

The use of Sound Therapy in Palliative Care

By Lisa Pollock from the Forest of Dean

I've been a complementary therapist for over 15 years now. Four and a half years ago I joined the hospice complementary therapy team at Great Oaks specialising more in palliative/ life treating illness, also supporting carers during difficult times. Hospice work now makes up a big portion of what I do.

I recently qualified as a sound therapist with the College of Sound Healing and have been incorporating the sound therapy into my work at the hospice. I started by running a presentation workshop on 'What is Sound Therapy?'

This allowed the patients to experience Tibetan bowls and healing instruments as well as the power of voice and using sound/voice to balance the chakras. This workshop was part of a course called 'Back to Wellness', which gave patients tools to use for self-help. Other techniques that I used in the course were hand massage, Bach flowers, EFT and chi gong.

Due to the great interest in sound therapy, I was asked to run group sessions once a month. I ran my first relaxation sound bath in January with another work colleague Donna Howell who is also training in sound therapy.

We worked very well together supporting over 13 patients with a diversity of health and mobility needs. The room was set up for all the patient's needs; some floor mats, couches, large chairs and small chairs.

We started with a 30-minute sound bath using Tibetan bowls, bells gongs, shakers etc. I also used the aura soma pomanders that help to clear the energies. We then put the people into groups of three and we got them to sound the heart sound AH to each other. We finished with stamping the feet and grounding sounds.

The feedback was very positive. I'm sure the sessions will grow and adapt to the group's needs. The hospice will be running open sessions once a month for those who wish to attend.

Feedback from Pat Roberts (A carer at the Hospice)

"What a wonderful experience I had at your sound session yesterday at Great Oaks! Whilst lying flat we had an hour of very restful sounds made from a large variety of wonderful instruments. To allow the sounds into our minds in such a tranquil environment was so healing. I felt 'LIFTED' and re-energised and ready to face a new day."

"The humming experience was also an opportunity to give warmth and healing to others in our group. Well done, and please can I come again when you have another session? With grateful thanks for all you do."