

Outline of project:

I am a music therapist and a researcher interested in developing collaborative and participatory research methods in music therapy research. My PhD research is a participatory research project which seeks to explore the following questions:

- 1) What is important about music therapy for children and children and young people with complex disabilities?
- 2) How do children and young people with complex disabilities and music therapists work together in music therapy?

The project design involves four interrelated and interconnected studies:

Study 1: Six children and young people are involved in Study 1 as co-researchers. Study 1 consist of participating in 25 weekly, individual music therapy sessions. I will be the Music Therapist and the researcher. The sessions will be recorded, and selected extracts will be transcribed and analysed using Conversation Analysis (CA).

Study 2: Family members of children and young people from Study 1 are being invited to participate in up to three Video Elicitation Interviews (VEI) as co-researchers. The families choose the amount of participation that is right for them. The family members are asked to watch extracts and talk about their observations from the perspective of the child or young person and as an advocate of the child or young person, giving voice to their experiences. The knowledge and understanding co-created from the interviews inform the music therapy sessions of Study 1. The interviews are also transcribed and analysed using reflective thematic analysis (RTA).

Study 3: Short multimedia presentation projects will be made by each child or young person from Study 1 and their family member from Study 2. This is planned to happen June and July 2023. The presentation will be created from recorded extracts from their music therapy sessions or other material chosen by families and the child or young person. The aim of the presentation is to show what was important about music therapy

for the child or young person. The making of the presentations will enable the child or young person, with the support of their family member, to analyse, evaluate and understand what was important about music therapy for them. The presentation will be a way for the child or young person and their family member to use their experiences and expertise to contribute as co-researchers to the understanding and knowledge created and disseminated as part of the research project findings.

Study 4: Focus groups with Music Therapists. There will be two focus groups with the same group of music therapists:

Focus group 1: Music Therapists will be invited to discuss the theories and practices of psychodynamic music therapy with people with complex needs and explore the relationship between their clinical work and current social, political, and cultural contexts.

Focus group 2: Topics raised by the family members through interviews as part of the earlier Study 2 (see above) will be shared in the focus group. Music Therapists will be invited to discuss and explore their responses to these topics in relation to their clinical practice. The Music Therapists will also be able to return to topics discussed in the first focus group.

The research project adopts an interdisciplinary research approach and is informed by contemporary discourses in music therapy research, conversation analysis, and critical disability studies.

My research to date has include the following:

1. Exploring the application of Conversation Analysis (CA) to in interactions Music Therapy to assess if this would be an appropriate method to analyse interactions in study 1.
2. Preparing ethics applications for the four studies (both applications have been approved). Engagement with ethical considerations is a significant and ongoing aspect of the research project.

3. Recruitment and data generation for studies 1 and 2 started in March 2022. Recruitment to the project has now finished. Data generation is planned to be completed by September 2023.
4. Data analysis has started for both studies 1 and 2. Data analysis is planned to be completed by April 2024.
5. Paper presentation at the European Music Therapy Conference (8th-12th June 2022) titled '*Transcription and Analysis in Music Therapy Research. An interdisciplinary approach to developing a methodology.*
6. Published article to the British journal of Music Therapy title 'Developing a research approach to explore therapeutic relationships with children and young people with complex needs: A critical reflection.'
Roman, T. (2022a). Developing a research approach to explore therapeutic relationships with children and young people with complex needs: A critical reflection. *British Journal of Music Therapy*, 36(1), 27-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13594575221090180>
7. Paper Presentation at Music Therapy in the UK Today: a weekend conference with the Music Therapy Charity and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, 29th-30th October 2022 titled '*Disability, ethics and music therapy research: An exploration of ethical considerations in a participatory research project with disabled children and young people.*'
8. Paper presentation at Children and Young People and Families (CYPF), BAMT network day, 26th November 2022, titled '*A reflection on processes of learning and discovery in participatory research exploring therapeutic relationships with children and young people with disabilities.*'