

Using music to tackle health inequalities

Live 8: 'I see it all as the biggest
public health ever staged'

Dr Alan Maryon Davis, Public Health News,

Using music to tackle health inequalities

Why use music to engage local people in improving their health?

Music is popular with key target groups

In this section Sunderland continues to be used as an example of a city facing problems of health inequalities.² The Mosaic research also shows that a large proportion of its population have an interest in popular music be it pop or rock. Around a third to a quarter of most of the major subgroups in the city says that they have an interest in pop music. Around 10-15% says the same for rock music. This is not just among young people. Indeed figures are even higher for some specific groups of young people. (See appendices for Mosaic data.)

Non-readers can learn from songs



'Extraordinary how potent cheap music is.'

*Noël Coward*³

Music is a powerful tool. It has been used throughout history by religions, the military, political movements and commerce to influence people. This may partly be because of the problem of literacy in previous generations. However, this problem still exists. According to official figures 16% of the adults in England and 21% of adults in Sunderland have literacy below Level 1 (Level 1 literacy being the equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grade D-G.)⁴ This does not necessarily mean that they cannot read. However, they may give up on anything not written as simply as a tabloid newspaper or magazine. Therefore health education interventions that do not rely on reading ability seem worth considering. Although the language used in particular songs still needs to be appropriate for the intended audience of course.

Some people learn best by hearing information

NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) theory claims that different people learn best in different ways.⁵ Although some people prefer to learn with their eyes, others regardless of their literacy level prefer to use their ears. A third group need to use their bodies. In practice this means that the actual act of writing things down helps them learn. This is regardless of whether they ever look at their notes again. Music may be useful as a tool to reach all three groups of learners. Obviously songs may be a particularly effective way of reaching people who like to hear things. However, musicals with their mixture of visuals and music may be effective for people who need to see things. It would be interesting to research if singing along reinforces learning in the group that need to use their bodies.

Paradoxically, other research shows that people remember

- 10% of what they hear
- 20% of what they read
- 30-40% of what they see
- 60-70% of what they see and hear ⁶

In this case again, perhaps musicals with their mixture of music and live action may be a good tool to develop. (See the subsection on musicals for more information on this.)

Although music then may be useful as a health tool, perhaps it might also need to be backed up by simple to read materials when people need to remember things. This could even be on CD sleeves if the music is in recorded form. Alternatively, live music could be backed up by a recorded version on CD or podcast.

Music works on the head as well as the heart

'Music is something that can give us a focus. But most of all, music is the most powerful tool for expressing emotion that's available to us as human beings.'

Alex Kapranos from the band Franz Ferdinand ⁷

Assumptions that human behaviour is rational are not accurate. In reality people are affected by their emotions as well as logic. Emotions and the unconscious evolved much earlier than logic as a way of making decisions.⁸ Songs with their combination of both the poetry of the lyrics and the sound of the music are powerful ways of triggering feelings. This may be because music mimics the emotional sound of the human voice.⁹ Health workers may be able to use this power in a number of different ways

- As triggers to open people up, so that they are open to talking about health topics. This could be amongst themselves or with health workers
- By using song lyrics to remind people that they are not alone, e.g. other people are also HIV positive
- By using musical events to help create a sense of community
- By showing people how to use music to alter mood e.g. depression or anxiety (See subsection on Music as a mental health promotion tool)
- By using song lyrics to inspire people to change or keep going
- By showing people how to use music as a reminder or affirmation of their positive health choices

Music brands the NHS as approachable

Using music may help the NHS counter Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Fiona Adshead's claim that 'We are the enemy of the people'.¹⁰ It may present an image of the health service that is more human. Show it as an organisation in tune with real people's lives and that can let its hair down to have fun or be moved. If so it would help primary care trusts in their aim to engage with the public.

The media may love music for health

Using music, at least initially, may have novelty value with the media. It may also provide them with interesting 'sound bites' and photo opportunities. Common Knowledge, the Tyne & Wear Health Action Zone arts and health project, found that music for health projects attracted the most media interest of all its projects. ¹¹

As well as press releases about actual projects, perhaps interest could be created by annual awards for health and music. Categories could include most inspiring song about a health topic or the music performer who has done the most for health. This could be for charity work or sharing a health problem publicly etc.



Have you ever gone away humming a leaflet? Music helps brand an organisation or service. Think of all the classical and pop tunes advertisers have adapted over the years. (a)

Health workers also need to be prepared for negativity from some parts of the press. The *Daily Mail* attacked *Prime*, a government funded health magazine that mimicked the format of popular celebrity publications. The paper said that ‘The Health Service is spending millions publishing celebrity magazines. Every year it pays £2million for glossy publications featuring pop stars and actors discussing their views on diets, smoking and even fake tans. Critics said the money should be going to cash-strapped hospitals instead.’¹²

Things to consider about using music

‘Rap and hip-hop is a very powerful way to convey your ideas in a way young people enjoy and understand... We all have some strong beliefs and share a love of this type of music which we use to try and get some strong positive messages across.’

*Amer Sheikh, chemistry teacher and rapper at Thornhill School in Sunderland*¹³

To reach a large audience you need a good product

Most of the popular culture approaches suggested in this report involve experts and an audience. In terms of music, the prime focus is on health education to mass audiences through live performances or CD. Both the songs and their performance need to be of a high quality. Local song writers or community groups may not always be able to consistently produce high quality songs. These need to both give the right message and be catchy and moving. If this proves to be the case it may be easier to use songs that have already been recorded by professional musicians. These can be performed by local

An incomplete history of public health and music part 1

- In the beginning: The human animal makes sounds to maintain contact and bonding between mother and children. Human have an incredible sensitivity to voice and song. This extends to music. Music is about connecting and body rhythm, which meets basic needs and that the brain feels as pleasure. ¹⁴ Prehistoric people use 'songs' in the form of pitch and sound to communicate e.g. a certain noise might mean 'Mind that falling rock!' ¹⁵ The rudiments of accident prevention are invented around the same time.
- Early times onwards: Religion, armies and political movements use music as a way to communicate information and motivate their followers.
- 1878: General Booth forms the Salvation Army. In part a temperance organisation concerned about the dangers of alcohol, the Salvation Army is also involved in medical, educational and social work. Music plays a big part in the Army's proselytising efforts. The General asks 'Why should the devil have all the best tunes?' and asks new lyrics to the melody of music hall songs. ¹⁶
- Nineteenth century: The comic song *Why Should Children Go Into Public House?* helps to lead to a change in the law. ¹⁷
- 1930s and 1940s: Songs about poverty and social change are sung by Woody Guthrie and others in the US. Even establishment writers manage some social comment occasionally e.g. about racism in the musical *South Pacific*.
- Late 1950's: Rock'n'Roll takes off and new attitudes about sex and other issues begin to form. The lower half of Elvis the Pelvis is banned from US TV because of his gyrations. A later commentator says that Elvis is more political than Bob Dylan because of this.
- The 1960's: Music provides the soundtrack to a generation who want to change the world. Political singers like Dylan even impact on the charts.
- 1971: Concert for Bangladesh – Ravi Shankar and George Harrison respond to a political and health crisis in South-east Asia with an all-star benefit fund-raising concert.

musicians or residents if they have the skills. (However, for powerful examples of songs written by amateurs with the help of professionals go to http://www.musicinprisons.org.uk/index.php?page=news_topten .)

There are other ways of using music that would interest public health professionals. These focus not on the audience but the people making the music. For example, youth workers who get young people to write their own songs to explore issues, increase confidence or develop new skills. The finished product may not always be suitable for use as a mass communication tool however. This approach is covered in more detail in later sections. It is important not to confuse the purpose of the different approaches but to concentrate on their different strengths.

10 easy ways to find appropriate songs about health inequality

1. Talk to knowledgeable members of the target audience
2. *'The Green Book of Songs' by Subjects* is a good source of titles.¹⁸ Order it at <http://www.greenbookofsongs.com/order.asp> or through the normal channels.
3. *'Rise Up Singing'* contains song lyrics some of which would interest public health workers.¹⁹ They also produce a series of CDs to teach people the melodies of the songs as well. These can be ordered at <http://www.singout.org/rus.html>
4. People interested in the wider determinants of health could start with the links section of the Centre for Political Song website <http://www.gcal.ac.uk/politicalsong/links/index.html>
5. A simple approach is to put a word that sums up the aim of the project plus the word 'lyrics' in Google.
6. Another idea is to sign up to iTunes, put key words in the power search and see what comes up. The site also has short snatches of all the songs that are on sale. iTunes is on www.apple.com/itunes/download/. The development of iTunes is really helpful for using music as a tool to engage with the public or to combat health inequalities. The US site holds over six million songs.²⁰ In the UK tracks can be downloaded for 79p each. The alternative of course is to have to buy a whole CD to get one track off it. Unfortunately, as yet there are no compilations albums called 'Now That's What I Call Public Health vol.56' or 'The Greatest Health Education Songs in the World...ever 42' (Thought iTunes have assembled their own *Rest In Peace* compilation of around 50 songs about death.)

'If you don't write good music, people aren't going to listen to anything you say. That's something I learnt from Billy Bragg when I met him about 10 years ago.'

Justin Sane from the band Anti-Flag.²¹ It is worth spending time finding the right songs for the target group and the aim of the project.

7. Amazon is a good place to listen to snatches of CDs that might be suitable. The US site on www.amazon.com seems to have a greater selection of tracks to listen to than the UK version.
8. A company called Broadchart have developed Play Time. This is subsidised by the UK government and is aimed at schools. Play Time is available on line. It includes every song from the UK Top 40 since 1952 and the majority of the US Hot 100 chart since

1954. It also has many other tracks too. Schools can access over 3 million recordings for whatever purpose' plus music scores. Depending on the size of the school Play Time costs between £400-900 a year. For more information go to www.broadchart.com Health workers may be able to develop projects with schools that make use of this resource.

9. To find sheet music of appropriate songs try www.sheetmusichound.com

10. Workers could pool their collective knowledge of possible songs and create a national/international database on the web. This could be a wiki – a website where anyone can add to what is already on the site.

(Mobiles can now also be used to identify unknown songs that you hear that are appropriate. Simply hold the phone up to the music as it plays. There are a number of companies that provide this service as long as registration is completed with them first. For example go to www.shazam.com/ and press 'what is shazam?')

Many health topics have been covered in song

There is plenty of recorded music from the 1950s onwards that have themes appropriate to promoting health. For example

- Sex
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Mental health
- Relationships
- Self-esteem and assertiveness
- Personal change
- Gender roles
- Ageing
- Raising children
- Wider determinants of health e.g. poverty
- Environmental issues
- Social change

There is less on smoking, diet, physical activity and accidents but some songs do exist.

Music mentioned in this document

To listen to any of the music in this document try www.amazon.com. To make things easier the albums that songs come from are listed in the appendices. Simply enter the album name in the search engine and change the drop down menu to music.

To find the words try Google and put in the song name plus the word 'lyrics'. Be aware however that they may or may not be accurate.

BNWHM, Hi-NRG or R&B?

Popular music has as many subdivisions as the average branch of medicine and can be as confusing to the uninitiated. Does the target group prefer the British New Wave of Heavy Metal, high energy music or rhythm and blues? And this of course is just a handful of styles. It's obviously important to pick songs whose content reflect the aims of the health project they are part of, but what about genre? Will a target group reject a song because it is not in the right style? Perhaps. Testing it with them may answer that question. Often however songs can be performed in different ways. 'My Way' for example started life as a rather depressive French song called 'Comme d'habitude' by Claude François. It was later recorded by Frank Sinatra with powerful new English lyrics. Since then there has been a disco version by the Bobby Azeff Orchestra, a Sid Vicious punk version, and the Gipsy Kings did a Romany rock version in Spanish. Impersonator Mike Yarwood even sang it as Prime Minister Harold Wilson. (The experience of soul legend and political activist Curtis Mayfield is also worth mentioning. When he started singing the Carpenters' love song 'We've Only Just Begun' at a live gig, black power supporters started booing him. They ended up feeling moved. They realised that the lyrics and his performance had something to say to them about the recent attainment of civil rights in the USA.)

Reach 30,000 people face to face

Over 750,000 people visited major events (excluding football) in Sunderland in 2006. ²² Possible events, with Sunderland examples, could include

- **Citywide events** such as the annual air show, kite festival, Mela Asian festival of music and dance or the women's half marathon. (The Sunderland International Festival of Kites, Music and Dance' alone attracted 30,000 people in one weekend in 2003. ²³ More information about this and other events are available in the appendices.)



Even in quite a small city such as Sunderland there are many opportunities for using live music to promote health e.g. the annual kite festival (b)

- **Local events** such as the Hendon or Southwick area carnivals. Almost 2,500 people saw the Hendon carnival in 2006. ²⁴ (Interestingly, local people said that they ‘would like to celebrate Sunderland more through events and festivals that bring people together’) ²⁵
- **Celebration events** e.g. 120 people attended the Back on the Map Employment Awards and 400 turned up at the Safer Sunderland Partnership’s Pride of Wearside Awards. ²⁶ Musical performances on the theme of the wider determinants of health or individuals’ personal struggles might work well at this kind of event.
- **Consultation events.** There is a number of these every year. Within Sunderland a consultative event using art was the most successful consultation done by Back on the Map up to that point. It included a range of approaches including music.²⁷
- **Health fairs.** In 2006 there were 15 of these in one of Sunderland’s three Primary Care Trust localities alone. ²⁸
- **Health events to mark campaign dates** such as World Aids Day. Perhaps these could even include legal busking or health-a-grams. The local council’s policy on culture included plans for more street theatre. ²⁹
- **NHS premises.** The local NHS is building new Primary Care Centres. Perhaps any new ones should have an area that could be used for health gigs. This might help men and other non-users of services to feel more at home in them. The community could use them at other times. In a sense this is a development from the old Peckham Pioneer Health Clinic model of the 1920s and 30s.³⁰ In facilities aimed more at young people, such as specialist clinics, perhaps a café could be opened for music and comedy performances connected with health. The cafe could also stock the magazines and games mentioned in other parts of this report.
- **Local authority premises.** Sunderland’s Cultural Strategy says that there is a “need to develop ‘one-stop’ cultural and community facilities as (there is) not equal access across the city’. Perhaps health agencies could tie in with this. ³¹
- **Pub tours.** Many local pubs and clubs have live music. They may allow a health band to play in their venue. Presumably they would want a choice of music that would not affect their profits from alcohol, food or cigarettes. Songs around positive mental health might be possible. (The Mosaic data showed that around 30-40% of the main subgroups in Sunderland listed going to the pub as one of their forms of recreation. The figure was even higher for eating out. These venues are therefore worth focusing on. This might even be simply hiring them as venues for public meetings. The target audience might feel more comfortable there than in an NHS building.)
- **Bingo halls.** The social market research also identified bingo as popular places for two of the main target groups to go to. In the past a one-woman show on screening toured bingo halls locally. ³² Perhaps music could go down equally as well.
- **In-house events.** Music may be also be a useful tool at Royal visits and tours by audit commissioners or potential funders. (It might also have role in training events as well.)

At events such as these it would be important to be clear what the health aims were and what the key targets were.

There is also the opportunity for using recorded music on CD or online. CDs could perhaps be distributed with magazines aimed at the target group e.g. ‘Street’ for young Wearsiders. This has a distribution of 26,000 free copies. ³³

Key issues when using music

'Sing like the Supremes. Walk like the Clash.'

The band, the Redskins, had some chart success in the Eighties. They were also members of the Socialist Workers Party and used their music to promote its views. This quote in effect was both their mission statement and their operational outline. If health agencies want to use music for their own purposes they also need to be very clear about how they will use it to achieve their goals. Fortunately there are various theories that can help.

There are a number of key issues to be aware of when using music

- Have clear aims
- Have a well thought out plan of how the music will help achieve these aims e.g.
 - Who it the music aimed at?
 - Why they should be attracted to it?
 - How are they supposed to respond and why?
- Pilot the music to see if it works with the target group
- Have follow up workers or materials ready to follow up any interest
- Look for links with other agencies to share costs, workers etc

How music may help meet health targets

Music can probably only be used effectively when it clear what purpose it is being used for. Theoretically it can be used to achieve a number of different aims. The main ones are

- To attract people to a stall or event
- To change people's image of an organisation
- To give out health messages and ideas
- To demonstrate the skills needed to be healthy
- To move people at an emotional level so as to effect their attitudes and behaviour

It may be possible to use music to meet more than one aim at a time. However to make explanation easier in the next few pages they are looked at one by one.

How to use music to attract people to an event

Music may attract people's attention without it being anything to do with the event itself. Few of the songs performed at Live Aid or Live8 were about the Third World, starvation or poverty. Simply having live music may attract people to an event. Health workers can then engage with them about health face to face. To make it seem topical a band may perform seasonal songs, for example at a summer fete

- *Here Comes The Sun* (The Beatles)
- *Let The Sun Shine In* (From 'Hair')

However, there are so many songs about health it would be easy to make the repertoire link in more closely. Some topics have many songs about them that explore the complexity of their subject, e.g. sex and mental health. However, this is not always the case. There are very few modern songs about food. Those that do exist are unlikely to persuade anyone to change their diet. They may however attract people over to a stall where workers can do this. The song itself may also help workers to break the ice and

make it easier to start a conversation with people. It is probably an idea to get a number of possible 'chat up lines' ready at the start. It is also worth thinking about whether health professionals are always the best people for this role. People with an outgoing personality and an affinity for the target audience may be most appropriate. These could be health professionals, clerical staff or be specially recruited.

Light hearted or comic songs may be a good way to cover some subjects, such as food. Straight songs on some topics may end up sounding worthy but dull. Here are a few to choose from.

- *The Food Album* (by Weird Al Yankovic)
This is an LP of covers of hit songs where the words have been changed, with permission, to be about food. For example 'Addicted To Spuds' instead of 'Addicted To Love'. Some of the tracks however definitely couldn't be endorsed by the NHS.
- *Slave To My Belly* (by Catie Curtis)

Alternatively, it may be possible to make an orchestra of instruments made out of fruit and vegetables. This was reputedly done on the BBC children's TV programme 'Blue Peter'.

Using AIDA to attract people to an event

In this approach the AIDA model is attempted to be used in the following way;

- **Attention** is initially grabbed by the music
- Maintaining **Interest**, arousing **desire** and obtaining **action** is down to the skills of the worker at the stall or event

How to use music to change people's image of your organisation

Red Wedge: An example of engaging with young people

Can pop music help to alter the image of an institution? Before the 1987 election the Labour Party was concerned that it was out of touch with young people. It used Red Wedge to try to reach them. Red Wedge was a number of well-known musicians who performed for young people on behalf of the party. Their concerts also gave MPs a chance to mingle and talk with young voters. Although Labour still lost the election they successfully increased their votes in the 18-24 year old age group. Bryan Gould, a senior member of the party at the time said that Red Wedge had been 'an important part of our efforts to reach the young'.³⁴ (In Ireland a Rock the Vote movement has also been set up to encourage young people to vote. It has blogs from all the main party leaders.) For more information go to <http://www.rockthevote.ie/>

Few local state organisations can call on a host of celebrities to support them. They could perhaps however use music to attract people and appear relevant and approachable. They could back this up with face to face talk.

'We need to provide a friendly and lovable face.'

The Deputy Director of Public Health for England made the above comment. If the research shows a target audience is interested in music it may help create this new image. Of course, the reality of the audience's daily interactions with the NHS also needs to back it up.

The choice of *live* music could simply reflect what is currently in the charts or reflect local culture. (South Tyneside NHS Trust took over the sponsorship of a miners' brass band when the local pits closed. See http://66.102.9.104/search?q=cache:grFUu_Tfi0sJ:www.sthct.nhs.uk/newsEvents/mediaReleases/may06/PRESS%2520RELEASE%2520A%2520%2520Note%2520To%2520Re member.pdf+south+tyneside+Brass+band&hl=en&gl=uk&ct=clnk&cd=9)

An alternative approach is to theme the music. The theme would depend on what image an organisation was trying to create. This would partly depend on its own values as well as those of the target group. However one general theme might be the NHS being there for people when they need healing. Songs that tie in with this theme include

- *Fix You* (Coldplay)
- *London Rain [Nothing Heals Me Like You Do]* (Heather Nova)
- *Let The Healing Begin* (Joe Cocker)

Singing to the world that the NHS is an equal ops employer

The NHS is interested in promoting itself as equal opportunity employer. A number of songs could be used to support this message. These include

Race

- *Ebony And Ivory* (Stevie Wonder and Paul McCartney)
- *Scatterlings Of Africa* (Johnny Clegg and Savuka)
- *We Are All Made Of Stars* (Moby)

(Live performance by appropriate ethnic minority musicians might also send the same message. Music for Change is charity that uses music to promote cultural diversity and understanding. Visit their website at www.musicforchange.org. However, also see the pages further ahead on music and Islam.)

Disability

- *I In 10* (UB40)
- *What You've Got* (Roy Bailey)
- *Spasticus Autisticus* (Ian Dury)

(This last track was considered controversial when it was released even though Ian Dury was himself disabled from polio.)

Sexual Orientation

- *Everything Possible* (Fred Small)
- Also check out the Tom Robinson CD '*Cabaret '79*'

Applying the AIDA model to try to change the image of an organisation

- Music is used to try to get people's **Attention**
- If the aim is simply to create a good image on the day an organisation may not be interested in maintaining **interest**, arousing **desire** and obtaining **action**. There is a need however for some explanation of who is providing the music and why. Otherwise the public may not link it to the organisation or think that it is wasting public money
- If an organisation wants to use this approach to recruit then they will need workers to follow up leads if people are attracted over. It is down to these employees to

An incomplete history of public health and music part 2

- 1978: singer Harry Chapin has a UK hit with *WORLD* and a US number one with *Cat's In The Cradle*. However his true calling is to harass politicians, including President Jimmy Carter, to do something about worldwide poverty. As a result of his efforts a Commission on World Hunger is set up. Chapin makes sure that half of his concerts every year are benefits for this cause. He also delights in saying that 'Not one dollar goes to a starving child.' (He thinks that the money is better spent on lobbying politicians and educating the public.) Tragically he dies at 38 in a car crash. His organisation 'WHY: World Hunger Year' still goes on however. (He called it this because every year is world hunger year.)³⁵ Visit www.worldhungeryear.org for more information
- 1984: Band Aid release *Do They Know Its Christmas?* in response to the public health crisis in Ethiopia. Even years later it is claimed it makes about £100,000 a year from sales and repeats for the Band Aid Trust³⁶
- 1985: Worldwide perhaps 1.5 billion people watch TV footage of Live Aid from stadiums in London and Philadelphia. £150 million may be raised³⁷
- 1986: The cast of *Grangehill* get to number five in the UK charts with their anti-drugs song *Just Say No!* This is a re-recording of an American song that was part of a US campaign of the same name. The effectiveness of the American campaign is heavily questioned and the phrase is satirised. Music isn't a magic wand that can cure all ills³⁸
- 1990: *Red Hot + Blue*, a collection of Cole Porter tunes reinterpreted by modern artists is released. It aims both to raise awareness about AIDS and to fundraise for the same cause. More records are later released from different genres.³⁹
- 2005: Live8 concerts are held in a number of countries throughout the world. They aim to put pressure on world leaders to cut debt in Africa as well as to increase aid and fair trade. Reputedly the concerts are broadcast on 182 television networks and around 2,000 radio networks globally⁴⁰
- 2006: To combat discrimination and stigma, Creative Futures start their first annual 'Bonkersfest' music and art event in London⁴¹
- 2007: Tim Samuels creates a rock band, The Zimmers, to raise awareness of social exclusion and abuse among older people. The group's oldest member is 101. Their version of *My Generation* enters the UK charts at number 26, (Watch the video at www.thezimmersonline.com/)⁴²

maintain **interest**, create a **desire** to work for the NHS or whoever and obtain **action**. This could be simply getting people to take a form home to apply for nurse training.

Using AIDA to try to change people's image of an organisation

When asked what the health authority would be like if it came to life as a person, the majority of people believed it would be male, aged mid-40s, who made decisions without involving people, read the Financial Times, had lots of qualifications but a lack of common sense.

Asked what their *ideal* health authority would be like, the majority of people said female, aged about 36, caring with a big heart, confident, able, inspirational, with energy and an independent reader.

Although this research is about 10 years old now, it does still raise interesting questions about how the NHS should present itself. A health trust for example could personify itself in the form of a 35 year old singer/speaker with all of the qualities shown above. She could tour locally presenting in many ways what is an accurate image of a female dominated workforce. First however the research would need to be repeated to find out what was appropriate for particular target groups. The original researchers used a number of techniques to get people's views. These included drawings and selecting from a range of photographic images. 43

How to use music to try to tackle health inequalities

Social marketing principles say to use theory to work out how to apply local research. However, the choice of theory is left to individual workers. In this next section the classic health education theory of the three legged stool is studied. This is made up of changes in information, skills and attitudes/feelings.⁴⁴ It recognises that to change health behaviour all three are important. Information alone will not change behaviour. Attitudes also need to be challenged. People may also need new skills such as assertiveness or communication. Although this model focuses on individuals, attitudes and skills cannot be seen in isolation from the institutions and communities that people live in. Attitudes around health, and related topics such as sex roles, are formed in society. Institutions reward or punish particular attitudes that they approve of. For example, some schools may teach assertiveness but in practice punish it as 'insolence'. (This model therefore has much in common with the work on health literacy developed by Nutbeam that stresses

- Communication of information: Functional Health Literacy
- Development of personal skills: Interactive Health Literacy
- Personal and community empowerment: Critical Health Literacy ⁴⁵

The next three sections of this paper look at how music might be used to pass on information, challenge or reinforce attitudes and promote certain skills. For ease of explanation these are presented as three independent approaches. In reality a mixed approach may be necessary.

'Making the healthier choices the easier choices'

This classic health education slogan sums up well the popular culture approach. Make it easy for people to listen to and engage with health education messages.⁴⁶

How to use music to give out health information

Songs that give straight information about health issues would probably be difficult to listen to. A better approach could be to mix songs with spoken anecdotes about health. For example, a performer could chat about diet between playing the food songs mentioned earlier. 'Eat It' by Weird Al Yankovic is a take-off of Michael Jackson's 'Beat It'. It is about an adult trying to get a fussy child to eat. The adult's approach probably would not work, but the song could be used as part of a light-hearted routine. The singer would need to connect with the audience. This involves both understanding their views and having the performance skills to engage them. Other workers would also need to be around to pick up any questions they had.

A non-health example of what this might be like in practice are the tours by veteran politician Tony Benn and singer Roy Bailey. These are a mixture of readings, commentary and songs. In 2003 they even won BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards' 'Best Live Act'.⁴⁷

Using AIDA to give out health information

AIDA might be applied in the following way;

- **Attention** is initially grabbed by the music
- **Interest** is maintained by the humour and being able to relate to the song's content. ('Our youngest is like that.')
- The **desire** to change to is two-fold. The problems associated with getting a child to eat are invoked by the feelings and memories the song brings up. The performer then provides the desired solution.
- **Action** is more likely if there is a worker who can back up the performer. Materials to take away may also be useful

There are a wide range of songs that could be used as part of an act giving out health information. The choice depends on both the issue focused on and the social market evidence. Below are a few examples.

Child care

- *On Children* (Sweet Honey In The Rock)

Positive mental health

- *Everybody's Free [To Wear Sunscreen]* (Baz Luhrmann)

Sex

- *Let's Talk About Sex* (Salt-N-Pepa)

Smoking

- *Quitting Smoking Song* (Princess Superstar.)

This has a lot of swearing in it, so is only appropriate for certain audiences e.g. university students.

If you are particularly interested in songs for primary aged children try the websites below. These companies provide a range of music on topics such as people who look after us, environmental health, taking care of myself and social skills.

- <http://www.songsforteaching.com/orderinfo.htm>
- <http://www.cherylmelody.com/childrensmusic.html>
- www.outoftheark.com

Health information music could tie in with campaign days such as World Aids Day etc. It could either be played live or on CD with information provided on the sleeve. Alternatively it could be part of a website.

How to use music to affect people's attitudes

'Music does not just express emotion and meaning – it enacts and constructs them.'

This is a quote from 'Community Music Therapy' on the power of music.⁴⁸ Music plus lyrics make a very forceful emotional statement. Some performers, such as Bruce Springsteen, ratchet this up even further by the power of their oratory between numbers ⁴⁹

The previous section looked at the information leg of the three legged stool of health education. This section looks at issues around attitudes and feeling.

How feelings affect our behaviour

Feelings evolved before logical thinking as a way of helping animals make decisions. So if a deer was attacked by a lion but got away, strong feelings would be linked to different sensory stimuli from the incident. For example, the lion's scent, the sound of the waterfall it was near and the shape of the rocks it hid behind would all say 'danger'. If the deer came across any of these again it would feel anxious. However, it is a very crude decision-making system as a waterfall does not bite.

Humans are animals too, despite their capacity for logical thought. Like other animals they often respond to the strong feelings attached to different stimuli. Professor Maio from Cardiff University, for example, has found that feelings are one of the four psychological barriers that stop the fight against obesity. This is because '...people often possess feelings that they are unable to retrieve from their memories, or are unwilling to admit to others. For example, even though people may consciously endorse exercise, they may non-consciously associate it with pain, difficulty and exertion. Laboratory experiments have shown these automatic feelings are more accurate at predicting people's behaviour than their conscious attitudes...'⁵⁰ It may further be useful to think of the *emotion* e.g. fear, as the glue that holds the *message* part of attitudes or beliefs in part. The message part could be something like exercise is difficult and people will laugh at me.

Similarly socialisation around gender, race, class etc. is also held in place by feeling as much as rational thought.

How to use music to try to affect people's attitudes revisited

'The role... was to entertain, and to help unite, the vast audience by performing songs that expressed, and intensified the emotions of the moment.'

The Civil Rights Movement in the American South in the 1960s used music to great effect. Although not consciously a public health movement, the poverty associated with segregation clearly affected health inequalities 51

The sound component of songs (as opposed to the lyrics) mimics the emotion of the human voice or in the case of the beat, the heart. The poetry and content of lyrics too will often trigger an emotional response. As an emotional tool music might be used in a number of ways. Some of which could be considered unethical and manipulative. Religious figures as well as troops going into battle all know the power of music to move people. (Indeed the word emotion and motion or move, have the same root.) Music can help people get into altered states or face a hail of bullets. When supermarkets have played different sorts of national music in their stores, sales of food from those countries have gone up too. This is probably due to the positive memories associated with the sound.

In a health inequalities context perhaps health workers could try to

- Use music at health events to get people talking with each other or NHS staff about an issue (See later pages for more on this)
- Use music in educational settings to consciously trigger emotions. They can then be discussed in a group or explored by individuals. Fresh opinions and actions may result from this.
- Use music in a therapeutic setting to bring up emotions to deal with. They can then be released through talking, sound or movement. Self-reflection may often follow this. (See later pages for more on this too)
- Teach individuals to use music as a tool to modify their own feelings or behaviour. (See later pages for more on this as well)

The voluntary sector has used music and performance to try to change the views of the public about mental illness. This quote from a 2006 press release for Bonkersfest, an event supported by the Young Vic, sums it up well; 'The mad have a tendency to ghettoise; we are against this and we want to show the local community the positive side of mental illness ...' 52

Using AIDA when music focuses on feelings and attitudes

The AIDA model may work if

- **Attention** is initially grabbed by the music
- **Interest** is maintained by the music emotionally engaging the listeners
- The **desire** to change is triggered. (This may depend in part on how the workers follow up the music. Different options are described in the previous section)
- **Action** follows. (This is more likely if there is a worker who can back up the performer. Materials to take away may also be useful)

All music is emotional

There is a wide range of music to choose from that may work as a tool to deal with emotions or attitudes. The final choice, as always, will depend on a range of factors such as the social marketing evidence and the aims of the project. Music, in fact, by its very nature is emotional. Sometimes it may be useful to choose songs that bring up 'difficult' emotions like embarrassment or anxiety. For example see the mini-musical 'In the Family' later in this chapter. Some of the songs in this may bring up the pain as well as the pleasure associated with raising teenage children. This may be appropriate if it opens up a discussion and action on this topic. At other times, it may be more useful to choose upbeat pieces. For example see the section on 'How to use music to give people the skills to be healthy' below.

All songs have a message

Even throw away pop songs have a message. Try getting people to think about their attitude to sex and relationships by listening to changes in lyrics over the last 50 years.

How to use music to give people the skills to be healthy

There are a range of skills needed to be healthy. These could be demonstrated as part of a mini-musical. Alternatively a song and talk routine could be built around particular health issues. This could be an individual giving up smoking or a community dealing with conflict. As described in the other sections, the AIDA model of **attracting** people, keeping their **interest**, creating a **desire** for change and enabling **action** may be useful.

Example of songs that public health workers could use around skills include

Self-esteem

- *I Am What I Am* (Gloria Gaynor)

According to some theories of health promotion, self-esteem underpins a range of positive and negative behaviours

Assertiveness

- *We're Not Going To Take It* (Twisted Sister)

Assertiveness can be about either individual or collective action

Positive Mental Wellbeing

- *My Favourite Things* (From 'The Sound of Music')

This song explains how to focus on positive thoughts to change an emotional mood

Keeping on until successful

- *Let Your Soul Be Your Pilot* (Sting)

Everyone needs some inspiration at times be it to give up the cigarettes, cope with redundancy or carry out a difficult piece of work.

Celebration

- *Celebration* (Kool and the Gang)

This is a reminder to mark and celebrate success, be it individual or the work of a self-help group or community

Community building

- *Reach Out And Touch [Somebody's Hand]* (Diana Ross)

The skill illustrated here is taking the risk to reach out to other people and to break the isolation modern culture encourages

Changing the world

- *Imagine* (John Lennon)

This was voted the UK's most popular song lyric in a 1999 National Poetry Day competition.⁵³ Imagination is needed to create a better world.

Musicals: Public health - the greatest story never told

'The point of musicals is people have to sing because the emotion is too powerful to just talk.'

From the Saturday Review 54

Songs can be strung together to tell a story; an off the peg musical. (Though if it is targeted at a group for whom the word 'musical' is unattractive, it might need to be called something else.) An off the peg musical is not as unlikely as it sounds. Many successful current shows are made up of songs that were originally written as one offs. These so-called 'jukebox' musicals include

- 'Mamma Mia!' (The Abba Musical),
- 'Movin' Out' with a Billy Joel soundtrack
- 'We Will Rock You' written by Ben Elton and made up of Queen songs

Indeed, even many *individual* songs now include samples from earlier hits.

Use story to engage people

'Storytelling is an ancient art, and stories are often used to develop an analogy between the present and a recent or past event. All of the world's major religions blend stories with calls to action. Why? Because the story makes the message memorable as well as relevant to the listener.'

Many of the issues that public health addresses are dramatic topics- sex, the risk of death, power and poverty to name but a few. Yet the NHS seldom uses story to engage people. (Quote by John Baldoni) 55

The additional advantage of a musical is that it has the added power of a story attached to it. Story allows people to put health in context.

Stories have a long history of being used to put across what could be quite dry subjects. Aristophanes made a successful comedy out of play about rhetoric. ⁵⁶ In modern times the Archers was created to help give out information to farmers.⁵⁷

Write your own health mini-musical

Playwright John Osborne reputedly talked about drama as 'being the art of the more so'. In other words it makes its impact by being larger than life whilst still being true.

There are a number of different formats that can be used in a Do-It-Yourself musical drama. For example a question song followed by a number of answer songs. On later pages I describe an *imaginary* musical. This is to show the process of how it can be done and how easy it is.

It is to encourage people to write their own. It is not based on social market research. If anyone wants to share their efforts with me and everyone else then email me at mail@sexanddrugsandrockandhealth.com

Anyone who decides to pull together their own mini-musical needs to think about plot and character as well as the choice of songs. These will all need to tie in with the project's overall health aims e.g. to reduce teenage pregnancy. Social market research could also be useful as a way of choosing characters that the target group would identify with.

'Musical numbers should carry on the actions of the play, and should be representative of the personalities who sing them'

Jerome Kern's advice about musicals is probably the easiest theory for public health practitioners to follow, though there are others. 58

Plotting the downfall of health inequalities

- The plot is simply the journey a story takes. In a mini-musical it should probably be more like a short story than a novel. In other words, new 'writers' should stick to only one plotline until they get really proficient
- Stories often have a beginning, a middle and an end. However, the other approach would be to borrow from Theatre in Education practice. TIE sometimes uses stimulus pieces that allow the audience to decide how it ends. However, this is more suited for schools and community groups than a festival performance. Ideally the performers would also have the skills to interact with the audience in role and even to perform alternative endings in song. (I don't consider Theatre in Education as example of the use of popular culture by the way. It is excellent in its own right. However, very few people in the target groups public health focus on go to the theatre. Straight drama is also less likely than music to hold people's attention who wander in half way through a performance at a health fair.)
- It is often a good idea to build layers into the story. For example the surface story or layer of 'Three Little Pigs' is house building, but the premise is 'Forethought leads to happiness'. There is always the danger of being 'preachy', however good social market research should prevent this. Being too melodramatic is another risk. In America the government has sometimes made deals to use popular TV shows to give out social messages. These 'Very Special Episodes' are sometimes disparaged if they are too heavy handed. For example the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode on alcohol was voted as being the worst in the show's seven year history. 59
- The premise of a story, according to James N. Frey is what happens to characters as a result of their actions.60 When writing for public health purposes the premise also needs to tie in with the aim of the piece. There are three sorts of premise:
 - *Chain Reaction* e.g. drunkenness leads to sex leads to unintended pregnancy. (Though this example is a bit sermonising) Alternatively it could be a positive chain reaction. For example packing a condom leads to the love object of the story agreeing to have sex with the main character
 - *Opposing Forces* e.g. people's prejudice against mental illness versus the courage of someone with depression. It must also have an outcome, for example prejudice

- against mental illness versus an individual's courage leads to acceptance. (These opposing forces can be internal e.g. 'Should I do this or that?')
- *Situational* e.g. poverty leads to bad health, but this can be overcome with the right choice, such as people banding together
- The simplest format is simply to have a story unfold rather than use complicated structures like flashback. A narrator might sometimes help to explain what is going on if there is any chance of misunderstanding.
- To get the audience's attention have an early hook, so they want to know what happens next. If possible, try not to make what happens too obvious.
- Be careful to judge how long a piece can be, to keep the target audience's attention.

'Rodgers and Hammerstein... turned (musicals) into a genre with a future, and that future has a political and social relevance.'

Scott McMillin in his book 'The Musical as Drama' illustrates this claim with an analysis of 'West Side Story', 'Cabaret' and 'Sweeney Todd'. 61

Audience identification allows safe exploration of health issues

- The target audience must be able to identify with the characters. This does not necessarily mean they have to live in the real world. They can be set in a fantasy world that allows the target group to see the metaphor. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is a good example of this. The monsters in it represented the everyday problems of teenage life. There are now many academic studies written about the sociology, psychology and ethics of the show, which was also a musical. 62
- However, the audience must have sympathy for the lead character even if he or she is 'bad'. This could be because they feel sorry for him or recognise a universal human condition in her. If the character shows a desire to change this often evokes sympathy.
- The central character is sometimes neutral e.g. Tintin. This allows the audience to impose themselves on the character easily. However, if this 'trick' is used, all of the other main characters must be strong to compensate. It is OK however to have larger than life main characters.
- Central characters can be wimps but they must move or there is no action in the story
- Central characters often behave like the audience initially but then take things a step further. This can offer inspiration or a warning. Alternatively it may allow the audience to explore new possibilities safely in their heads to begin with. (This can be followed up by public health staff after the performance. The workers can offer practical options around the health issue the character was grappling with.)
- Characters need to make decisions both for dramatic reasons and to raise public health issues. An inner conflict about what to do can serve just as well as a conflict with another person.
- To get an idea of what a character is like, writers sometimes sketch a quick biography separate from the actual novel, musical etc.

Dancing is not essential but the audience must want to watch

Traditionally many musicals often contain dance numbers. The main thrust of any mini-musical for health performance is not entertainment for its own sake. Movement then should reinforce the main messages i.e. by accentuating the emotion rather than diverting

the audiences' attention. Some acting or dance skills might therefore be needed by the cast, as it may look odd if characters just stand there and sing.



Job Ad: What does the NHS want from its rock stars? Ideally you must be able to perform a wide range of genres and have no prejudices about doing so. You must have the stage craft to move an audience. If you have the patter to amuse them with stories about health this would be a bonus – as would acting ability. Off stage it would be useful if you have the skills to talk to people individually afterwards so as to provide follow up advice. If you're applying for a senior post you should be able to help and direct other performers and volunteers to do all of this as well. Oh, and studio skills would be good too. It goes without saying that applicants with too much of a rock'n'roll lifestyle need not apply. On stage debauchery is not what the doctor ordered. Applicants in rehab will be considered however. (c)

In The Family: a hypothetical mini-musical about health

Below is sketched out an imaginary musical. It illustrates some of the theory described earlier. It is not based on social market research but is to encourage readers to write their own musical. It took about 15 minutes to come up with a range of songs that would carry the story and another 30 minutes to get the lyrics off the internet. I could have probably have downloaded the songs from iTunes in another 15 minutes. A complete musical in one hour!

Description of the show

What is it about?

- Teen pregnancy
- Family relationships

Where's it set?

- In a family home

Who's in it?

- Mother
- Father
- Son
- Daughter

What's the story? What songs does it use?

- *Father and Son* (Original by Cat Stevens)
The father lays down the law to the son, who tells the audience how he feels. The mother just watches. The daughter listens to her iPod. The son eventually storms off.
- *Girl's Just Like to Fun* (Original by Cyndi Lauper)
The daughter sings this to herself as she dances round the room with her iPod. The father leaves. The mother just watches.
- *Tangled Up Puppet* (Original by Harry Chapin)
The mother sings this to herself as the daughter continues to listen to her iPod. The song is about the joy and pain of seeing your child turn into an adolescent and adult.
- *Papa Don't Preach* (Original by Madonna)
This is the second of two acts. The daughter sings to her father. She is accidentally pregnant. He says nothing but leaves in a bad mood. Elsewhere on stage is the son with a case in his hand ready to leave. He sees everything that has happened.
- *If My Sister's In Trouble* (Original by Lady Soul from the film *Sister Act*)
The son sings this to his sister as he has decided not to leave as she needs his support. Elsewhere on stage the parents are in view arguing and then coming round as they listen to their son
- *I'll Stand By You* (Original by The Pretenders)
Each of the parents sings lines of this to each of their two children.
- *Thank You For Hearing Me* (Original by Sinead O'Connor)
Different members of the family sing different lines to each other

(*'Girls Just Like To Have Fun'* is not in the first person, i.e. the daughter does not sing 'I just like to have fun'. As the daughter is singing this song about her own life this could sound a bit strange. One way round this is to get her to sing along to her iPod as she dances round the living room. This illustrates her character in a way that seems authentic.)

Practical issues of performance

How long does it last?

- 20-25 minutes (For some performances the audience will not have specifically come to see the show. Their attention span might be short. Experience will tell how long the show should be. As the shows are short each song must need to be there. They must advance the plot, highlight character or make a point about public health.)

Who could perform it?

- It would need 4 singers.
- It would also need either musicians or backing tapes.

What props does it need? Where could it be performed?

- It does not need a huge set. Just a few props to create the idea of a house with one main room and the illusion of other rooms coming off it
- The cast could wear T-shirts labelled 'Dad', 'Mum', 'Son' and 'Daughter'.

- It could be toured to community groups or performed at local events such as carnivals or health fairs



Live performance needs a good sound system and good diction if the audience are to hear the health messages (d)

Story theory in action

Plot (Premise)

- ‘Opposing forces’ i.e. a story about conflict
- Main theme: Communication overcomes problems

Plot (Initial hook)

- How will the conflict between the father and son turn out?

Character (Audience identification and sympathy)

- The target audience may well recognise the characters’ worries in the situation presented. The characters are not fully developed so as to make this easier. The songs are in character with the singers.
- There is also a general shift from conflict to love and resolution

Character (decision and conflict)

- All of the characters have either inner or external conflicts that they need to make decisions about. This adds to the drama.

Public health theory in action

Who is it aimed at?

- Families
- Young people and parents

Menopause: the Musical ⁶³

This musical about life after 40 has developed a life of its own. As well as having been seen by nine million people throughout the world, it has inspired a free magazine, an art show and a non-profit charity. ⁶⁴ This is funded by souvenirs of the show.

The show is based round parodies of 25 classic hits e.g.

- *I Heard It Thru the Grapevine; You No Longer See 39*
- *Stayin' Awake! Stayin' Awake!*
- *My Husband Sleeps Tonight*

Writer/producer Jeanie Linders explains the impact of the show;

“Most women know intuitively every other woman is experiencing the memory loss or night sweats or hot flashes. They talk about it with their friends and, on occasion, with their spouses. But, when they're in a theatre with hundreds of women all shouting 'that's me!' then they know what they are experiencing is normal. They aren't crazy; they call it 'sisterhood.’ ” This echoes the view, which is then further developed in *A Prospectus for Arts and Health* produced by the Arts Council of England in 2007;

‘The benefit of using drama is that it has the capacity to affect audiences, and then to move them on in their thinking by engaging them in a living narrative, raising questions rather than providing answers. The powerful impact of drama stimulates dialogue between different parties within the audience, which often includes ... health service users, professionals and policy makers.’ ⁶⁵

For more information as well as positive and negative reviews go to

<http://www.menopausethemusical.com/main.php?page=about>

http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/theatre/2007/04/why_i_loved_menopause_the_musi.html

What is the aim?

- Depending on the audience to get people to talk about either sex education with teenagers, worries about becoming pregnant or family problems

How might it work in terms of AIDA?

- The music could **attract** people to the event
- **Interest** might be maintained by the music and the emotional content of the story.
- Hopefully the characters and plot resonate with the lives of the intended audience and creates a **desire** to do something.
- To turn this desire into **action**, workers would need to be around to talk to, get materials off etc. These could be from the NHS or other agencies.

How might it work in terms of the three legged stool?

- In terms of this model of health education, the post-show workers could build on the emotions brought up by the musical to further explore attitudes and emotions.
- They could also explore skills and information in more detail. For example, what communication behaviours were most useful in the family? How do you build on these?

Although it is an imaginary musical I did try it out in a self help group I belong to. We sang along to the tracks. People found it moving and it did bring up feelings. This pre-testing also showed the need to double check downloaded lyrics as some were wrong.

A local paper was interested in giving a CD of this musical away with a magazine they produce for young people. They talked about putting money into it too, but in the end it was just not possible to get a cast together in time.

Other ideas for mini-musicals

- Reality TV continues to be popular and perhaps should be a format that public health pays more attention to generally. A mini-musical based around *Big Brother* could look at issues around relationships, mental health, sex and alcohol.
- A radio phone-in lends itself to a simple question and answer format.
- A postman delivering letters on a health topic could be another plot device. Songs like *'Please Mr. Postman'* could set the scene.
- Very short musicals could be built into Ann Summer type parties. Perhaps these could be rebranded as 'Anne Sinners' and look at issues around sex and relationships for women. (These are described in later pages)
- Musical don't need to be static. Performers could travel round in a bus and perform a musical version of a public health annual report at different venues.

To find out more about writing musicals try *'Writing A Musical'* by Richard Andrews.⁶⁶

There are also a few ready made musicals on health themes;

- *'Bullying!'* (For children)
<http://starshine.co.uk/content1/productlist/musicalsforallyearround/bully/product.main.bully.php>
- *'The Litter Muncher'* (Environmental health show for primary aged children)
http://www.outoftheark.com/products/product_details.php?action=keysearch&searchterm=muncher&id=9

There is also *'Menopause: the Musical'* (described previously) and on the same topic *'Hot Flashes'*. (Listen to this at <http://www.hotflashesthemusical.com/info.htm>)

Other ways to reach large numbers of people using music

Radio NHS

“We should never underestimate the power of the very local when it comes to broadcasting.”

The Right Honourable Chris Smith (www.commedia.org.uk) 67

The authorities in the UK give special licences for people to operate community radio stations for limited periods of a few days. (See www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/rbl/rsls/ for more details) In terms of the AIDA model there is an immediate problem. How do new broadcasters get people’s attention when there are so many other stations out there? One approach might be to have a station that is highly targeted to a particular audience. Then use research to position it and advertise it effectively. What health benefit would come from this would depend on the programming. Possible ideas could include variations on ‘Our Tune’, ‘Desert Island Discs’ and programmes listing the twenty greatest songs about ‘being all you can be’ etc. All these would be a mixture of song and talking. Songs could be selected by the station with phone-in suggestions from listeners. Radio 1 also recently reintroduced the radio ballad documentaries of the fifties. Put on ‘Radio Ballads 2006: The Enemy That Lives Within’ to listen to the one about HIV. It is at http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/aod/genres/musicdoc/aod.shtml?radio2/r2_radioballadaids

An alternative would be to copy some high street shops and have the NHS’ own radio stations in clinics etc. Of course some commercial companies such as the Life Channel already produce television stations for this market. However, perhaps radio could still be part of the mix. There may be a niche that a particular format could fill at certain times e.g. World Mental Health Day. Again see www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/rbl/rsls/ for more details. Volunteer hospital radio stations may also be able to offer help or try university or college media courses.



Radio has been around a long time. With the web it is now possible to start a station at home. (See www.radioandtelly.co.uk/internet.html) (e)

Celebrity Magazines

"I love reading women's magazines and have always been interested in information about health. The NHS magazines are great because they look like regular women's and men's magazines. This is a brilliant way of communicating with people who aren't going to read an official-sounding letter or leaflet."

Patricia Hewitt, the then Secretary of State for Health ⁶⁸

Dr Foster has produced a number of celebrity magazines for the Department of Health. *'Your Life!'* is aimed at women aged 18-35. *'Fit'* is for men aged 18-35. *'Prime'* is for people over 40. These are all free. The first two publications in particular contain stories around pop stars and health. To see what the magazines look like go to www.drfoosterintelligence.co.uk/newsPublications/publications/magazines/

An official evaluation of *'Your Life'* showed that

- 90% of readers found it accessible
- 86% found it useful or very useful
- 67% had changed or intended to change their behaviour because of it ⁶⁹

It would be possible to produce a local version for a more specific target group. (See next chapter for more information on magazine theory.) These could copy the weekend papers and include music CDs. This would tie in with social market ideas of learning from competitors. These local magazines could be distributed in places that the Mosaic research shows the target audience go to. Mosaic breakdown every household in the UK in to one of 61 Different social groups. For around £8,000 per year it is possible to buy this data for a Local Authority area.⁷⁰ This means that magazines and CDs could also be sent directly to appropriate people's homes.

Information about celebrities can be gained from secondary sources such as papers and the net. It is important to make sure that it is true of course. Alternatively, try approaching celebrity musicians or other stars directly. To get contact details look in *Celebrity Black Book: Over 55,000 Accurate Celebrity Addresses* by Jordan McAuley ⁷¹ Dr Foster often uses stories from celebrities who have either received NHS treatment themselves or have close family who have. Co-operating with an NHS initiative was their way of giving something back. Of course it is important to match the right star to the right target audience.⁷²

How else can we use music in public health?

Youth and community work

'The idea for this CD came out of another project where we had been looking at our life stories through music. We discovered that lyrics had played a powerful part in our lives and so we decided we might try and write our own songs.'

Music is not just for the young. The local hospice in Sunderland has also used music. Residents worked with musicians to write their own songs. To hear extracts from their CD go to <http://www.hospice.co.uk/fundraising/new.asp> 73

So far this chapter has focused on how 'edutainment' by skilled performers can reach the largest possible number of the target group. However, there are other ways of using music in public health. These often concentrate on smaller numbers, with the focus on the 'performer'. Indeed there may never be an audience. The impact on the individual may be great however.

Music as a Personal, Social and Health Education tool

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport in the UK are working with Youth Music to inspire young people and so tackle antisocial behaviour. The idea is to help young people make music to give them a sense of purpose and self-respect. Examples of projects with various groups are explored in the Spring 2007 edition of *Feedback*, the Youth Music organisation magazine. 74

In a similar way since 1994 Sunderland Council have used music making with young people to

- Improve basic skills such as reading, writing and talking
- Develop life skills such as working with others, negotiating and time management
- Increase self-esteem
- Carry out issue-based youth work
- Improve music skills such as playing, performing and song writing 75

All of the above may have an impact on health. They also fit well into the 3 legged stool model, as information, attitudes/feelings and skills are all addressed. Writing and performing their own lyrics might allow young people to think through an issue, release any feelings around it and communicate with others.

For an evaluation of community music approaches with young offenders (and other prisoners) go to http://www.musicinprisons.org.uk/index.php?page=pubs_eval

Can dead rock stars help people today?

One project suggested by young people in Washington, Tyne & Wear, a few years ago was 'Dead Rock Stars'. Young people would look at the lives of rock stars that had died from a range of causes such as AIDS, suicide, drug overdoses etc. A concert of cover songs plus songs written by the young people was planned. Young people without music skills would produce materials to go with the concert. In the end the money was not forthcoming to make it happen. Would it have worked? It may well have attracted young

people and kept their interest. After all they had suggested it. However, there is always a risk that people cannot identify with rock stars. They are too far away from ordinary people's lives. Alternatively, by focusing on dead pop stars, is there a chance of glamorising the Rock & Rock lifestyle of risk-taking? Perhaps, it depends on how the project is developed and the skills of the workers.

To find about more about peer education approaches try '*Theatre-Based Techniques for Youth Peer Education: A Training Manual*'. This is at

<http://www.fhi.org/en/Youth/YouthNet/Publications/peeredtoolkit/TheaterTraining.htm>



Dead rock stars include

- * *Freddy Mercury (Aids)*
- * *Kurt Cobain (suicide)*
- * *Brian Jones (drowned)*
- * *Elvis Presley (heart failure)*
- * *George Harrison (cancer)*
- * *Bon Scott of AC/DC (alcohol)*
- * *Janis Joplin (drugs)*

For more information try

http://www.turkku.com/music/musicians_a.html (f)

Building community – the role of music

“At one time we all sang, in pubs and homes as well as schools. We have lost that collective experience, which I think helped to knit our communities together. It is time to try and bring that back...”

Howard Goodall, chair of the singing stream of the Government’s Music Manifesto. Does encouraging communal singing have a role in public health? 76

The evidence from research into life satisfaction shows that dancing to music is very good for mental health. This is because it mixes music, physical activity and social contact.⁷⁷ However, social contact is also important for another reason. Research suggests that Americans are much less likely now than in previous generations to belong to community organisations such as sports groups, social clubs etc. ⁷⁸ This has led to a breakdown of community cohesion that in turn has led to social problems, including health ones. It is worth considering whether local dances, music clubs and live performances all add to a sense of community and so to better health. Another question worth considering is when to target particular social groups and when to try to involve everyone. Social marketing stresses targeting. However, in an article in *Sounding Board*, the journal of community music, Andrew Peggie argues the opposite view.⁷⁹ He believes that to build community different groups must mix. The idea of having different music projects for different age groups is a mistake in his eyes. For more information on community music in the UK generally go to www.soundsense.org

How music can help consultation with the public

‘All Primary Care Trusts have a programme of Patient Public Involvement ... to ensure that users’ voices and experiences are a core part of shaping future healthcare services. The power of the arts in building confidence and empowering individuals and communities in self-expression has enormous potential to deliver on this agenda and to bring innovation and creativity to the modernisation process.’

Arts, Health and Well-Being: A Strategy for Partnership (Draft November 2004, Arts Council England) 80

In 2002, ‘Back on the Map’ a multi-agency partnership staged a consultation event in a part of Sunderland that was in danger of being ‘consulted to death’. However the event used a range of artistic ways to collect people’s views. It was at that time ‘the most well attended event connected with Back on the Map’. ⁸¹ Music played a big part on the day. If organisations want people to give time for something important but potentially boring, such as consultation, do it on their terms. Make it interesting, or even fun, for them. Consultation is not just a way of collecting information. It is also an opportunity to try to create a positive image of the agencies collecting the data. This way the public may be more likely to want to engage with them again later.

In development education, consultation is often carried out by workers who use drama or drawings to reflect villagers own life back to them.⁸² This helps people think about the root social causes behind development issues. These are often issues such as poverty, ill health etc. In the UK this might be considered too biased politically and in terms of research practice. However, the use of stimulus pieces of theatre, music or a combination of the two might attract more people to consultations. It may also encourage them to open up more.

Some Muslims may be offended by music

Before using music in the community, be aware that *some* Muslims are wary of it. ⁸³ They are uncomfortable with

- Music that may lead to inappropriate emotions
- Words in songs that are sexual or romantic
- Any 'suggestive' movements that accompany songs
- Males and females performing to or with each other
- The use of musical instruments, because of historic links with prostitution and drink
- Spending too much time on music (presumably as opposed to on more practical or spiritual matters)

This is not true for everyone however. For example, Sarfraz Manzoor is a second generation Pakistani person in Britain. In his recent autobiography he explores his life in terms of his love for the music of Bruce Springsteen. 'The Boss' probably offends all the rules mentioned earlier. ⁸⁴ The answer as always is to do the research first. This may show that music is not a controversial issue with Muslims in the relevant target group.

Other ethnic minority communities may have their own songs that can be used to promote health messages. Reggae stars Bob Marley and Jimmy Cliff for example have a number of songs with positive health messages. These include

- *Three Little Birds* (Bob Marley)
- *You Can Get It If You Really Want It* (Jimmy Cliff)

There is also a musical about how a family became refugees and asylum seekers, though this is an unlikely premise for a fun evening out for anyone but the most 'right on' theatre goer. It's called '*The Sound of Music*' or something like that.

Generally think very carefully about using lyrics with people who do not speak English as a first language. They may struggle to understand songs that use metaphors or slang. If the singer has an unusual accent or imprecise diction this could also be a problem. Ironically language teachers sometimes find that foreign singers who perform in English are easier to understand. ⁸⁵

In the Northeast of England, the North East Cultural Diversity Arts Forum maybe a useful organisation to speak to about many of these issues. Ring 0191-477 3311. (Their website, <http://www.necdaf.org.uk/> , is currently being redesigned.)

Music as a health education tool in schools

Schools may be able to use many of the approaches discussed elsewhere in this chapter on music. However, there are some specific websites that teachers may want to visit.

- <http://www.songsforteaching.com/teachertips.htm> includes how to use music for personal, social and health education purposes in primary schools.

- <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2058/> and
- <http://www.rockhall.com/programs/plans.asp>
Both these sites offer lesson plan ideas for secondary school teachers on personal development and social issues. Many could be adapted to look at health from a range of different perspectives.
- www.bbc.co.uk/music/childrens/
This site includes tips for young people on writing songs
- <http://www.creative-partnerships.com/>
Creative Partnerships is a UK government project that encourages schools to improve pupils' ability to think, come up with new ideas and make choices. These are essential skills in health education. The project regularly uses artists including musicians in its work.

In addition there are a number of song books on relevant themes e.g. *Every Colour Under the Sun* by Brenda Piper for primary schools.⁸⁶ This contains songs about helping others, social awareness, co-operation and tolerance as well as working towards building a better world.

For older pupils, libraries may still have copies of the out of print *'Sing for Your Life: 44 Songs to Change the World'* by Sandra Kerr ⁸⁷

Music as a training tool

Trainers can use music as an

Emotional Tool

- To give the message that this training is different i.e. not boring
- To relax or energise people before, during or after the training or meeting
- To use lyrics to open people up to discussing things more
- To change the mood using entrainment (See later pages for a fuller explanation.)
- To encourage people to physically move, which again will alter their mental state



"...music is the life blood of our young people and it is this nation's common currency." The then Culture Minister David Lammy ^{88 (g)}

Social Tool

- To build a community or group identity e.g. the Conservative Party sings *'Jerusalem'* at its conferences. The Labour movement also has a tradition of songs. (Catalyst UK

offers teambuilding events using music. For more details see http://www.catalystglobal.com/our_events/)

- To celebrate successes and milestones e.g. *'For He's A Jolly Fellow'*

Procedural Tool

- To signal changes of process e.g. one trainer uses Bryan Ferry singing *'Let's Stick Together'* to get people back when their tea break is over

Thinking Tool

Music can be used

- To aid concentration Georgi Lozanov deliberately induced the alpha state in his language students with music.⁹⁹ This normally occurs just as a person is waking or falling asleep. There is some evidence that learning at these times goes straight to the long term memory
- To relax people before using guided visualisation techniques
- To challenge people's views with controversial lyrics
- To reword songs as memory aids
- To link songs to particular messages. When learners play the song, even if just in their own heads, they remember the messages
- To engage rhythm and rhyme in learning and memory
- To appeal to people who prefer verbal learning (See NLP theory section)

'If you really want to have a go at everything music has to offer training, try this...

- 1. Put on a piece of fairly upbeat, rhythmic music, instrumental music**
- 2. Let it play for 20 or 30 seconds then begin talking in harmony with the music**
- 3. Use the pauses and changes in the music to emphasise key messages in what you are saying**

This can be very useful when the training involves learning big chunks of information'

Thanks to Mark McKergow Associates and the Training Journal for this idea and many of the others in this section. 90

Music as a mental health promotion tool

Perhaps talking therapies are not always the best approach with clients groups that

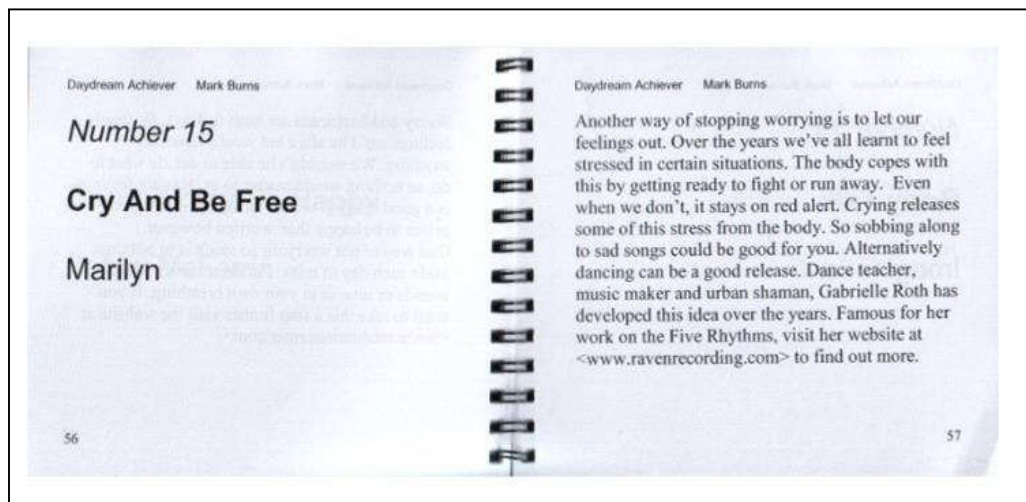
- Are not particularly literate
- Do not like talking about their feelings e.g. many young men
- Cannot speak English
- Have a non-Western concept of mental illness

Music could be used in a number of ways instead. Many of these approaches have been tackled earlier in the chapter. However, ideas from music therapy can also be adapted.

Entrainment: Musical mood changing techniques

Probably the simplest technique that public health practitioners can borrow from music therapists is 'entrainment'. This is a technique to help people change their mood. They make a CD of music that starts with tracks that reflect their current state e.g. heavily depressed. They then start introducing pieces that are less depressive and then move to happy and finally joyous tracks. They then use this CD whenever they are depressed. (Playing relaxation CDs may not work as they may simply grate with how the person is feeling.) The technique can be used for other emotional states too e.g. anxious to calm. If people are having trouble thinking of suitable music they could try 'The Tao of Music' by John M.Ortiz.) 91

Some library departments are now getting involved in health books on prescription schemes. Perhaps they could also help promote entrainment in their CD sections



It might be worthwhile producing music CD with booklets.92 These could tie in with entrainment or be on themes such as self-esteem or assertiveness. People could use them as reminders or to boost their confidence at difficult times. 'I can do it' songs might also be useful for people wanting to change their behaviour, when they are faltering. Other selections might remind some groups that they are not the only ones e.g. people with drug problems. The accompanying booklets could tie in with the music theme. For example by having a chart count down of relevant songs with complementary information. Obviously these would need to be researched, pre-tested and evaluated. (h)

Co-counselling: Music and self esteem

Co-counselling International is a free peer counselling organisation. Members take it in turn to be counsellor and client, swapping roles during a session. The emphasis is on letting out feelings and reflecting on how to move forward. This emotional literacy allows members to try out other therapeutic techniques amongst themselves. Often this involves the arts. One approach is simply to ask group members to share tracks that move them. Everyone then takes turns to listen, dance, sing a long or be sung to as well as sharing whatever comes up. This is a very powerful as a way of building self-esteem by showing who you really are in a safe environment. However, it is not everybody's taste. (For more general information on co-counselling go to <http://www.co-counselling.org.uk/>)

Five Rhythms: Dance for the mind

This is dance to a series of five different rhythms. There are no set steps. However each rhythm matches both a different kind of movement and state of being. The sequence is designed to release tension in the mind and body. For more information go to <http://www.gabrielleroth.com/> or read *Sweat Your Prayers* by Gabrielle Roth.⁹³ Trained teachers are initially needed to run any sessions, but peer-led groups can be set up later.

What can music and dance therapy offer public health?

Anyone interested in seeing what else music may offer public health try contacting the professional organisations below.

- The Association of Professional Music Therapists: www.apmt.org/
- The International Association for Voice Movement Therapy <http://www.iavmt.org/index2.html>
- The Association for Dance Movement Therapy UK: www.admt.org.uk/

Where to find musicians

- To contact professional community musicians try www.soundsense.org
- There are also regional centres that may be able to recommend musicians, for example Generator in the North of England. (www.generator.org.uk)
- Many university, colleges and schools have performing art courses
- Local authorities also sometimes employ musicians in schools or youth projects. They also have workers who specialise in the arts and cultural events
- Some NHS trusts, councils and charities employ music therapists. They may be able to tie in relevant projects
- To find your local regional office of the Arts Council go to <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/regions/index.php>
- Local people may be a good source of talent if supported. In the UK over 21% of the UK population over five years old play an instrument, with 57% of these being under 35 years. An additional 15.5m people would also like to learn to play music ⁹⁴
- Similarly co-workers may be able to help. In Sunderland there was a local tradition for several years of staff putting on a pantomime at Christmas. This was most successful when people could rehearse after their shift in their own workplace. Staff may want to be involved in health projects using music and have the skills to do so. This could either be in their own time or as paid overtime. ⁹⁵

Remember that being a skilled musician is not enough. The skills to engage with the public are equally important. Musicians will also need support from health workers and social marketing experts if any project is going to be successful.

How much would using music in public health cost?

In 'No Surrender' Bruce Springsteen's lyrics talk about learning more from a three minute record than he ever learnt at school

Lyric publishers are much more stringent than book publishers about people using quotes from their works. This is why there are not any songs quoted in this chapter. Even the licence that the NHS has with the Copyright Licensing Agency around photocopying and scanning forbids copying music and lyrics. Anyone needing to print song words for any reason should add the cost into their budget proposals. ⁹⁶

As well as the cost of performance there is also rehearsal time. Singers may also need back up musicians. To find the rates recommended by the Musicians' Union go to <http://www.musiciansunion.org.uk/>. Click on the advice button at the top of the page. This gives information on rates recommended for different jobs e.g. stage performances, studio work etc. Alternatively try Equity at http://www.equity.org.uk/start_theatre.htm. This gives costs for singers, dancers, actors etc.

On top of this there is a need to pay for relevant licences for using other people's music. For more information go to <http://www.mcps-prs-alliance.co.uk/subsites/router/5/default.asp#>

How to find out more

There are a number of journals that are worth subscribing to

- *Feedback: Your Essential Youth Music Update*
www.youthmusic.org.uk
Subscribe at <http://www.youthmusic.org.uk/subscribe.jsp>
- *Sounding Board: The Journal of Community Music*
Email: info@soundsense.org
- *Link: Connecting the Music Education Community*
Subscribe at
<https://www.impromptupublishing.com/subscribe/link/subscribe1.php>
- *Mailout: Developing Participation in the Arts Across the British Isles*
<http://www.e-mailout.org/>
Subscribe at <http://www.e-mailout.org/subscribe.htm>