Music Therapy forms part of the multidisciplinary team of the Stuart Pegg Paediatric Burns Centre (SPPBC) at the Royal Children’s Hospital Brisbane, and is provided based on referrals received from medical, nursing and allied health staff. The RCH music therapy service for children with burns was established in 1993, and has contributed formative publications. Using the family-centred model of care, the RMT liaises closely with the SPPBC team to assess the needs of each patient and family referred to music therapy. An individualised live music therapy program is implemented in accordance with their needs and strengths, aiming to support treatment through musical interventions.

### Individualising burns care

**David Khlentzos, BMus(MT), RMT, Music Therapist, Royal Children’s Hospital, Brisbane**

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### Critical appraisal trial 2012:

An appraisal of relevant paediatric burns MT literature was conducted. It revealed 27 results, of which 18 were relevant. The data revealed an increasing rate of publication, demonstrating expanding service delivery. Various forms of Music Assisted Relaxation (MAR) and Music Alternate Engagement (MAE) were the most widely utilised interventions—reporting mainly on pain and anxiety management— with significant results. MAR included receptive techniques such as music based imagery and music analgesia, and was chiefly used to reduce perioperative pain perception and anxiety. MAE interventions including improvisation, songwriting and patient selected songs, promote distraction through active engagement and provide expressive opportunities for children needing psychosocial support.

### Some appraisal results:

MT found to significantly reduce pain perception pre, during and post debridement and dressing changes. Significant decreases in anxiety, distress as observed by staff, use of analgesics post-operatively, and in heart rate compared to control, were also reported.

### Critical appraisal trial summary:

- **Music Assisted Relaxation (MAR) interventions** show significant clinical effects on reducing pain perception and, though less consistently, anxiety in paediatric burns patients
- **Active Music Alternate Engagement (MAE)** interventions show significant effects in reducing pain and anxiety, yet more research is needed