

Sonas programme

The Sonas programme is a person-centred, evidence-based therapeutic communication activity for people who have Alzheimer, other dementias or other significant cognitive impairments.

The Sonas approach aims to provide cognitive, sensory and social stimulation, through relaxing music, sing-alongs, communication partners, gentle exercise and multi sensory stimulation.

The Sonas philosophy values individuality, dignity and choice to participate. The repetitive structure of sonas sessions, together with regular attendance promotes predictability and facilitates engagement, however small, at an experimental and participatory level.

Guidelines on the delivery of the session:

Room: you would like to create a nice atmosphere, not too dark and not too bright. The volume needs to be adequate to allow participation, but not uncomfortable.

Group: it is recommended that no more than 6 people participate in group. Place participants on a circle.

Something nice to smell: strong and pleasant smells, e.g. essential oils, flowers, spices, perfume, coffee beans, aromatic herbs, lotion, cream. It is important to vary the smell item.

Something nice to taste: chocolate, yogurt, jam, honey, fruit (small amount of the item to taste during the session).

Percussion instruments, if you don't have access to any instrument you can clap your hands and/or assist the participant to clap hands.

Structure of the session:

1. Signature tune: introduces the session and alerts people to the nature of the session.
2. Greeting song: Each participant is addressed by name and greeted.
3. Exercise to music: Encourage and assistance can be offered to participants.
4. Sense of smell: offer the participant something nice to smell.
5. Link music: is played between some items to give participants a rest and allow time for the change of focus.
6. Singalong1: allows for expressions through singing.
7. Relaxing music and stimulation of taste: as this plays, a small taste item is offered.
8. Music with percussion instruments: participant can be encouraged to express themselves through using percussion instruments, clap hands or dance.
9. Proverbs & poetry: Proverbs are partially said on the CD with the opportunity for participants to complete them. Poetry can be listened to or joined in with if participant wish.

10. Personal contributions: participants are encouraged but not pressured, to contribute to the session. The contribution may vary from a song, a poem, short story, or anything that the participant would like to share with the group.
11. Singalong 2: allows for vocal expression.
12. Closing song: is similar to the opening song. Each participant is again affirmed by name and farewell.
13. Signature tune: provides closure to the session.