

What is Life Care Radio and what does it do?

The benefits of Hospital Radio are acknowledged by many who work in the healthcare profession. Speaking to the BBC in 2012, the Head of Science and Ethics at the British Medical Association suggested that helping people to feel better can reduce their need for painkillers and other medical intervention. Life Care Radio is founded on the same principle, providing a personalised service, usually incorporating request visits and one-to-one conversations with clients and residents, helping to reduce isolation as well as make a genuine difference in a person's care, rehabilitation and day to day life. As such, the service is tailored to those receiving long term care such as those in residential and nursing homes although anyone can listen via our website: www.lifecareradio.org.uk.

Music can be extremely beneficial for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia. Music can connect memories and important events in an individual's life promoting a personal and sometimes profound response. Selections from someone's young adult years, or in advanced conditions, from childhood years, can help to create a potential for engagement. (Alzheimer's Foundation of America, 2013). These cognitive connections are deep and complex and have even been shown to awaken people from comas (Roberts, 2006; The Telegraph, 2012).

It is not only individuals with dementia who benefit. As many of our team have extensive hospital broadcasting experience, we have seen the difference our work can do to people's general well being, mood, outlook and medical health. Even if the difference we make is simply bringing a smile to someone's face – the work that we do is incredibly powerful – perhaps more so when you consider that everyone involved is a volunteer, giving their time freely because they want to make a difference. The listening units we install into homes cost them nothing and we raise all funds through donations and charitable work. At the heart of Life Care Radio are the connections we make – between younger and older people, between people from different walks of life and communities and between those who may feel isolated and those who care. This sense of community is perhaps our greatest gift and it is one that we are keen to share because we have seen the value that it has in people's lives.

Alzheimer's Foundation of America (2013) *Education and Care: Music*. [Online]
<http://www.alzfdn.org/EducationandCare/musictherapy.html>

BBC (2012) *Whatever Happened to Hospital Radio?* [Online]
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-19270013>

Roberts, B. (2006) *Coma Girl is Woken by Blunt Hit*. [Online]
<http://www.mirror.co.uk/3am/celebrity-news/coma-girl-is-woken-by-blunt-hit-630067>.

The Telegraph (2012) *Girl Woken from Coma After Listening to Adele*. [Online]
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/children_wealth/9338820/Girl-woken-from-coma-after-listening-to-Adele.html.