

## **Invited Presentation, Amy Clements-Cortes, PhD, RP, MT-BC, MTA**

### **Clinical benefits of singing for cognitively impaired older adults**

This presentation features a multi-phase investigation examining the benefits of music therapist facilitated singing groups for older adults. In each phase, participants sang in a weekly one hour choral program, and were assessed on several qualitative and quantitative dimensions including: anxiety, pain, and mood. At the conclusion of each study participants were interviewed, and several levels of observation data were collected. Study one, saw the emergence of 5 qualitative themes, and study two, resulted in statistically significant changes ( $p < .01$ ) for four indicators: increased energy, mood, and happiness; and decreased pain. Nine themes also developed from study two. Study three was distinctive, as caregivers were included in the singing groups along with older adult participants. All participants were assessed by means of multiple objective and self-reported tools including: pre- and post-weekly session tests for pain, energy, and mood; observation; and interviews. Quantitative data compared aggregate mean pre- and post-session numerical rating scores, in order to identify statistically significant changes in pain, energy, and mood. Outcomes indicated statistically significant increases in energy and mood, and decreased perceptions of pain for all participants. Seven predominant themes emerged from participant interviews from older adults and caregivers and were identified by social, emotional, and/or physical wellness. Implications of the results of all study phases will be conversed, alongside the sharing of a few short video clips of singing sessions.