The Rhythm of Life

Drumming for self expression

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Why Drumming?

• This project, supported by the Australian Government, focuses on drumming for men with younger onset dementia living in the community
Why Drumming?

• Drumming provides a safe and supportive environment to enable members to enhance their quality of life, create a sense of belonging and social connectedness within a drumming community
Why drumming?

• Drumming enables communication without dialogue and provides a sense of connection to self and others—reducing tension, stress, anxiety and social isolation
The Journey

• Consultation and collaboration occurred with key organisations in the Gippsland region to ensure support for the program
  • DBMAS
  • AAV
  • CDAMS
  • Local support groups
What happened?

• An existing 10 week evidence based therapeutic drumming program (DRUMBEAT) was modified for younger men living with dementia, family members and support workers.

• The focus was on exploring connections, building relationships utilising rhythm to communicate.
Rhythm of life themes

• The essential heartbeat
• Relationships
• Harmony
• Community
• The journey
Rhythm of life themes

• Communication
• The seasons
• The rhythm of ME
• Celebrating here and now- shared with important people in our lives- invited for the last week
Was it successful?

• We believe the drumming program enabled all participants to maintain and improve current functional and emotional wellbeing
• We focused on men with younger onset dementia and the specific issues related to their diagnosis and age
Was it successful?

The program encompassed a range of current risk reduction strategies:

• Learning a musical instrument
• Being socially active
• Undertaking physical activity
Was it successful?

- We were able to express ourselves honestly, trusting each other, acknowledging specific convictions and beliefs in a safe space, enabling us all to grow.
- We formed connections and relationships, we became more energetic
Evaluation

• “I found it very inspiring and able to express my emotions and inner feelings”
• “It gave me something to look forward to each week and has encouraged me to continue drumming”
• “The sense of oneness, acceptance mateship and community was surprising and wonderful”