

Music Therapy in Professional Medical Literature: What Doctors See

What happens when a physician wants to know music therapy? What do physicians learn about music therapy by consulting their usual sources in indexed medical literature? When managing physicians face decisions about which patient services will be offered by their hospitals and medical groups, what research results about music therapy are likely to influence their decisions?

In this talk I will present the results of a limited, systematic inquiry into this topic. I will discuss some of the factors that strongly influence physicians. This includes criteria used by medical journals, both when they select articles for publication, and when they judge the reliability of reported clinical / experimental results.

I will describe some characteristics of the music therapy reporting that appears in medical literature, and how mismatches between its format and physicians' habitual expectations can impede reception of music therapy. Finally, I will offer suggestions.