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Patients' and health care providers' perception of and attitudes towards the use of music as therapy in psychiatric hospitals.

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Introduction: Music is a widely utilized form of complementary therapy. Despite the available literature supporting its role in improving concentration and attention span, increase relaxation, social interactions, communication, relationships, learning, mobilization and expression, yet its use in psychiatric clinical settings is still limited. Positive perception and greater understanding of music as therapy may lead to increase use of music, and more opportunities for direct patient care. In this respect, research indicates that if healthcare providers are interested in, and tended to have positive attitudes and perception about Music as Therapy, this will help in the provision of sound medical advice to their patients seeking this option. Little literature explored the patients' and health care providers' perception and attitudes towards the use of music as therapy in psychiatric hospitals as an adjunct medical treatment option. Aim: This study aimed to explore patients' and health care providers' perception and attitudes towards the use of music as therapy in psychiatric hospitals.

Design: The study followed a descriptive research design. Setting: It was conducted at El-Maamoura Hospital for Psychiatric Medicine. Subjects: The study Subjects comprised 130 in-patients with psychiatric disorders and 181 health care providers which included 96 nurses, 63 psychiatrists, 8 psychologist and 14 social workers. Methods: Four tools were used for data collection. The Attitude towards the Use of Music as Therapy Survey, the Psychiatric Health Care Provider's Perception of Music as Therapy Structured Interview Schedule, patient's Perception of Music As Therapy Structured Interview Schedule, and a Socio-Demographic and Clinical Data Sheet were used.

Results: The main results of this study found that 75.1% of the studied health care providers had high knowledge about music as therapy and 81.8% of them had positive perception of music as therapy and of its effectiveness and 70.7% of the studied health care providers had positive attitude towards music as therapy. Additionally, 70.8 % of the studied patients perceived that they could use music as therapy and 66.2% of the studied patients had positive attitude toward music as therapy.

Conclusion: The present study concluded that patients have positive perception and attitude toward music as therapy, in spite of their low knowledge about it. Health care providers have knowledge about music as therapy, they perceive it as helpful in improving patients' condition and they possess positive attitudes towards music as therapy. So the researcher recommended that nurses should assume a more positive role in the implementation of music as therapy. They have to be able to choose the most appropriate time for their patients to listen to music, attend workshops on the use of music as therapy and they should be implemented as part of in-service programs for staff, integrating music as therapy into the nursing and medical curriculum is necessary and psycho-educational programs to develop patients' awareness about music as therapy are needed.

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