

MUSic, performing and creative Arts professions involved in healthcare:
a portal for VET promotion and mutual recognition of profiles

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Experiences and reflection
about therapeutic effectiveness
Italy

Report realised by:

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Collection of bibliographic references about therapeutic effectiveness of music therapist

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Report on therapeutic effectiveness of Clown therapist

In recent decades humor became an important component of mental and physical health. Clown therapy represents a particular way of using humor in order to promote people's well being.

Recent years have seen a considerable increase in the presence of clown in hospital, especially in paediatrics. Thousands of children across the world watch clown shows during their time in hospital (Koller & Gryski, 2007). However clown doctor have a long history. Same reports says that the clowns have worked in the hospital since the time of Hippocrates because it was thought that the good mood positively affects the healing process. However, the presence of professional clowns in the hospital as part of healthcare team date back to 1986 when Karen Ridd in Winnipeg and Michael Christensen in New York independent to

each other began the practice of clown in pediatric hospitals. The medical staff noted that the arrival of clowns in the hospital had a beneficial effects on the hospitalized patients: the patients felt happier and, as their mood improved they needed to take fewer drugs. After that experience many hospitals decided to create a clown program to support recovered patients.

So, clowns and hospital are currently a normal match. Despite the growing numbers of clown programme, there exists a paucity of studies that have explored the effectiveness of such programmes. Research are needed to evaluated the impact of clowning in health care settings, and more specifically how therapeutic clowns plays a role in well-being of petriatics patients, their families and health care providers.

Hospitalization is considered an adverse event in life, usually causing distress, especially for children (Golden L., Pagala M., & Sukhavasi S., 2006). It is estimated that between 50 and 75% of child population who undergo surgery experience high levels of distress and stress during their time in hospital (Kain, Z., Wang, S., Mayes, L., Krivutza, D., Teague, B., 2001). Child anxiety and psychological distress are characterized by feeling of tension, nervousness and worry (Vagnoli, L., Bastiani, C., Turchi, F., Caprilli, S., & Messeri, A., 2007; Kain, Z. N., Mayes, L. C., & Caramico, L. A., 1996; Kain, Z. N., Mayes, L. C., Weisman, S. J., & Hofstadter, M. B., 2000; Kain, Mayes, O'Connor, & Cicchetti, 1996). The worry and fear experienced by children who undergo medical procedures have motivated research on the factors that trigger them, as well as the design of programmes aimed at preventing or minimizing emotional disturbances (Quiles, Ortigosa, Méndez, & Pedroche, 1999). Humour and laughter are central to some of the approaches currently most widely used for reducing fear, stress and anxiety in the hospital context. Hospital clown programmes constitute an approach that uses humour to reduce child psychological distress in healthcare settings (Meisel, V., Chellew, K., Ponsell, E., Ferreira, A., Bordas, L., García- Banda, G., 2010).

Two pilot studies at Columbia University (Slater J., Gorfinkle K., Bagiella E., Tager F., & Labinsky E., 1998; Smerling, A. J., Skolnick, E, Bagiella, E., Rose, C., Labinsky, E., & Tager F.,1999) focused on the effectiveness of clowns as distractive presences during cardiac catheterization and invasive procedures in a pediatric oncology day clinic. Results showed that, during cardiac catheterization, there were significant decreases in observed child

suffering, in child self-reported distress and parent-rated child distress with the clowns present. As a result, physicians found that the procedure was significantly easier to implement with the clowns present than without them. In addition, positive changes in the behaviour and mood of health care providers were observed when the clowns were around.

In a qualitative study, Aquino et al. (2004), asked child (age between 4 and 12 years) to describe their experience with clown doctors in a semi-structured individual interview. Participants found the clowns to be humorous, which allowed the patients to be laugh and be happy. Bennett and Lengacher (2006a, 2006b) note that humor acts as a coping mechanism to reduce stress and psychological symptoms related to negative situations. Some children noted that the playfulness of the clown allowed for distraction in that some children stopped crying during their medical procedures.

An Italian randomized controlled study investigated the effects of the presence of clowns on a child's preoperative anxiety during the induction of anesthesia and on the parent who accompanied the child until she/he is asleep (Vagnoli, L., Caprilli, S., Robiglio, A., & Messeri, A., 2005). This study shows that the presence of clowns during the induction of anesthesia, together with the child's parents, was an effective intervention for managing children's and parents' anxiety during the preoperative periods: the clown group was significantly less anxious during the induction of anesthesia compared with the control group

Another controlled study investigated whether clown intervention could reduce preoperative fear of children undergoing minor surgery, taking into consideration also parental anxiety (Costa Fernandes, S., & Arriaga, P., 2010). Compared to the control group of children accompanied only by parents, the group of children accompanied by parents and a couple of clowns showed a decrease in preoperative worries and emotional responses both in children and parents.

In another recent study Hansen et al. (2011) investigated the effect of the presence of a hospital clown on children treated with botulin toxin in an outpatient setting (botulin toxin injection is a painful procedure and a stressful experience for the child). Results indicated that not all children, the majority of whom had spastic cerebral palsy, showed beneficial effects from the presence of a clown. The effect of the clown was significantly related to patient gender. Girls were found to have a significantly shorter period of crying

when the clown was there. For children younger than 8 years, the impact on boys was negative.

In a study by Higuera et al. (2006) it was shown that clowns were a positive element for change and progress in psychiatric patients.

Tener D. et al., in a quasi-experimental study examined the effect of medical clown on psychological distress during pediatric anogenital examinations of sexually abused children. Findings indicated that when a medical clown was present during the examination, the child reported less pain and fear. This finding is consistent with previous research demonstrating that the presence of a medical clown contributes to a decrease of anxiety levels during invasive medical procedures (Gorfinkle et al., 1998) and that using humor techniques may increase children's pain tolerance (Stuber et al., 2007). Laughing with the clown and adding humor to a stressful situation is thus likely to reduce fear, which in turn will reduce the body's tension and actual pain.

Overall, the existing studies concerning clown performances found decreased levels of distress in the child and parents and increased cooperation of children who undergo medical procedures. These studies show that those children who benefited from clown performances felt less concerned about hospitalization, medical procedures, illness and their negative consequences; they also reported a more positive emotional states (felt happier and calmer) than those who did not benefit from clown therapy. These results seem to support the hypothesis that humor and specifically the clown doctor's presence may reduce the suffering of hospitalized children.(9,19). However there is a requirement of further studies to produce stronger evidence to the positive effects of the clown therapy.

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Report on therapeutic effectiveness of Pet therapist

According to biologist Edward Wilson humans are biologically predisposed to seek contact with nature, since it is not possible to live a full and healthy life away from nature (Biophilia). Therefore, we need direct contact with life forms. This theory would help us to understand the desire that we try to surround ourselves with dogs, cats and other pets, or plants to have in our homes. We could define the basis of the type of Biophilia EVOLUTION: the man for its survival had to learn to understand the environment to reap benefits such as food and protection. It therefore seems that our brain has registered at least in part some ways of interacting with animals and plants, especially those that have become necessary to the survival of the species. As the Biophilia, even the "biofobia", ie the 'aversion to nature, fall into this innate system of "learning rules" handed down from generation to generation. According to the ethologist David Orr, this kind of opposition to the organic life is becoming more common as we grow today in the midst of televisions, mp3 highways and cities in which nature plays only a decorative role.

ANIMALS AS TRANSITIONAL OBJECTS.

This term was used by Winnicott (1953) English pediatrician and psychoanalyst. For Winnicott the transitional object is, for the child, the mother and symbolically allows him to have it close at the experiences of separation, such as during sleep. They have become a symbol of the transitional object the security blanket or teddy bear with whom the child goes to sleep. The hypothesis that the animal can hold the office of transitional object is created with the introduction of the pet within the therapeutic contexts. Among the pioneers of Pet Therapy can not forget Levinson In 1953 Boris Levinson, child psychotherapist, accidentally discovered the beneficial effect that had the company of a dog on a child with autism, who had been subjected to various treatments without finding any benefit.

One day the psychiatrist did accommodate the child in his study forgetting entirely the presence of his dog, a cocker named Jingles, which generally was brought out during the sessions. The animal, went voluntarily to the child who showed no sign of fear, but rather began to gently touch it ..The game with the dog Levinson allowed to enter and establish a good relationship with his young patient. According to the psychiatrist the presence of an

animal can make it more enjoyable and less fearful and the setting can make it easier, through the screening of his moods, the expression of his emotions. After this incident, happened by chance, Levinson used more systematically pets, dog or cat during her therapy sessions.

ANIMAL WITH FUNCTION OF OBJECT OF DEVOTION

Pets may be considered for use as eternal children, to express their emotions, body language, sometimes similar to ours or at least understandable and that draws in many cases the relationship established between the mother and the newborn.

Children who can take care of an animal is perceived as more competent with an increase in self-esteem. Obviously the attachment bond depends on the culture, we know that many cultures do not "like" certain types of animals and geographical influence. The unconditional love that pours the animal on its own for those who receive it can represent a source of support.

HANDLING OF AN ANIMAL IMPROVES SELF-ESTEEM

Some programs of activities and therapy assisted with animals provide moments when the subject is directly involved in the care or training. These activities represent a joint effort between the man and the animal with the aim of reaching a specific goal. This would seem to be for this increased sense of self-efficacy. Think of the projects of pet therapy aimed at the elderly, thanks to the activities of care that they experience in the relationship with the pet may feel more effective. We can say that often perceive some dangerous situations because we do not feel able to face them. The stress that results can lead to physiological effects.

When we take care of an animal we get positive feedback on their skills and abilities and this can bring positive effects on the health. The subjects participating in therapy programs direct assistance with the animals take on a role that often turns out to be for them again and this allows him to learn or change their attitude by introducing in their behavior most appropriate ways.

This concept should not be confused with that of role playing as the person who takes part in therapeutic programs with the help of animals does not play a part, but gives rise to a change that seems stable over time, even once their meetings. When pet therapy programs are part of caregiving activities or training, it provides the opportunity for patients to experiment, in a protected and not rejecting, in the role of caregivers.

In literature there are many benefits found in the man – animal such as benefits found on physical and mental health.

In the early 80 Dr. Freidman and his team made the first Protestant study the benefits of animals. The results of this research showed the increase in one year survival of pet owners after discharge from the intensive care cardiology (Friedmann, Katcher, Lynch, & Thomas, 1980). This was the first study published in a medical journal that documents how the relationship with animals contributes to disease prevention. Other studies, performed later confirmed that having a pet reduces the incidence of cardiovascular disease as it affects the psychosocial risk factors. (Patronek & Glickman, 2006).

In the world were then made numerous studies documenting the benefits of the animals to the health of the owners, such as the study by Siegel in 1990 that showed that the presence of the animal makes it more tolerable stressful events. For a year was recorded how often the elderly who went from doctor. We noticed significant differences between pet owners and non-owners regarding the number of accesses that Patients performed by the doctor. The authors hypothesized that the animal would help to make it less stressful events, creating a social network around the elderly. The elderly without animal seemed to find the same reassurance going to the doctor very often. Katcher in a study of 1981 showed a decrease in heart rate and pressure in individuals intent to caress your pet. Other authors (Allen, Blascovich and Mendes, 2002) in 2002 occurred less cardiovascular reactivity in terms of psychological and physical stress (while they were engaged in situations of calculation and in the presence of thermal stimuli) in pet owners, especially when the animal was present.

This was also confirmed by Odendaal and Mejtnties (2003) in another study that considers stress hormones.

Other research has shown the benefits of the human-animal relationship on mental health. Brickel (1979) attributed to the animal a role of social distractor able to shift the focus from monotonous or anxiety-provoking situations. In addition, the pet within therapeutic contexts becomes a stimulus and acceptable and therefore is a strong motivator to treatment, facilitating participation in therapies. Interesting are studies AKIYAMA, HOLZMANN And BRITZ 1986 ADKINS AND RAJECKI 1999 showed that in the presence of a strong mourning (with widows and mothers who have lost a child) people who can take advantage of the presence of an animal fit better the situation and make less use of drugs. The authors hypothesized that the animal represented a stimulus to activity, not to fall in the 'apathy and a source of comfort and distraction. Probably we can read these results in another key, which is

not so much the animal, but the fact of taking care to be therapeutic.

We can find also benefits on socialization:

MARR AND FRENCH 2000 showed that pz participating in pet therapy programs are more active and cooperative.

In a subsequent study Prothmann et al. (2006) showed how to insert a pet within therapeutic groups with adolescents allows you to record more openness and greater availability of comparison.

Surely all conductors Pet Partner and all pet owners know that the presence of the dog makes the accompanist more accepted and has positive connotations and trustworthy. Very interesting in this regard the study of MC NICHOLAS AND CALLS 2000 when they videotaped behaviors of 1,800 passers towards experimenter who was walking with a Labrador puppy, an adult Labrador, Rottweiler with an adult and with the neutral stimuli as a plant or a teddy stuffed animals. The reactions of passersby were then compared with a control situation where the experimenter ran alone. The results showed that the DOG was a facilitator of socialization more for women than for men, and more for the people who passed sun than couples. The race influenced the effect of catalyst, definitely encouraged to approach and stop the experimenter when walking with the puppy compared to rottweiler.

Animal Assisted Interventions and hospitalization:

Illness and hospitalization constitute a major stress in early childhood development. They effect a profound change in the children's lifestyle as they face separation from parents and from the security of home routines (Petrillo & Sanger, 1980; Kurz, 1987). Play is one way in which children deal with the normative (e.g., developmental stage) and non-normative (e.g., hospitalization) conflicts in their life.

Play enables a child to master anxiety, externalize problems and conflicts, rehearse new solutions, and turn from passive to active roles in conflict resolution (Sturner&Howard, 1997). Play can provide several methods of coping for the hospitalized child (McCue, 1988; Vessey&Mahon, 1990). Play may act as a diversion, refocusing attention away from stressors. It may enable the child to exert some control over a situation by allowing some choices (e.g., which game to play, which dog to pet) to help compensate for the lack of control in other areas of hospitalization.

Play may also enable the child to express, master, and ultimately better cope with European

researchers have shown that contact with companion animals can positively influenced the development of communication skills in children (Filiatra, Millot, & Montagner, 1983, Guttman et al., 1983).

The animals are so present in the life and Children's literature, that it is reasonable to think they effect in their development. Melson (2001) argues that caring for animals is a way for children and teenagers to learn the handling, especially important in males, whereas in our society have little chance to experiment in games of nurturing and care. Animals play an important role in motivating children and can positively influence the way they see the world. (Beck, Melson, da Costa, & Liu, 2001; Katcher & Wilkins, 2000, Rud & Beck).

Sometimes children and teenagers have difficulty in recognizing and managing emotions of anger, sadness, loneliness. Is essential for proper emotional development deal with them and share them with the peer group.

Through the game and knowledge of the dog will try to encourage better management of their emotions and behaviors and the acquisition aware of their abilities to improve both the relationship with oneself and with others. It's now present in everyday news the occurrence of bullying in schools. Recent studies highlight how these manifestations of antisocial also derive from a knowledge deficit regarding the recognition of emotions in others (lack of empathy).

In 2006/2013 , Fondazione Ospedale Salesi promoted a research program of AAI in Hospital wich involved children with Psychosomatic migraine

It's tested that at the begin of the paediatric migraine there is a quantitative of anxiety mounted up in that child who meet even the simple things as they was big problems; so these children are more reactive to the stress and seem to tolerate frustrations less than others . Experience has shown that the relationship and the contact with Pets produce an improvement of the mood, the reduction of anxiety and a reduction of the reactions to stress. In AAT programs, the animal involved with its handler, is the transitional object, by wich the child can express his needs, and use different ways of communication.

