The use of music therapy to address psychosocial needs of informal caregivers:
An updated integrative review

Adrienne C. Steiner, PhD, MT-BC

Abstract
In 2020 there was 117 million care dependent Americans with an estimated 45 million individuals available to provide care (AARP Public Policy Institute & National Alliance for Caregiving, 2020). As a multidimensional clinical service, music therapy can delivery care from a patient-and-family centered approach, while targeting psychosocial needs of caregivers. The purpose of this investigation was to systematically review and analyze the literature on music therapy used to address psychosocial needs of informal caregivers. Studies were obtained through a computer-assisted search using OneSearch platform, ProQuest Databases for dissertations and theses, and a manual search of other pertinent journals based on the established criteria. The search produced (N=33) studies, which were appraised for quality utilizing the Collaborating Center for Integrative Reviews and Evidence Summaries (CClRES) Evidence Leveling System (ELS) (Cuenca & Crawford, 2011). Three categories were developed to sort and synthesize the literature, which included studies with interventions: targeting caregivers (CG) and care receivers (CR) simultaneously (n=22), targeting CGs specifically (n=9), and targeting CRs specifically (n=2). Various research designs and intervention techniques were represented in studies. Documented changes included: anxiety, bereavement/grief/pre-loss support, coping strategies, depression, fatigue, hopelessness, mood, perceived stress, perceived relaxation, quality of life, satisfaction, self-efficacy, self-esteem, strain, support, and wellbeing. Coded studies represented a variety of evidence levels, including level B (n=11), level C (n=13), and Level E (n=9). Further results and recommendations are discussed within the paper.

Keywords: music therapy, informal caregivers, family caregivers, psychosocial health, integrative review