

Mercy Medical Center's
Update to Stef Ripple, Inc.
On behalf of the *Therapeutic Music Program*

Mercy's Therapeutic Music Program offers patients one-on-one, live, acoustic music played by Certified Music Practitioners (CMPs) as a complement to the exceptional clinical care we offer at our hospital.

Since Stef Ripple, Inc. generously awarded a \$10,000 grant in the fall of 2025, Mercy's two CMPs have offered 280 sessions of free therapeutic harp music, totaling approximately 350 hours. Sessions took place in both patient rooms and common areas for outpatients, visitors, and staff.

The internal referral form we created in our electronic medical record system helped to identify and prioritize live music sessions for patients with ovarian cancer, of whom this program has served 30 so far this fiscal year.

According to the CMPs' weekly logs and anecdotal feedback, this program had a profound impact on patients' ability to manage pain, physical side effects and symptoms, as well as psychological unrest.

Our CMPs continuously observed significant short-term benefits that live, vibrational music provided to Mercy patients, including:

- Ease in respiration, digestion, and sleep
- Reduction in pain and stress, muscle relaxation
- Normalized heart rate and blood pressure
- Increased appetite
- Emotional catharsis and a sense of preparedness for major transitions
- Peace at the end of life

Songs selections ranged from classical to contemporary, or were wholly improvised. The CMPs adjusted their rhythm, tempo, and register to meet each patient's unique needs for nurturing or respite.

As a healing modality, therapeutic music is a deeply personal art that requires attentiveness and care for the whole person. Mercy also offers cancer patients free therapeutic art sessions, visits with therapy dogs, oncology-specific massages, and opportunities to pray and receive spiritual support in keeping with their own faiths.



Music Practitioner Cathy Maglaras

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This interconnected approach to care allows patients, their families, and our staff to process pain, disappointment, and death, or the chance to simply focus on something else for a time.

Chaplain Jay Fuller notes, *"I am so impressed with how the music practitioners are able to adjust their playing to respond to each patient's unique needs. For some, it is a welcome respite or a way to think on happy memories. For others, it is deeply moving and cathartic. In every case, it is transformational."*

Chaplain Erin Tribble, Director of Pastoral Care, shares, *"Both our chaplains and our care teams are so grateful for the Therapeutic Music Program. It's an additional healing tool that we can offer our patients who are struggling with various challenges. Recently, I was very pleased to receive a referral from a medical resident whose patient expressed the importance of music in her life. The resident was so happy to be able to offer the patient a way to connect with something meaningful during a time of isolation."*

We'd also like to share comments from ovarian cancer patients who have benefitted from your generous gift:

One patient said: *"I needed this in my body. I didn't know I needed it."*

Another patient safeguarded her time with the CMP, declining phone calls and asking other providers to come back because *"I just started to finally relax thanks to this beautiful music."*

Many patients were able to drive off to sleep during sessions, experiencing a sense of peace that can be difficult to achieve while staying in the hospital.

On behalf of the people who come to us for excellent, compassionate, whole-person care, please know that we are so grateful to you for ensuring the sound of healing music ripples through Mercy's halls.