



# Music Mirrors

Spreading the concept  
across south London

November 2016

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### Executive Summary

Music Mirrors is a life story resource to trigger autobiographical memory using sound or music. The Health Innovation Network (HIN), the Academic Health Science Network for South London led a project to promote music mirrors across the South London dementia community. The aim of this project was to increase the number of people with dementia using music mirrors by developing a 'Train the Trainer' programme for professionals, care home staff and volunteers across a variety of health, social care and community settings. 182 people participated in the training sessions with over 90% of participants rating the quality and content as good or excellent. Four organisations adopted Music Mirrors as part of planned intervention study with results available later this year. Follow up showed that participants are committed to the concept with a small number of Music Mirrors created but time, particularly for care home staff and access to technology are barriers to wider implementation. Feedback identified a need for additional support in making a Music Mirror. The HIN will work with Music Mirrors to develop a short film and simple guidance for families to support them in providing life story prompts to care staff and volunteers.

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### Background

Music Mirrors is a simple reminiscence resource tool, linking life stories told in people's own words to recorded sound and music to facilitate person centred care. The concept was developed by 'Come Singing' a voluntary organisation in Norfolk, and Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Mental Health Trust. It is used by hospitals, care homes and third sector organisations as a reminiscence tool and contributes to person centred care by stimulating conversation and engagement.

In November 2015, Music Mirrors was presented to the South London Care and Nursing Homes Forum, a network made up of approximately 350 older people homes set up to disseminate innovation and best practice. The concept received significant interest from the sector so in response the Health Innovation Network worked in partnership with Music Mirrors to develop a training offer for interested organisations and individuals across South London.

Music Mirrors as a tool can support care homes meet the following policy and regulation standards:

- NICE quality standard (QS50) Mental wellbeing of older people in care homes
- Care Certificate Standards:
  - 5.2 Understand working in a person centred way (5.2a Describe the importance of finding out the history, preferences, wishes and needs of the individual).
  - Outcome 5.6 Support the individual to maintain their identity and self- esteem (5.6c Support and encourage individuals own sense of identity and self-esteem).

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### Aim

The aim of this project was to raise awareness of the Music Mirrors tool and train people in its use to encourage more people with dementia across South London to be supported in creating their own Music Mirror.

### Method

Train the Trainer sessions were offered free of charge to interested care homes, organisations, community groups and individuals across South London between February and August 2016. The programme was widely promoted via targeted emails, newsletters, events and presentations at care home forums. Bespoke training was offered in local settings for organisations and community groups and three 'open' workshops were offered in a central London location. Evaluation forms were completed by each participant. Participants were followed up in September 2016 to identify progress implementing Music Mirrors and barriers experienced.

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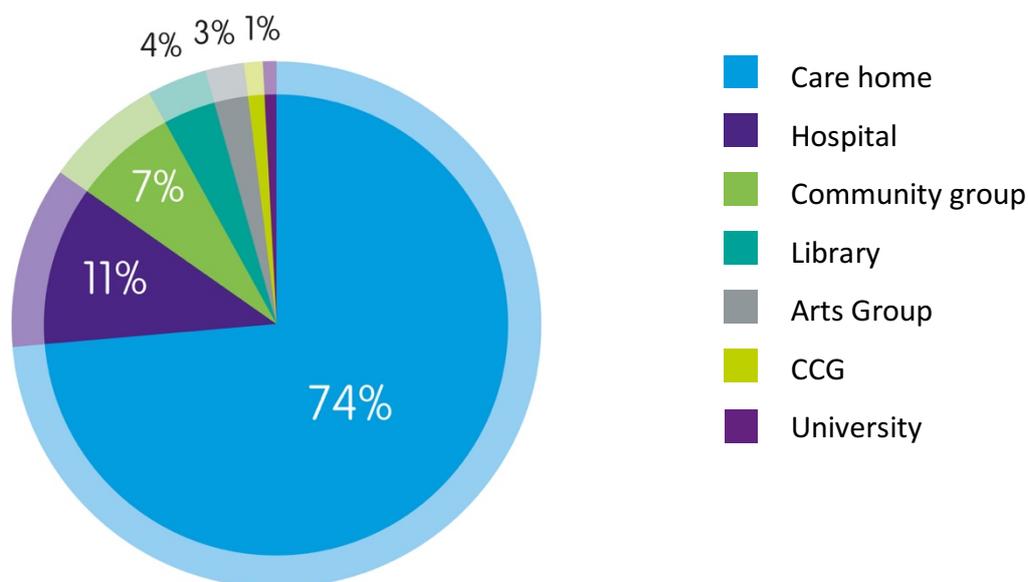
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### Results

In total 182 people attended training in Music Mirrors. 165 people participated in the full training session (2.5 hours) and 17 in a shortened training session (1.5 hours). Care home staff accounted for 74% of people trained (145 people) with training sessions held across six care homes, two care home forums and attendance at the three HIN workshops. In total 50 care homes were represented. Two hospitals requested training - St Georges University Hospital for occupational therapy staff and Mile End Hospital for the community mental health team for older people. The remaining participants were from dementia peer support groups, arts organisations for people with dementia, Southwark library who are developing their dementia support services and an academic from Zurich University, Switzerland.

Ten out of 12 South London Boroughs were represented by organisations or individuals participating in training.

Figure 1: % of participants by organisation type



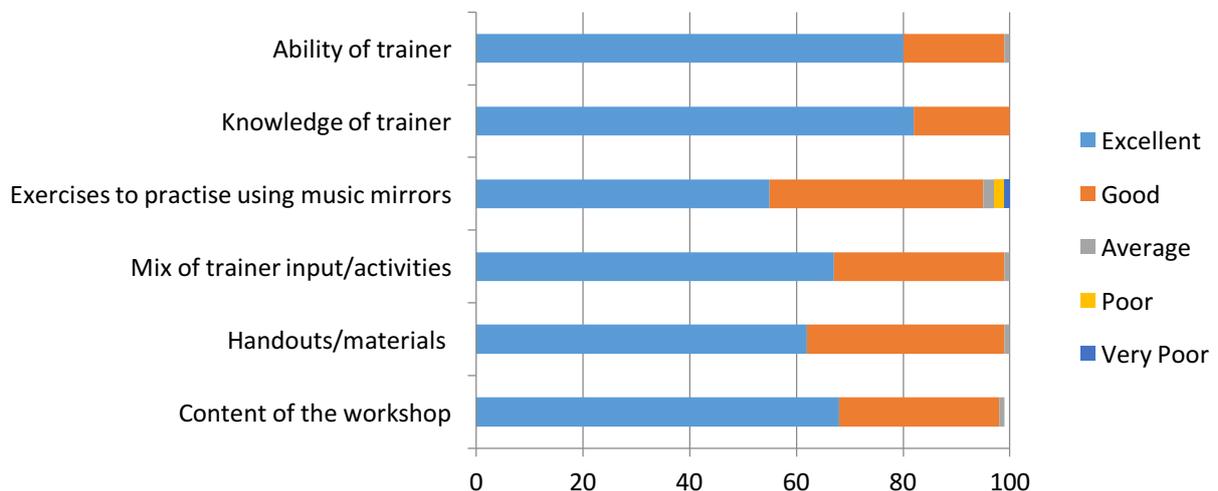
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### Feedback from evaluation forms

165 participants completed evaluation forms (Appendix A) with over 90% of respondents rating the training as good or excellent for all questions (See Table 1). 80% rated the knowledge and ability of the trainer as excellent. Although 95% rated the exercises to practice making a music mirror as good or excellent four participants felt them to be poor or very poor. These low scores can be explained in the qualitative feedback for question six detailed below.

Table 1. Results in % from evaluation forms



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## Participant comments

Participants were asked to feedback on the following questions:

### **Q2: How did you feel during this workshop?**

Participants stated that they felt 'excited, interested, engaged and motivated' by attending the training, with some participants reflecting on their own experiences of music in addition to feeling 'inspired' by the opportunity to use the tool with people they know or care for:

*"very moved by what a difference music and sound can make to a persons' life"*  
Activity Coordinator

*"wonderful. Bought back memories which I loved. I felt this is something that I could introduce to people whom I work with and others. Inspired."* Care home worker

*"I felt this is a marvelous opportunity, to connect/communicate with our residents"*  
Care home worker

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## Participant comments continued

### Q3: What was the most valuable part of the workshop?

Participants found the three films showing how music helps as a reminiscence tool valuable, as well as the practical exercises to understand how to create a music mirror through reminiscence. The enthusiasm of the trainer, Heather Edwards was mentioned on many participants' feedback forms particularly when sharing her own personal experiences of dementia and how these influenced the development of Music Mirrors. Participants found the concept of how music reminiscence helps people with dementia became clearer during the session:

*“recognising the benefits of the smallest piece of information from a dementia resident that can be used to enhance their quality of life”* Care home worker

*“realising there is a magnificent tool to help residents continue to be happy”*  
Care home worker

*“thinking about how not just music, but sounds were very important in triggering motions and memories”* Community Group volunteer

*“when Heather gave and showed examples of the positive impact of music mirrors on people with memory problems”* Activity Coordinator

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## Participant comments continued

### Q4: How will Music Mirrors help you in your role?

Care home staff frequently commented that it will help them get to know resident's better. Many care home staff felt Music Mirrors would enable them to engage positively with residents with dementia. Activity coordinators working across care homes and community groups mirrored the care home staff comments but also felt that the tool provided another way to work with clients, and encouraged them to think more widely about the role of music and sound. Participants felt that Music Mirrors has a role in transfer of care and could be used to reassure and calm distressed residents.

*“it will give me a creative tool to know residents better in the home I work in. It will allow me to spend quality and meaningful time with them”* Care home worker

*“to know how to make memories come back to life for those that have lost it”*  
Activity Coordinator

*“In connecting with dementia patients more clearly and helping to make their dementia more enjoyable and giving them a quality of life”* Occupational Therapist

*“it will help us to give person centred care and help us to prevent challenging behavior”* Care home worker

*“to support people with dementia in care settings to complete music mirrors and support transfers of care”* Attendee at CCG Care Home Forum

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## Participant comments continued

**Q6: What support do you need to make a music mirror? and Q7: How could this workshop be improved?**

Answers to both these questions were similar with over 80 participants wanting more examples, through film or practical exercises in creating a music mirror. Participants also wanted to spend time looking at the Music Mirrors website which has functionality to upload and store individual mirrors for people to access from any computer or tablet. Lack of available technology, e.g. iPads or tablets or understanding of technology such as YouTube was cited as a likely barrier by some care homes.

*“I thought the workshop was fantastic. Perhaps Heather could talk us through how she makes a music mirror with specific ways she gathers information”*

Care home worker

*“to actually make a mirror with someone in the group, not just discuss our music so we can see the full process”* Activity Coordinator

*“we don’t have access to equipment such as computers to play things through”*

Care home worker

*“slightly less case studies and more on how to do it - including the technology used”*  
Community group worker.

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### Follow up results

Participants were contacted in September 2016 to follow up on progress made and identify barriers to implementation.

Zurich University and a care home in Greenwich are planning to use Music Mirrors as an intervention study to improve wellbeing for residents in care homes. A dementia support group in Lambeth is trialling with 8 members and volunteers and The Royal Borough of Kingston Local Authority is using Music Mirrors as a quality measure with Activity Coordinators based in care homes. Five community groups had cascaded the training to volunteers and started to discuss music memories with members. A number of care homes and a befrienders group had begun to create music mirrors with positive feedback from people with dementia; however the following barriers were experienced:

- Time is a barrier for care homes – finding the time to sit down and discuss music and memories with one resident is manageable but for all residents seems a huge task.
- Activity staff do not have the time to focus solely on the creation of music mirrors which is viewed as resource intensive, as they have other activities happening across the home.
- Families not providing full life histories for residents.
- Access to equipment e.g. computers or iPads to create and play the Music Mirror or to access via the Music Mirrors website.

Respondents remained enthusiastic about the concept of Music Mirrors and keen to implement in their setting but the short timeframe between training and follow up, and staff on leave over summer was cited frequently as an explanation as to why many participants hadn't yet implemented Music Mirrors.

Feedback from evaluation forms and follow up telephone conversations with participants highlighted two areas for further development to support wider adoption of Music Mirrors:

- a worksheet for families to complete to capture life story information for care workers and volunteers to use as a prompt.
- visual guidance on how to create a music mirror using the internet and YouTube.

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### Reflections from the Trainer

Heather Edwards, the founder of Music Mirrors and trainer responsible for delivering the training reflects on her experience of and challenges in delivering a large-scale training programme across a wide range of settings and job roles.

#### What worked well?

The broad range of participants - people living with dementia as well as those working with them in many different environments meant rich input of ideas on both making and using Music Mirrors. For participants the most useful parts of training seemed to be hearing how Music Mirrors are used (including short video illustrations) and the practical exercise of working in pairs to make a short written sample. At one care home in particular it was very moving to see residents with dementia, families, carers and housekeeping staff all take part in the exercise, supporting, encouraging and learning from each other in the process of making a Music Mirror. Very positive attitudes towards the concept meant that group discussion always produced valuable practical insights and suggestions.

#### Challenges and what could be improved?

The main practical barrier to people going on to make Mirrors is time. My learning from the feedback is that it should be made much clearer how very simple a Music Mirror is, and that it does not require technology: just a few brief words on paper describing memories of sound or music can help to build bridges between people. This will now lead to the development of a simple basic template for writing down material that has real meaning for people living with dementia, and storing it as part of care plans. At training sessions in care homes especially, more reliable internet access would be useful for hands-on practice in linking words to sound and music, and for exploring the Music Mirrors website.

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### Next steps

In response to feedback received the HIN will work with Music Mirrors to:

- develop simple guidance to capture life story information to use as a prompt to support the development of a music mirror (appendix b),
- make a short film showing how to create a music mirror. The film will be made available on the HIN and Music Mirrors websites as well as video sharing sites.
- reiterate the simplicity of Music Mirrors as a reminiscence tool and promote non-technological approaches to creating a Music Mirror for those without access to technology.

A credit card sized Music Mirrors prompt card has been designed to be held by the individual or family, to inform carers or those involved in someone's care that they have a Music Mirror and how to access it (appendix c).

These additional tools will form part of the overall training package delivered by Music Mirrors and help support individuals in creating music mirrors independent of attending or following attendance at formal training.

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### Conclusion

Music Mirrors was recognised prior to this work as a simple, cost effective tool to support reminiscence work and facilitate person centred care. This project was effective in raising awareness of the tool - predominately within care homes as well as other health and social care settings. Evaluation showed that the content and quality of the training was rated highly and participants found the experience of discussing memories with people with dementia enjoyable, as did the people themselves.

Participants cited a need for further support to understand the technology used to create a Music Mirror as well as difficulties in accessing iPads, PCs or similar to use the Mirror. A learning point is in future training to stress the simplicity of tool and demonstrate how Music Mirrors can be shared by creating a CD or simply by talking about sounds and music personal to people, as well as through technology or via the Music Mirrors website.

For those working with a number of residents in care homes time is the biggest barrier to successful implementation, as well as not having enough information about people's lives to create a detailed music mirror. Lack of time and the request for supporting materials to help make a Mirror highlight the difficulties care home staff experience in getting to know their residents well. The role of family and friends in providing this information was frequently cited, but it should be noted that care homes themselves also have a responsibility to proactively engage with residents to find out more about their lives prior to moving to the care home. Music Mirrors is a tool that encourages conversation between staff and residents and once created, is something that can be enjoyed together to build relationships and deliver person centred care.

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## Limitations

Understanding the true impact and spread of this project is based on self-reported activity from participants and there is no objective measure as to what is reported and what is actually observed in practice.

## Case Study

# Janet and Gwen



**Link Age Southwark** has been providing friendly volunteer support to older people in Southwark for over 20 years and offers a befriending service for people with mild-moderate dementia. A staff member attended the training workshop and enthused by the passion of Heather Edwards and the concept, particularly that the Mirror is available online and can be retrieved in any setting, such as hospital, care homes or other settings, decided to train the Charity's volunteer befrienders. Befrienders visit weekly and are well placed to discuss and record the information needed to make a mirror, which can be used when they visit each week but also by care staff to encourage meaningful interactions and conversations regardless of whether family members are around to prompt about a person's life, interests and passions.

### Making the Mirror

**Gwen:** *"It is the best thing ever. It was fun making the mirror, I've been sitting up in bed laughing my head off - once you start going back to those times - it makes you laugh when you listen to it. It was alright to do, only a problem if I had to write something down as my spelling isn't good"*

**Janet:** *"We talked about important memories one week, then I went away to find the music and the next week we listened to it together. It encouraged us to do more things over and beyond the mirror - we chatted about lots of other music and memories"*

### Using the technology

**Janet:** *"There are loads of clips on YouTube. I was amazed in fact and really surprised I could find most of the originals, for example Flanagan & Allen actually singing 'Underneath the Arches'. When I couldn't find the original it was a question of choosing the most appropriate and showing it to Gwen. It was easy to upload the songs from YouTube to the Music Mirrors website. Gwen has the detail so anyone can get it"*

### How does Music Mirrors help you?

**Gwen:** *"It keeps you alive, keeps your brain going and we had a good laugh. These memories are all locked up in your head, they come and go you know they are there - this helps get them out. It is like opening a shut door - letting the memories out"*

**Janet:** *"It is useful to have a focus. Gwen and I have never struggled to find things to talk about but for some people it will help to do something together, to talk about, to go back to - it acts as a prompt"*

### Gwen's Music Mirror

#### **Molly Malone (Cockles & Mussels):**

Memories of Sunday tea in the 1960s when the delivery man used to come and sell cockles and winkles. Memories of putting the black 'foot' of the winkles on her face as pretend beauty spots.

#### **Little Boxes by Pete Seeger:**

Memories of overcrowded housing in the 1960s, her family of 7 sharing 2 bedrooms and waiting to be rehoused.

#### **There's an old mill down the stream by Nellie Dean:**

Memories as a young girl sitting in her Grandmother's house watching the men coming out the pub singing this song, and the women carrying jugs of beer back home.

#### **Underneath the Arches by**

**Flanagan & Allen:** memories of sleeping under the arches during air raids and this being a popular song in the music halls during the war.

#### **Coming to take me away (ha ha)**

**by Jerry Samuels:** memories of her eldest son singing this song whilst heavily pregnant with her twin boys waiting to be transferred from home to the maternity hospital.

# Appendix A: Evaluation Form



## Evaluation: Music Mirrors 'Train the Trainer' Workshop DATE - VENUE

1. Please rate the following by putting a tick in the relevant box

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Content of the workshop					
Handouts/materials used					
Mix of trainer input / activities and questions					
Exercises to practice using Music Mirrors					
Knowledge of trainer					
Ability of trainer					

2. How did you feel during this workshop?

3. What was the most valuable part of the workshop?

4. Please tell us how Music Mirrors will help you in your role:

5. As a result of the training do you now feel able to make a music mirror?  Yes  No

6. If no, what support do you need?

7. How could this workshop be improved?

8. Would you recommend this training to others?  Yes  No

9. Can we contact you in the future for research related to Music Mirrors? If so please leave your contact details:

Name ..... Email..... Tel.....

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Health Innovation Network is the  
Academic Health Science Network  
(AHSN) for South London

## Making a Music Mirror



Making a Music Mirror is very simple. You do not need to attend a training course or be technologically savvy but you do need to have time to sit down with the person whom you are making the mirror and / or their family and friends, to find out about their life to identify personal sounds and music that trigger positive memories. Gathering the information to make the Mirror can be a one-off conversation or take place over a series of conversations.

To get started, using the topics listed below as prompts collect four or five memories that relate to sound or music (cues), and just a few words to explain each one.

- Write the words as an email or in a format that can be shared and for each memory find a version of the sound or music on Youtube.
- Copy the Youtube link and add it the cue.

For example: I grew up near the Tyne and remember going to sleep hearing the sound of foghorns <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbmAslpFQMO>

You now have a Music Mirror - that's all there is to it! Now you can:

- print out the e mail on paper as personal information;
- send and share it with family and friends, or make it available as part of a care plan;
- store the information with a secure password on the [www.musicmirrors.co.uk](http://www.musicmirrors.co.uk) website. The website will guide you through the process.

Topic	Memory	Description of sound or music
Where you grew up town, country, seaside? what you heard		
Family and home street games music in the house days out car journeys		
Education and work School, University and working life		
Worship and religious music		
Going out and hobbies dancing, going to the cinema, theatre, hobbies		
Listening to the radio or records, Favourite television programmes		
Things you <i>wouldn't</i> want to hear		

## Appendix C: Music Mirrors Prompt Card



**A resource for people living  
with memory loss**

**[www.musicmirrors.co.uk](http://www.musicmirrors.co.uk)**

**My name is:.....**

**I have made a Music Mirror, a digital resource of sounds, words and music that are important to me, to share with family and friends and those who support or care for me.**

My Music Mirror may be held by my family or carers, or stored on the Music Mirrors website [www.musicmirrors.co.uk](http://www.musicmirrors.co.uk).

Please ask them to share my Music Mirror or password to access my Music Mirror with you.

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## Acknowledgments

The Health Innovation Network would like to thank Heather Edwards for committing her time to this project and to participants in the training sessions that went on to make a Music Mirror and cascade the training to colleagues. Thank you to LinkAge Southwark and Gwen and Janet who helped with case study.

Heather Edwards would like to acknowledge the generosity of the Health Innovation Network in making this work possible. Heartfelt thanks go to Amy Semple for planning and organising the project, providing resources and materials and for wonderful support and kindness of every sort; also to Rebecca Jarvis and Dr. Hugo de Waal for giving me this opportunity to try to do something useful for people living with dementia.

## References

NICE Quality Standard QS50 Mental Wellbeing of Older People in Care homes available at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs50/chapter/quality-statement-1-participation-in-meaningful-activity>