

## **Harmonizing Together: Speech and Music Therapy and Support for Patients and Partners with PPA**

### **Summary**

The Frontotemporal Disorders Unit at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, USA, facilitated an eight-week interdisciplinary therapeutic support group targeted at early stage PPA patients and their care partners. Group goals included providing patients and their care partners with functional communication strategies, decreasing patient isolation, support for caregiver resilience and music therapy to promote utilization of language, social engagement and emotional connections between patients and care partners.

The following outlines a structure for creating and facilitating this type of group:

### **Schedule**

Eight weekly 90 minute sessions  
45 minutes of speech language therapy/caregiver support  
45 minutes of group music therapy

Four monthly 120 minute sessions  
60 minutes of speech language therapy/caregiver support  
60 minutes of group music therapy

### **Participants**

Recommended criteria for inclusion in the group include having a diagnosis of Primary Progressive Aphasia, being at the early or mild stage of PPA, the ability to attend the majority of sessions, the ability to bring a care partner, and ideally having individual speech therapy in the past.

Please see the attachment for a prospective member list.  
Suggested maximum: 10 dyads

### **Staff**

Speech-Language Pathologist  
Music Therapist  
Community Resource Specialist/Social Worker  
Behavioral Neurologist with experience in PPA

If available:  
Speech-language graduate students  
Volunteers  
Additional health professionals

### **Resources**

Meeting Space  
Handouts

Refreshments  
Recording device  
Parking vouchers

### **Program Evaluation**

Care partners and patients were given separate pre and post surveys with Likert scale and open-ended questions to measure the impact of the group. Standardized questionnaires with customized supplemental items may be used.

### **Speech-language Evaluations**

Formal speech-language evaluations before the group are recommended for screening purposes.

### **Recommended Timeline:**

#### 3 Months Before Group:

Screening patients for potential group inclusion  
Selection of patients  
Contact potential patients

#### 1 Month Before Group:

Provide group information and reminders to participants

#### Weekly tasks:

Writing treatment plans/agendas

### **For additional questions, please contact:**

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