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**California Department of  
Public Health**



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
Governor

August 2, 2016

AFL 16-12

**TO:** Skilled Nursing Facilities

**SUBJECT:** Dementia Care Program Availability

**All Facilities Letter (AFL) Summary**

This AFL invites all skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) to participate in a no-cost project called, "Improving Dementia Care through the Music and Memory Program" that is designed to improve the quality of life for residents and reduce reliance on medication.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Licensing & Certification Program is pleased to support the implementation of the MUSIC & MEMORYSM program to 4,500 nursing home residents at 300 California SNFs over the next three years. The California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF) administers the project in conjunction with the University of California, Davis with funding from the federal civil monetary penalty (CMP) fund.

MUSIC & MEMORYSM is a non-profit organization that brings personalized music into the lives of the elderly or infirm through the use of digital devices and headphones. The underlying premise of the MUSIC & MEMORYSM program is that the music a resident enjoys will improve his or her cognitive and physical condition and will renew meaning and connection in their lives. The selection of music that is uniquely relevant to the resident's experience is the key to its success. The approach is effective with people who suffer from Alzheimer's and other types of dementia because they do not lose the lasting connections between a favorite song and their memory of an important life event, no matter how long ago these occurred.

Providers who have adopted this program report that when their residents suffering from dementia hear a melody connected with a meaningful memory, they seem to "re-awaken" and many people who have not spoken in years find words and sing lyrics. More information on the MUSIC & MEMORYSM program is available at [Music & Memory.org](http://Music & Memory.org).

All SNFs participating in the "Improving Dementia Care through Music and Memory Program" will receive MUSIC & MEMORYSM certification training for their staff and the equipment needed to provide personalized music to 15 residents in their facility at no cost to the SNF. The equipment includes iPod shuffles, earphones, chargers, and a lap top computer dedicated to the project. They will also take part in the research component of the project, which will study the benefits of MUSIC & MEMORYSM on individual residents and the impact this program has on staff morale and other organizational factors. SNFs do not need to be a CAHF member facility to participate in this project.

Additional information about the project including the application is available on the CAHF website at [CAHF - Music and Memory](http://CAHF - Music and Memory). Enrollment is underway. If you have questions, regarding the information contained in this AFL, please contact:

Jocelyn Montgomery, RN, PHN  
Director of Clinical Affairs  
California Association of Health Facilities

Sincerely,

**Original Signed by Jean Iacino**

Jean Iacino  
Deputy Director

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