

Korrin Henneman - Music Therapist

Q: What does a typical day look like for a Four Diamonds Music Therapist?

I start my day by reviewing the patient list and charts. Then, I check in with the nurses. I will typically see patients in the hematology and oncology clinic in the mornings, and patients in the inpatient unit in the afternoons. However, this is all dependent on the time of clinic appointments and procedures.

Q: What is the one of the best sessions that you have had as a music therapist?

I worked with a patient in the outpatient clinic who has had a hard journey. They had a song that they absolutely loved. They always asked Mom to play it in the car on the way to the hospital. Together we worked on rewriting the song to make it their own. We added and changed lyrics, and we recorded it as well. Now it has become their fight song.

Q: What activities do kids participate in during music therapy?

This depends on their interests, diagnosis, developmental level and age. Our first priority is pain and anxiety management. We may use live, music assisted relaxation, music imagery or music listening to help our patients relax and even fall asleep. We use active music engagement to help each patient adjust to the hospital setting, address emotional coping and developmental milestones, especially since being in the hospital keeps our patients away from school. Music improvisation allows us this sense of freedom in the music. It opens us up to feel and process the emotions we didn't even know we were feeling. We also use musical instruments, singing, songwriting and digital music applications during music therapy sessions.



Korrin working with Four Diamonds child Allyson

"Building rapport is an important first step to a therapeutic relationship. You need to know what each patient is going through before diving into the music. Learning this completely changed the way I look at my job."

What instruments do you play?

I sing and play piano, guitar, ukelele and small percussion instruments.

Steel or nylon guitar strings, and pick or no pick?

Steel strings all the way. And no pick.

Where did you go to college?

Shenandoah University with my bachelor's degree in music therapy with a minor in classical piano.

Favorite song?

Make a Difference by Danny Gokey

When did you start with Four Diamonds?

November 2021

Q: After a day at work, what do you listen to (if anything) on your commute home?

Some days I can't listen to music in the car. I just need quiet time. Most days though, I listen to contemporary Christian or Spanish Christian music. I also listen to children's songs, Disney albums or any newly released music. I have to be up-to-date on all of the new music from each genre!

Q: What is the most difficult session that you have had as a music therapist?

A newly diagnosed patient had just been admitted onto the unit and was having difficulty adjusting. Everything always happens so quickly within the first 48 hours. This patient was super anxious and fearful of all staff members. I provided live, sedative guitar and humming to increase relaxation and redirect their focused attention so the medical team could examine the patient. This was the first time the medical team was able to examine the patient without a fight. The patient had a very long stay in the hospital, and I continued to see them each week to support them and their family.

Q: What is one of your favorite music therapy activities?

Definitely songwriting, and with that comes digital songwriting. Many patients are very interested in laying down their own song tracks, and we use a device called an Orba, a handheld beat maker and synthesizer, along with Garage Band.

Q: How often do kids at Penn State Health Children's Hospital receive music therapy?

When they are inpatient, we see patients about 1-3 times a week. When our patients visit the outpatient clinic, I try to check in with as many patients as I can to see if they want to engage in a music therapy session.