiences on elaborated model of integrative improvisational music therapy

Reflections on the iMTDep study involving interviews with participants about integrative improvisational music therapy, music listening, and vibroacoustic stimulation.

