

INTRODUCTION

Today, the oldest old population is rapidly growing across the world. As many of the baby boomer generation have now reached retirement age, there are increasing demands for long-term care services. The costs of caring for frail older people will escalate unless we can find effective ways of encouraging older people to be as independent and active as possible. In later life, it is not uncommon that older people tend to feel lonely and socially isolated (Nygqvist,

preschool aged children and older people aged 66 to 95 living in a residential care setting (Ward, Kamp, & Newman, 1996). The programme comprised music and movement activities such as singing songs and playing games with music. The programmes were carried out in two settings when twenty-one older adults undertook the same activities twice, once with and once without the children being present. A recreational music therapist facilitated the weekly sessions, which lasted half an hour each week. After 6 months, it was found that when older adults took part in the musical activities with children as a team they showed a lower level of anxiety and

wellbeing and decreasing anxiety and depression. There is a great potential using music as part of a cost-effective strategy to promote the well-being of healthy community-dwelling older people as well as institutionalised older adults with dementia. Participating in musical activities, from simply listening to music to more active engagements in singing or playing musical instruments, can be one of the most effective non-verbal communication methods for older people with varying degrees of physical and mental capacities. This is an activity that can be enjoyed by older people, with or without cognitive problems. Therefore, wider groups of older people can be reached through more personalised musical ing to ml. 0 -1.278 Tysical anc