

# Music Therapist



Health  
South Western Sydney  
Local Health District

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## Who is a Music Therapist?

Music therapists provide therapeutic programs through the planned and controlled use of music to help people of all ages including those with special needs because of social, emotional, psychiatric, physical or intellectual impairments.

## Roles of a Music Therapist

- Assess individuals and groups to identify abilities and needs and develop objectives that address individual needs
- Plan and carry out specific music activities to address the client's needs and concerns, such as singing, moving to music, reflective music listening, playing music, music and drama, improvisation, song writing and other creative activities
- Assess, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the musical and therapeutic interactions.

## Career Opportunities

Music therapists work in the home, schools, child care centres, community support groups, hospitals, clinics, community centres, nursing homes, hospices, rehabilitation centres and centres for people with a disability. Music therapists are increasingly moving into private practice.

It is a small occupation with reasonable employment prospects. Job opportunities depend on the number of people in the community requiring this type of service, level of awareness in the community of the benefits of music therapy and government policy, legislation and funding for community health care, education and social services.

## Qualifications Required

To become a music therapist you usually have to study music at university with a major in music therapy. Alternatively, you may qualify by completing a postgraduate qualification in music therapy after completing a bachelor degree. Graduates with a degree in allied health or another relevant field may also be considered if they possess an appropriate level of musical experience. Prerequisite subjects, or assumed knowledge, in one or more of English and music are normally required.

## Supervision required

A comprehensive orientation program is provided for all new staff members with ongoing support.

## Personal skills required of Music Therapist

- An appreciation for a wide range of music styles
- High level of musical ability
- Able to respect and relate to people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds