

# 'Thank You for the Music' : Exploring the Functional and Emotional Impact of a Community Aphasia Friendly Choir



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## Introduction:

Community-based singing rehabilitation is acknowledged to have a positive impact on psychosocial wellbeing and communication for people with stroke-related communication impairments. Increasingly, the literature suggests that collaborative singing interventions can support those experiencing communication difficulties post-stroke to improve functional outcomes, in addition to improving mood and quality of life.

The aim of this research was to measure the impact of an eight-week aphasia-friendly choir project created as part of a novel co-production between an NHS Speech and Language Therapy service, Chroma Therapies and Cardiff Metropolitan University.

## Method:

Up to six patients who experience a range of neurological conditions, including stroke, attended an 8-week pilot project. Each session incorporated exercises to bring focus to **breathing technique, vocal dynamics** and **speech sound production**, before singing familiar songs to encourage **word finding**.

The exercises and song lyrics were presented using **aphasia-friendly resources** and songs were incorporated following requests by patients to develop a sense of ownership of the group. Patients were supported by Speech and Language Therapy students from Cardiff Metropolitan University, as well as a Music Therapist and Speech and Language Therapist.



Figure 1: Example of aphasia friendly song lyric presentation

**Mood scores** were collected using an aphasia-friendly mood scale pre-and post each session when appropriate. Qualitative data was also collected from the patients to explore their experience of the choir through the **Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs)** and comments made during the pilot project.

## Results:

Mood scores obtained suggest that **patients' moods improved significantly** following participation in the choir ( $p = 0.001$ ).

Quotes collected through patient reported experience measures and verbal comments highlighted the **multi-factorial benefits of the choir**.

Attending the group has helped me manage my condition	All Agreed/Strongly Agreed
How likely are you to recommend a friend of family member if they needed similar care or treatment	All Likely/Extremely Likely
How would you describe the change you have experienced during the program	All Somewhat Better/A Great Deal Better

Figure 2: Results from PREMs

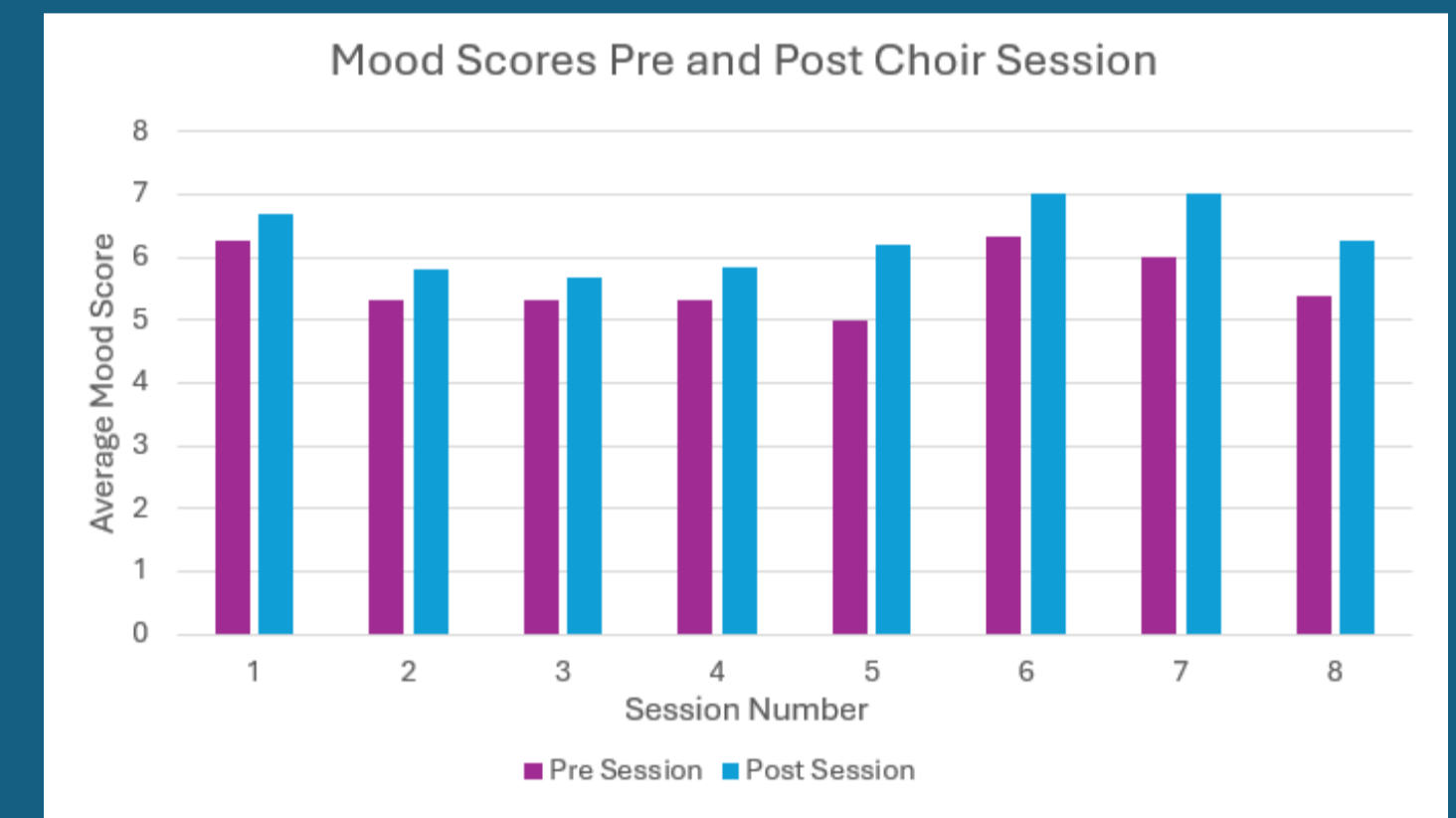


Figure 3: Pre and Post Session Mood Scores

"Fun and beneficial, 5 star!"  
Carer

"invaluable in many ways"  
Patient

"Reminder to use my voice properly"  
Patient

"This has been a fabulous adventure back into singing"  
Patient

"Please continue this experience for other patients"  
Patient

## Conclusions:

This research highlights the potential of such initiatives to support both the functional and emotional impact of communication impairments post-stroke. Understanding more about this singing collaboration and promoting its value for individuals living with communication difficulties can inform the development of future services. Thus empowering individuals with communication impairments, as a result of a neurological condition, to live meaningful and fulfilling lives. The researchers hope to use this pilot to explore the lasting impacts on emotional wellbeing and communication of group singing interventions in future projects.

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