Texas Music & Memory Effort Ramps Up With New Facilities, Study
Program Uses Music to Reconnect Seniors to World

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The Texas Health and Human Services Commission has selected 26 nursing facilities from across the state that have been certified as participants in the Music & Memory program for 2019. The program provides MP3 players to seniors with dementia to help them reconnect with the world through music-triggered memories, which can improve quality of life and quality of care.

Texas has invested nearly $47,000 so far on the newly participating facilities’ equipment and program certifications. Each facility received 15 MP3 players and iTunes gift cards for residents to purchase music for their personalized playlists.

A new research study, funded by HHSC, is being conducted by The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing to measure the effectiveness of the program in reducing the use of antipsychotic medications in Texas nursing facility residents with dementia.

“Our vision is to make a difference in the lives of Texans. The Music & Memory program fulfills that vision and offers a unique opportunity to boost quality of life for seniors in Texas who have dementia or other memory issues,” HHSC Deputy Executive Commissioner Stephanie Muth said.

The 26 new participating providers include nursing facilities in the following cities: Allen, Atlanta, Austin, Ballinger, Castroville, Corpus Christi, Denison, Devine, Dallas, Granbury, Hamilton, Hillsboro, Humble, Houston, Lubbock, Pleasanton, Red Oak, Round Rock, San Angelo, San Antonio, Uvalde, and Waxahachie.

The program, funded via Civil Money Penalties (CMPs), has a $550,651 budget for the grant period April 27, 2017 to 2020. The grant includes the costs of 3,000 MP3 players for 200 participating facilities across the state. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services imposes CMPs against Medicare- or Medicaid-certified nursing facilities found out of compliance with federal requirements. Sections 1819 and 1919 of the Social Security Act allow CMP funds to be used for projects and activities that benefit residents. The program was launched in 2015 as a pilot program in nursing facilities and launched at HHSC’s State Supported Living Centers and Austin State Hospital in 2016. Since then, 485 nursing homes across Texas have taken part in the HHSC Music & Memory program. It is part of HHSC’s initiative to reduce inappropriate use of antipsychotics in Texas nursing homes.