

AdamsPlace music program assists memory

AdamsPlace uses playlists to help residents

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The Adams Place Director of Recreation, Kelly Whitmorth, right, laughs with Mel Dunlap, as she listens to the sounds of her ipod during Music & Memory, a program to help restore memories, at Adams Place in Murfreesboro, Wednesday June 11, 2014. / HELEN COMER/DNJ

MURFREESBORO — Gertrude Anderson doesn't talk much anymore.

With dementia, Anderson seems to have lost her voice along with her memories.

One of the few times the staff at AdamsPlace hears the woman's voice is when she sings the lines of "How Great Thou Art" as she listens to a donated iPod from the Music & Memory program.

AdamsPlace recently launched the Music & Memory program that provides preloaded iPods to patients with memory issues, said Buckley Winfree, administrator of AdamsPlace.



Gertrude Anderson, left, Wednesday sings her favorite song, 'How Great Thou Art,' as she listens to it on an iPod. Mel Dunlap moves to the sounds of her iPod music during Music & Memory, a program to help restore memories at AdamsPlace. / HELEN COMER/DNJ

Technology helps

Music & Memory is just one digital technology that is helping improve the quality of life for many in

More

“Music & Memory struck a chord with us, musically and philosophically,” he said. “These musical favorites tap deep memories not lost to dementia. The music can create moments of time in a patient’s day when they become more actively engaged with our staff, their neighbors and their families.”

Anderson was touched by the hymn Wednesday morning. She lifted her voice and made a joyful noise as teenage volunteers Shelby and Seth Harrell helped her and other residents Mel Dunlap and Sarah Marsh women navigate the electronic devices.

The three women take part in the program that serves 14 residents at AdamsPlace.

The program was made possible by a donation from First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro, which donated 20 iPods, a large library of music and iTunes gift cards to AdamsPlace to help launch the program. The staff also uses an iPad and laptop.

Working with Music & Memory trainers, AdamsPlace’s Director of Recreation Kelly Whitworth, along with her staff and many of the church volunteers received training on how to set up personalized music playlists, sync them to iPods and use them therapeutically for those in their care.

She said staff members met with families and sat with residents in the program to select songs for each playlist. She said a lot of Elvis and gospel was chosen.

“It could be a song from childhood or a wedding song. Those memories aren’t gone. They are still there,” Whitworth said.

Whitlock said she has seen an improvement in the quality of life of many of the residents involved in the program.

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