

Welsh Ambulance Service are using RITA as an appropriate distraction mechanism and therapeutic intervention for more complex individuals when travelling to hospital. There is significant value in ensuring that patients arrive at hospital calmer and less agitated. The feedback received so far has been very encouraging.

It is well documented that complex service users who are admitted into hospital (electively or non-electively), arrive very anxious and distressed. In many cases they can be aggressive and non-compliant, which can frequently lead to unwarranted admissions, particularly from A&E. More complex patients such as those living with Dementia are prone to long stays in hospital and safeguarding incidents, which can then lead to delayed transfers of care.

*I had not had the opportunity to use the Rita tablet until 3rd February recently. I had a dementia patient with vascular dementia and Alzheimer's. He was very agitated and didn't really want to go to hospital, but the family could not manage anymore. He had 20 falls in 3 days. They had no help from carers or any proper equipment. His wife did come with us in the ambulance too. She was impressed that we managed to get him to agree to come with us and transfer across to the chair. He was non-verbal but I could understand him most of the time. I found out that he was Welsh speaking and enjoyed listening to music and they had been to music therapy group previously. I got him interested in the Rita tablet and we went through a few things but decided on the Welsh music, which we played all the way to the hospital and even on the way to the CT scan. He was much calmer and not as agitated as when we had arrived. His shaking had stopped and made the CT scan so much easier.*

*We were quickly offloaded but we made their journey the best we could, and they were very grateful.*

*I just wanted to let you know about a job on Sunday evening where I used the Rita tablet, and it was brilliant! I had everyone talking about it in the hospital too. We had a lady who was 99 years young that we picked up from a care home. She was ok on the journey to hospital but as we were stuck outside the hospital for a long time, she started to get agitated. I showed her the Rita tablet, we watched a few videos and listened to some music. She was very ill, bless her and needed to go into the hospital. She was getting worried and agitated. She didn't understand why we were still in the ambulance. She kept saying she wanted to go home, and she was going to die. I found some relaxing music and a nice screensaver, and she did manage to relax enough to get some sleep for a little while.*

*When we had to go into the hospital to be seen in triage, I took it with us still playing to keep her calm. Everyone was asking about it they thought it was a really great idea.*

*When we eventually offloaded her into a bed, she was so grateful and said she loved me. So cute, it melts your heart.*

*"We were quickly offloaded but we made their journey the best we could, and they were very grateful."*

*Before the use of RITA my patient was quite combative as she was saying she was in pain, pain scoring 10/10. When using the tablet the patient forgot her pain, she was singing to Frank Sinatra, Duran Duran and a bit of Tom Jones, she even tried to get up off the stretcher and have a little dance. She was very amused with the bubbles game and giggled whilst playing it.*

*Another patient was in complete delirium, very abrupt, no calming her down, I did think at one stage not to bring out the tablet Incas she threw it and damaged it. After a short while I brought out the tablet and put on some old news clips, food clips and games, she told me she used the ingredients in the food clips and could even tell me the year these products came out, and at what stages in the recipe it would be brought into the mix, when she baked with her grandmother. She was so excited, she loved snakes and ladders, and even enjoyed singing to music, Dean Martin bit of Elvis Presley, she was singing her heart out.*

*Had a couple more loving the music, all the old songs, I've noticed that it's always the music a lot of patients will go for, they sing, then they can give you little snippets of how old they were when the song came out. One patient even told me she was proposed to by her husband, she then cried and remembered he had passed away.*

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*Feedback from families is very positive. I have mentioned the scheme to a couple of care homes.*



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