

# Armonica



## MUSIC AND HEALTH

**SECTOR: Promotion of Art and Culture**

**FIELD OF INTERVENTION: Performing Arts (Cinema/Theatre/Music/Dance)**

**Advisory Board for the Scientific Part of the project: [Dott.ssa Domenica Taruscio](#) Director Rare Disease Research Centre of the Higher Institute of Health**

The project Music and Health, promotes an idea of culture and art as elements that give beauty and harmony to life, and believes that musical art, in particular, has the ability to support and include particularly fragile and disadvantaged categories. Born in 2017, the project is divided into musical communication workshops, dedicated to patients and their families, who participate, expressing their creativity and their potential, They feel recognized and accepted individually and in their community. They therefore represent an opportunity for aggregation and cultural enjoyment accessible to all, and at the same time close to individual needs. The project also aims to support the study, research and constant training of professionals specialized in the use of musical art for therapeutic purposes.

## **NEEDS AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS**

### **Initial and context analysis:**

- In hospital reality, the approach to pathology is no longer understood only in function of the treatment protocol: currently we try to pay full attention to the person, without underestimating any aspect, especially on the psychological and relational level. The concept of "humanization" concerns the welcome and especially the relational aspect: knowing and deepening the emotional dimension, can help to compensate, at least in part, the instability and uncertainties caused by the disease.
- The pandemic has marked a serious crisis in the cultural sector, causing a significant decrease in the participation of citizens, workers and performers in artistic and cultural activities, limiting the possibilities of use and production. Art and culture, have always needed their protagonists (artists and public) in a perspective of sharing and exchange fundamental for the complete development of the civil and social identity of individuals and the community.
- The pandemic has also widened the gap between people, especially those in fragile situations, as they have felt more vulnerable to the virus. Many people have lost their personal ties due to the lack of ongoing care or the possibility of being able to travel by private transport to meet other people. In addition, many voluntary activities have stopped or thinned out, to the detriment of those who were accustomed to cultural enjoyment as the only opportunity to meet, exchange and enrichment.
- The condition of isolation and social distancing affects strongly, both the most disadvantaged social groups, and young people, who increasingly lose motivation and interest in their surroundings. They need stimuli and opportunities for growth, to find a positive look towards the future and their professional and life projects.

### **Analysis of needs:**

Recipient of the project, is the Centro Clinico Nemo di Milano that, since 2008, takes care of people with neuromuscular diseases, and is today an important point of reference for the diagnosis, treatment and assistance of these diseases. The choice of such a structure is not accidental but is perfectly in line with the concept of humanization in care contexts. The primary need of the Nemo Clinical Center is to improve the quality of life of the people followed, providing them and their families with clinical, care and psychological support that responds to their global needs. It is a unique model of healthcare that, in addition to providing a multidisciplinary approach, is based on a concept of care that focuses on the person and his primary needs. Everything revolves around the sick person and his family. Armonica Onlus and its project partners (Cultural Association D.I.M.A., Fondazione Serena Onlus - Centro Clinico Nemo, Cultural Association IUBAL) with this proposal intend to

respond to these needs, making available their figures and skills that, However, they need adequate human and economic resources to achieve their objectives

### Analysis of emergency needs covid 19 - innovation strategies

The current state of emergency generated by Covid-19, made it necessary to use computer platforms that integrate within an organic and extensible framework the moments of musical encounter with patients and that are also a valid tool for the activities planned by the project, starting from training.

The system that we will use, provides two conference modes: a "classic" mode of alternation between participants, and a mode of "together" contemporary interaction. The web platform harmonises and combines the various functionalities, allowing a streamlined and easy use without forcing the user to install a software on his computer.

#### **Strengths of the company:**

- The beating heart of the Music and Health project are the Sound Laboratories, whose main objective is to improve the reception and quality of life of the person and those around him, acting as a bridge between the interior and the exterior, between hospitalization and social life, between the hospital structure and the multifaceted cultural reality of the community;
- Through the use of music in therapy, we support art and culture as educational tools for young people and adults, with particular attention to the most vulnerable. The aim is to instill a renewed and renewed active participation in the territory, in an expressly inclusive perspective, through new initiatives of socio-cultural involvement, enhancement of individuals and artistic fruition.

#### **Criticality:**

In addition to the experience gained from 2017 to today, the Music and Health project for its concrete and effective realization within the Centro Clinico Nemo in Milan, requires adequate human and economic resources, to better meet the needs set out above. Based on the above, it is essential to invest in the preparation and work of professionals in the artistic and music sector, for which, in addition to the academic title, a specific training is needed to guide the workshops with in the places of care.

### **OBJECTIVES**

#### **Purpose:**

- To help through sound laboratories to improve the quality of life of patients, and their caregivers;
- to train professionals specializing in "art-therapy";

- develop "cross-over" models and paths, through the encounter between art and science, in the field of research of so-called health humanities;
- development of an effective computer system to interact remotely, exceeding the generated pandemic limit;
- involvement of young people and the most fragile groups in an artistic project, as an alternative to socio-existential discomfort and emotional isolation.
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**General objectives:**

- improve the quality of life of people through art therapy, giving them the opportunity to find their own expressive mode, allowing them to enter into a relationship with reality outside the clinical-hospital context;

to promote the humanization of care through culture and art understood as generating elements of harmony, serenity, and as support in the psychic, emotional and relational dimension;

- support the study, research and constant training of operators specialized in the use of musical art in situations of particular fragility.

**Specific objectives:**

- Prepare and evaluate a model of musical experiential laboratory suitable for the guests of the Clinical Center Nemo
- To stimulate awareness, concentration, memory and cognitive functions by promoting the most appropriate functional skills for the living environment;
- to help the expression of feelings and the orientation of their emotions in the interpersonal relationship;
- Encouraging self- determination, encouraging independence and empowerment;
- facilitate communication and interaction starting from non-verbal language to arrive at a potential recovery of the linguistic aspect;
- to increase participation in and socialization by increasing integration into the community;

- or improving the quality of individual and community daily life;
- to bring about a change in the individual, with the development and growth of the person;
- contribute to self-fulfillment in spite of the difficulties caused by the disease.

**Expected results:**

Through the analysis of recommendations, the aim is to develop new methods and methods of study in the field of health and pathology, embracing an increasingly wide social and cultural context;

generate empathy by fostering interpersonal relationships in hospital and socio-health contexts;

study and application of strategies necessary for the realization of musical laboratories addressed to a wide spectrum of pathologies;

a path of experimentation and research, with the aim of defining new methods of collaboration between art and science, starting from the affinities of objectives, survey/work methods and diversity of approach;

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- contribute to self-fulfillment in spite of the difficulties caused by the disease;
- develop new itineraries for the training of artistic professionals who are able to share and apply their knowledge and skills in a multidisciplinary field.

### **STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS**

Intervention strategies, methods of implementation and actions.

Music encourages personal expression, facilitating the relationship: it also allows you to express your moods, improving the sense of well-being. Within the boundary marked by pathology, music works towards a certain psychophysical balance, a certain autonomy, participation, and integration. Music intervenes in the following areas:

- Sensory and Psychomotor Area
- Psycho-Affective Area
- Socio-Communicative Area

Recipients of the musical interventions are people with neuromuscular pathologies, such as ALS, SMA and some types of Muscular Dystrophy. The number of participants, the average age, the type of pathology and other specific characteristics, will be taken over by the Clinical Center Nemo through an internal investigation to be carried out in the first phase of the project during which the collaboration of the staff of the host structure and the network of patient associations in the territory to identify the specific needs of users. The music workshops are led by five operators who will work in presence or online. The selected operators hold academic qualifications and have gained experience in the artistic-musical, hospital and psycho-pedagogical fields. The laboratories will be attended by social workers, volunteers of the Centro Clinico Nemo and patient associations in the area. During the musical workshops each action is aimed at identifying the physical, emotional, relational needs of the patient and his family, and to stimulate new awareness that can improve the quality of daily life.

The flexibility of the methods and contents is essential in the conduct of the laboratories: operators use active and receptive techniques, improvisation, listening and/ or composition

of music according to the needs, conditions and situations that meet. Among the most widely used techniques, improvisation is the one that is best suited to create interactions in situations that require rapid and impromptu changes. The musical activities, coordinated by D.I.M.A., are built on the needs of the users, therefore, take into account the age, the time of hospitalization, the spaces available and the cognitive-behavioral factors. The laboratories will be held monthly, will have a variable duration, not exceeding two hours. It is necessary a training path open to musicians, music therapists, to all the figures working in the artistic and cultural field, to teachers and students. There will be specific courses, seminars, workshops divided into theoretical and practical lessons. The meetings are held by academic professors, by figures belonging to the world of health, science, neuroscience, psycho-pedagogical disciplines and by music professionals. During the meetings will be deepened many aspects related to sound, speech, gestures, silence, art in general and their use for therapeutic purposes.

The focus of study and learning is the concept of "communication/ expression of emotions through art", which emphasizes the relational strength of the artistic disciplines, especially music.

#### **CONCRETE STRATEGIES FOR ACTION:**

- Analysis and evaluation of rhythmic and sound perception - achievable in presence and/or online on a dedicated platform;
- Composition and execution in neurological deficits (disorders of speech, motor coordination, memory, emotional control) - achievable in presence and/or online on a dedicated platform;
- Test for the evaluation of the degree of well-being generated by the expression of emotions, and the use of non-verbal languages - achievable in presence and/ or online on a dedicated platform;
- application of specific techniques within the musical laboratories that, will be achievable in presence and/ or online on a dedicated platform, in compliance with the "Shared protocol of regulation of measures for the contrast and containment of the spread of Covid-19 in hospital contexts";
- use of narrative medicine, as an element of support to know and deepen the patient's experience during the treatment, often long and articulated. Through the laboratory, the sick person has the opportunity to express themselves freely and to share their emotions with others.

## **INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES AND WAYS OF RESPONDING TO THE CURRENT PANDEMIC.**

The Covid-19 emergency highlighted the need to accelerate the process of developing new communication strategies, training, production and creation of consultation materials, designed for the network. This development process has made it necessary to use a multimedia platform that allows, in addition to the online provision of high-tech multimedia materials, stable communication and a high speed of consultation. Thanks to near-zero latency, where remote interventions are necessary due to the health emergency, the platform allows new potential for online interaction between operators and patients participating in laboratories. This ensures the continuity of the project within the national and international network, virtually without borders. In addition, from the point of view of research, you can interview and collect data with the available tools. Psychologists will connect online and hear patients on the phone, in the belief that from an empathic and emotional point of view there are no major issues, as already noted by the groups that follow online, in which the participants who interact, They created a good relationship. The school in DAD has taught that online activity can also be formative and useful.

## **TIMING OF IMPLEMENTATION**

The project is biennial and includes a path as follows:

### **FIRST ANNUAL**

- preliminary investigation within the Clinical Center Neo coordinated by the staff to identify participants in the laboratories (3 months);
- **Training of professionals involved in the laboratory**

Coordination and logistical organization (4 months).

### **SECOND YEAR**

- **Sound labs**

Depending on the current pandemic phase, the meetings will take place in the presence and/or online. Two monthly meetings are scheduled, the duration of which depends on the number and type of participants identified in the preliminary survey phase;

- Refresher courses for the operators involved, in parallel to the period of activity of the laboratories;
- Data collection, analysis, evaluation of results for each objective and overall evaluation of the project: (10 months) in parallel with the path of the laboratories;
- Dissemination: (9 months) in parallel with the path of the laboratories and the evaluation of the results.



## **EXPECTED RESULTS:**

to increase, on the basis of recommendations and results or results, the development of methods and structures to be used in increasingly wider socio-cultural contexts;

develop interpersonal relationships, generating inclusion in hospital and socio-health contexts;

To apply a set of strategies necessary for the development of new activities for patients with a broad spectrum of diseases;

to create a path of experimentation and research that is capable of building an ever more stringent channel of communication between art and science, starting from the affinities of objectives, methods of investigation/ work and diversity of approach;

to encourage the training of new professionals in the artistic sector, who can apply their knowledge and skills in multidisciplinary fields.

develop new techniques for the use of sound and silence in the therapeutic field: topics such as, for example, sound and gesture through music, and their ability to generate contact between the external and internal world of the patient/ patient.

The focus will be on the "sound-rhythm" combination used essentially for its dynamic characteristics. The involvement of the socio-health personnel is important to set up a fruitful collaboration, given their path of support and assistance to patients and their families: working in synergy means creating an environment of serenity and harmony. The project counts the presence of a team of experts who will observe the various stages, in order to measure the expected objectives, through a data collection, whose feedback will be written in the form of reports, evaluation grids, audio-video documentation (upon acceptance of all participants through a data processing release).

realize an interesting research focus on the concept of "communication of emotions through music", supported by interventions of the scientific, cultural and socio-anthropological world that will put in emphasizing the relational and social strength that music can generate. The affinity between musical gesture, empathy and mirror neurons will be one of the main themes treated by outstanding scholars of the topic.

To use art as an instrument of consciousness in relation to existence.