

2026 Annual Music Research Network Investigator Meeting

Date: **Monday, June 8, 2026, 12:00 p.m.– 5:30 p.m.** All times are EDT

Open Public Virtual Meeting

12:00 – 12:20 p.m.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dr. Yolanda Ogbolu (Dean of University of Maryland School of Nursing-Host)

Dr. Wen Chen (NIH, NCCIH)

Dr. Lisbeth Nielsen (NIH, NIA)

Dr. Jane Simonj (NIH, OBSSR)

Sunil Iyengar (NEA)

12:20 – 1:20 p.m.

Introduction Dr. Shelley White (University of Utah)

Mechanisms of Transfer: How a Digital Music-Based Intervention Can Facilitate Cognitive Function Across the Lifespan

Dr. Theodore Zanto (University of California, San Francisco)

Q & A

1:20 – 2:05 p.m.

Introduction Dr. Julene Johnson (University of California, San Francisco)

Advancing Data Standards, Neurotechnology and Mechanistic Approaches for Understanding Brain Activity in Music-Based Interventions.

Dr. José “Pepe” Contreras-Vidal (University of Houston)

Q & A

2:05 – 3:00 p.m.

Music Networks and Working Groups Highlights

Moderator: Dr. Erin Burke Quinlan (NIH, NCCIH)

Music4Pain Research Network

Dr. Joke Bradt (Drexel University) Dr. Sheri Robb (Indiana University)

Music & Dementia Research Network

Dr. Julene Johnson (University of California, San Francisco)

Audio Analgesia Research Network

Dr. Debra Burns (University of Memphis)

ENSEMBLE Research Network

Dr. Jeffery Dusek (University of California, Irvine)

Q & A

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

Break

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Pilot Awardee Highlights, Part 1

Moderators: Dr. Coryse St Hillaire-Clarke and Dr. Elise Rice (NIH, NIA)

Music4Pain Research Network:

Investigating the Effects and Mechanisms of Group Drumming on Pain Sensitivity in Dementia: A Pilot Study Using Neuroendocrine and Psychophysical Biomarkers

AZA Allsop, PhD, MD (Yale University)

An Investigation of the Intersection of Affect and Meaning in Music-Based Pain Modulation

Claudia Denoue, MD (University of Virginia School of Medicine)

Effects of Music-Based Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation During Walking on Nociceptive Signaling and Muscle Activation in People with Chronic Pain Due to Knee Osteoarthritis

Deepak Kumar, PT, PhD (Boston University)

Audio Analgesia:

Impacts of Music-Based Intervention on Pain in Individuals with Irritable Bowel Syndrome: A Mechanistic Pilot Study

Weizi Wu, PhD (Yale University School of Nursing)

Building a Mouse Model of a Tambura Music-Based Intervention for Pain

Stephen L. Boehm II, PhD (Indiana University Indianapolis)

4:15 – 4:25 p.m.

Break

4:25 – 5:25 p.m.

Pilot Awardee Highlights, Part 2

Moderator: Dr. Dana Schloesser (NIH, OBSSR)

ENSEMBLE:

Assessing Molecular Mechanisms and Effects of Music Therapy in Youth with Sickle Cell Disease Using single-cell RNA-sequencing

Manoj Bhasin, PhD (Emory University)

Mechanisms within the Autonomic nervous SysTEm undeRlying Music therapy's aNalgesic effects in sickle cell Disease (MASTERMIND)

Kamal Chemali, MD (University Hospitals and Case Western Reserve University)

Music & Dementia Research Network:

Calming Improvisatory Music for Alzheimer's Anxiety: Exploring the Mechanistic Basis

Borna Bonakdarpour MD (Northwestern University)

Investigating Deficits in Gait and Brain Function in Alzheimer's disease with Integrated Brain-Body Imaging

Lou Awad PT, DPT, PhD (Boston University)

Music-Evoked Nostalgia in Mild Cognitive Impairment

Assal Habibi, PhD (University of Southern California- Dornsife)

5:25 – 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Wrap-Up: Key Take-Home Messages and Next Steps

Dr. Jeffery Dusek (Current Chair of the Music Research Network Steering Committee)

5:30 p.m.

Adjournment