

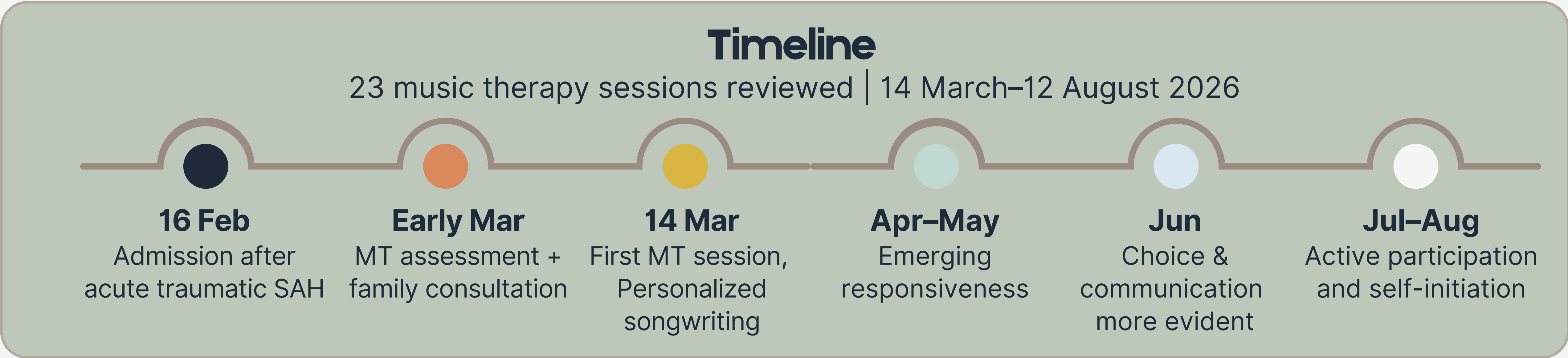
From Responsiveness to Relational Connection: Music Therapy Songwriting in Acute Traumatic Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

Thanyaporn Limkriangkrai

Bumrungrad International Hospital

thanyapornl@bumrungrad.com

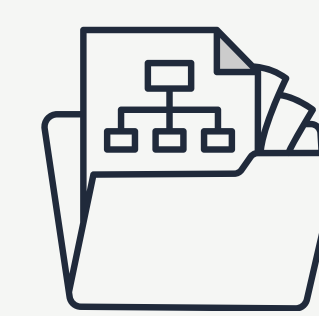
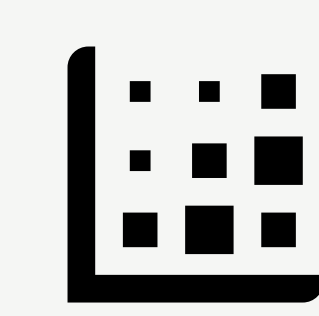
An older adult man with acute traumatic subarachnoid hemorrhage, initially minimally responsive with limited verbal and motor communication, was followed longitudinally through music therapy during recovery.



Aim

To explore patterns of cognitive, emotional, and relational engagement across recovery, beginning with personalized songwriting and continuing through subsequent music therapy encounters.

Methods

-  Longitudinal case report with retrospective review
-  Personalized songwriting drew on family narratives about the patient’s identity, followed by receptive and later active music-making
-  23 music therapy sessions 14 Mar–12 Aug 2026
-  Observable patient behaviors extracted from session notes
-  Observations coded into 8 domains
One observation could be assigned to more than one domain
-  Session-level patterns examined longitudinally

Results

	Mar			Apr				May				Jun				Jul			Aug				
Session No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Arousal																							
Response																							
Choice																							
Purposeful																							
Agency																							
Emotion																							
Relational																							
Physiological																							

Filled cell = documented evidence in that session;
Blank cell = no qualifying observation documented.
Blank does not indicate absence of the behavior or capacity.

Key changes over time

- Family Agency**

The family continued personalized music outside therapy by replaying ICU recordings and later developing their own version.
- Relational engagement** was observable from the outset and remained evident across recovery.
- Early**

Personalized songwriting introduced Subtle cue-linked, physiological, and relational responses
- Mid-Course**

Broader choice, communication, and purposeful engagement
- Later**

Purposeful action and self-initiation became more prominent

Conclusion

Across recovery, observable engagement broadened from subtle responses to more differentiated communication, purposeful action, and self-initiation. Personalized songwriting grounded in family narratives provided an early context for identity and family connection during a period of clinical uncertainty. Repeated music therapy encounters allowed these patterns to be followed over time, suggesting that relational engagement may complement cognitive and emotional observations when conventional communication is limited.

Limitations

- Single case
- Retrospective clinical documentation
- No standardized cognitive/emotional measures
- Concurrent medical and rehabilitation recovery

Ethics / Consent

Institutional ethics committee acknowledgement and written consent from the patient’s representative were obtained.