

**NEWSLETTER No. 3/2012**

**20 December, 2012**

Dear collaborators,

**In the second half of 2012 the project really started to roll. Below is a report from each of the seven countries that shows their impressive progress. Seven is allegedly a magic number, but I have to add that there are other nice numbers as well. For example, Bergen claims to be a city of seven mountains, but depending on how you count you could also find eight or nine of them. Four more countries – Argentina, Denmark, Italy, and UK – have considered joining, and a short report of those countries is found after the seven existing ones.**



The kick-off meeting in Bergen in June this year (see photo) really kick-started the project. It was successful on three levels: On a personal level, it helped to establish contact between collaborators that was important for developing the project. On a professional level with an “internal” focus it helped to clarify the project’s goals, procedures and to develop sub-projects. And on a professional level with an “external” focus it was a first opportunity to show the project and the international and interdisciplinary collaboration to the wider public. The presentations from the public day are available on the project

website (<http://helse.uni.no/timea>). We also had an “unofficial” kick-off meeting in Vienna (mentioned in the report from Brazil below). After the kick-off meeting, most communication has been through video conferences, bilateral email/phone communication, and occasional bilateral visits. But the initial personal meeting made all the difference for everything that followed.

**Upcoming meetings:** Next year, we will continue to have occasional video conferences and regular communication via email/phone, but we will also have a personal meeting again. This is scheduled to be in *Bergen on 5-6 August, 2013*. Arrival will be on Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup>; then we will have two days for the project meeting at GAMUT offices; and then those who also attend the European music therapy congress in Oslo

([www.emtc2013.no](http://www.emtc2013.no)) can continue to discuss informally on the journey to Oslo and during the congress. (One idea is that we might take a train together on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>, that would give us a lot of relaxed discussion time while being able to watch the beautiful scenery.)

We are also planning to have a (double-length) round table with presentations on the TIME-A project at the Oslo conference. This format (2 x 90 minutes) will give us space for about 6-8 presentations from project collaborators. The deadline for abstracts is 15 February, so we should start collecting abstracts in January. Please email your ideas, titles, or abstracts to Lucja and me.

**Other conferences:** A major autism conference, the Autism Europe International Congress, will take place in Budapest, Hungary, from 26-28 September ([www.autismcongress2013.eu](http://www.autismcongress2013.eu)). Monika will submit a paper, maybe others would like to join as well? The deadline for abstracts is very soon – 11 January. A smaller conference (partly in German language) will take place in Bonn, Germany, on 21-22 February ([www.wgas-autismus.org](http://www.wgas-autismus.org)). Monika will have a poster there. If there are other interesting conferences, please let us know so that we can put them on the project website. Also, don't forget to collect your project-related publications or presentations, media reports etc. – either for the website or for the annual report to the Research Council.

**News from the central office:** We have finally been able to fill the postdoctoral position that was included in the project grant. Lucja (Lucy) Bieleninik, a clinical psychologist and PhD from Poland, has found us, or rather she and the project have found each other. She is extremely hardworking and efficient, as indicated by an impressively long publication list (mostly in Polish), in addition to also having relevant clinical experience. She will strengthen the important minority of “non-music therapists” in this project. In addition to writing project-related publications, she will also take over many coordinating functions in the international collaboration. She has also helped to design the appearance of this newsletter.

Here are the news from the seven sites:



It has been a very busy few months in Australia. We have received ethics approval from Melbourne Uni, and are waiting to hear back from our Government Education Department before we can approach schools for recruitment. Advertising for participants began in the first week of November, and since then I have received 14 enquiries from families, with 3 consent forms signed. We plan to begin the baseline ADOS assessments in mid January 2013, so I'm currently working on gathering a small team of music therapists for the project. I have 3 funding submissions on the go at the moment, and will hear the outcome of 2 of them in a few weeks, and the 3rd one in January. It is a nervous wait - hopefully one of them will be successful! While presenting my PhD study at an autism research forum, I took the opportunity to introduce the Time-A project to this community. There was a lot of interest from the audience and many offers to help with recruitment, which was very encouraging.

*Grace Thompson, University of Melbourne, Australia*



In Vienna, the first family participating in the study recently completed the 12-month follow-up assessment, so we now have the first set of full data available. Therapy and/or assessments for the other six children recruited so far are underway. At present, I try to speed up recruitment through a new round of contacting all referring institutions and professionals involved. Meanwhile, on the occasion of a trip to Korea in October, I had the pleasure of visiting fellow site manager Jinah Kim at Jeonju University; we discussed various methodological and practical aspects of implementing the project at our respective sites, and generally enjoyed engaging in professional and personal exchange.

*Monika Geretsegger, Aalborg University/University of Vienna, Austria*



This year we formally entered in the TIME-A study through the collaboration agreement signed between Uni Helse and Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) in Brazil. In addition, this year we participated in the unofficial TIME-A meeting in Vienna through the site manager Gustavo Schulz Gattino. The Portuguese version of TIME-A project was submitted to the Ethical Research Committee at the Hospital de Clinicas de Porto Alegre (Porto Alegre city). The result of the evaluation committee will come out between January and February

2013. We seek scholarships for the master student Igor Ortega and for the doctoral student Alexandre Mauat da Silva that work in this project (both music therapists, students of the Postgraduate Program in Child and Adolescent Health at UFRGS). We're still waiting for the scholarships results. Later this year, the site Brazilian site manager sought support for the realization TIME-A study in São Paulo city through the University of São Paulo (USP, main university in Latin America). São Paulo city offer many possibilities to access children with ASD (according to the inclusion criteria of TIME-A research). Now, we are trying one authorization for validate and translate the SRS scale for use in Brazil.

***Gustavo Gattino, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil***



We had some unsettling period in Israel because of the unexpected war in southern Israel. We had to put our activity on hold since our main recruitment center, the city of Beer Sheba, got badly hit by the war. We are now finally back on track. First of all, next week we have a date with the child psychiatrist at Soroka hospital in Beer Sheba to finish one of our Ethical applications. We are also waiting to have a meeting with the head of the special education in Beer Sheba which is suppose to approve the recruitment at the nursery schools there.

We have decided also to work on another front and not just Beer Sheba. This made us also to apply for ethics through university of Haifa in order to start recruiting families in centers in Tel Aviv area and in Northern Israel. It is simpler to receive ethical approval from the university and it will also allow us to include master students to help in different elements of the project. Tali Gottfried, our PhD student will start with the recruitment and interventions as soon as we receive the ethical approval from the university.

***Cochavit Elefant, University of Haifa, Israel***



Korean Site has two collaborating centers: Family Love Music Therapy Center (4 music therapists and 2 counsellors waiting to serve the TIME A since August this year), and Rudolf Center for Children with ASD where Research level of ADOS Assessors work. Since early Oct this year, we successfully recruited 4 children, but unfortunately, the first child dropped-out immediately when the mother of the child found out that the child was randomly allocated to intensive treatment group. Most children with ASD in Korea are extremely busy following tight schedule such as

early intervention courses (special education, speech therapy, behavioral therapy, etc), and they tend to prefer once a week MT condition only. In order to have music therapy, they have to travel long distance, and music therapy means that they have to give up other interventions at least half of the day. So this has become such an issue here. Two children were allocated to control group (standard care) and they are not happy either. Therefore recruitment of participants turns out to be quite difficult due to these factors. I am currently making several new contacts with other institutions to ensure that we recruit the participants ASAP.

***Jinah Kim, Jeonju University, Korea***



The TIME-A project in Norway is proceeding slowly but consistently. The project has been approved by the ethic committee and we have communicated the project with several important institutions that are involved in the treatment of children with ASD in Bergen. As the project costs will be quite high in Norway we have worked a lot with grant applications and have succeeded with one. Helse Vest – the regional health authority for Western Norway – will give us funding for a predictor study within the TIME-A project. The project title is: “Shared moments. The quality of relationship as outcome predictor in music therapy with children with ASD”. This project will make use of the AQR instrument and therefore

we have established a collaboration with Karin Schumacher, Silke Reimer, and Claudine Calvet, colleagues from the University of Arts in Berlin, who have developed the AQR instrument. This collaboration is very fruitful and inspiring and we are looking forward to this project. The Helse Vest funding will also help us to start recruiting children in Norway. The recruitment will start next year.

*Karin Mössler, Uni Research, Bergen, Norway*



Greeting my fellow researchers:

I hope this finds you all well. It’s been quite of an eventful time since we last met in Bergen back in June. In August, we at The Rebecca Center for Music Therapy at Molloy College began recruiting potential participants for the TIME-A study. We had a very positive response to our promotion efforts and began randomizing children throughout late August and early September. Our target was to include at least 11 children in the study while collecting a growing waiting list for our next round of randomization. Thus, 3 children were randomized for high intensity treatment, 3 for low intensity treatment, and 5 for no treatment. Our team at the Rebecca Ctr organized undergraduate and graduate students to assist with filming sessions, transferring session video, as well as archiving the data. The study had been moving along rather smoothly in terms of attendance until late October when we (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut) were hit with a massive storm, “Super Storm Sandy.”

The storm ruined many lives in the NY and NJ areas especially on Long Island (that’s where we are located) as many families were displaced from their homes, children had lost their schools, loss of power and heat, minimal food and water, petroleum for cars and trucks was at a low, as well as the loss of personal belongings. Our Center remained closed for nearly two weeks. During those 2 weeks, and at the time when we had returned, our first priority was to support and assist fellow faculty members, nearby community families, as well as the families that we serve at the center. Our support would include a range of services including aligning and preparing home-based music therapy services, distributing goods, department fundraising, as well as participating in rescue efforts in Long Beach, NY.

2-3 weeks following the storm and the supportive initiatives we were able to get the TIME-A study back on track. One family dropped out of the study due to family circumstances related to the storm; however, the other 10 participants remained in the study. The study continues to move along and we plan on completing our first round (5 month period) of TIME-A by the end of January. Currently we are preparing for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of randomization in regards to solidifying MT students to film and archive session videos, scheduling therapists, and preparing new inquiry forms. In addition, we are actively seeking a new psychologist to be a tester for the study (Unfortunately, our current psychologist, Alan Wenderoff, will be leaving us).

All of this being said, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues at the Rebecca Center who have each played a role to ensure the success of the first round of TIME-A: Jill Lucente, Gabriela Ortiz, Suzanne Sorel, Jesse Asch, Tal Gur, Talita Ferrara, Monica Morello, Audra Cerruto, Alan Wenderoff, and the music therapy students of Molloy College.

I look forward to reading and hearing about developments in the other countries. I hope you are all well and wish you all a happy holiday season!

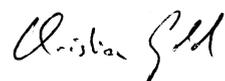
*John Carpente, Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY, USA*

**Other countries:** The TIME-A project has attracted considerable attention among interested professionals also in other countries. Colleagues in Argentina, Denmark, Italy, and the UK have been in touch with us this about setting up new sites in their country. In Argentina, Karina Ferrari has explored different institutions for possible collaboration. She also helped to translate the study protocol into Spanish (now published on the project website). In Denmark, Ulla Holck tried to set up a site, and although she eventually found out that this will not be possible, the initiative had other important spin-offs and she continues to be involved in the project in other ways. In Italy, Ferdinando Suvini and Filippo Muratori have just signed the collaboration agreement. In the UK, a group around Mike Crawford, including Amelia Oldfield, Helen Odell-Miller, Anna Maratos and others, are preparing an application for funding.

When seen together, this high level of activities in all the different countries is very impressive. Your enthusiasm is extremely important and valuable for the project, and I cannot thank you enough for holding it up even in spite of the rather severe adversities that some of you had to experience this year. Paraphrasing the inscription at the main post office building in New York (which I saw this spring when visiting Molloy College):

*“Neither hurricane nor war nor gloom of night stays these scholars from the swift completion of their appointed rounds!”*

So, as the end of the year comes closer, let me use this opportunity for thanking you all for the completion of not only your appointed rounds, but also many additional rounds, some of which I may not even know of. I wish you all a Merry Christmas (or Hanukkah, or whatever you are celebrating), all the best for 2013, and I really look forward to continuing the collaboration with this fantastic team!



Christian Gold