Dear colleagues and friends,

A busy year has passed since the last newsletter of the TIME-A project. In the last days of October last year, we met in New York (hosted by John Carpentee and his team at Molloy College and the Rebecca Center for Music Therapy). In addition to internal discussions, we also arranged a conference day with many presentations by international TIME-A team members and a keynote by Ken Aigen. In his thought-provoking presentation, Ken reflected on the appropriate goals of music therapy on the background of autism rights movement and self-advocacy. After many decades of sometimes misguided interventions attempting to change the autistic mind, should we now be more accepting of autism as a trait, and rather try to change society than the individual? In fact, society is already changing, with digital technology in particular creating a more livable world for people with ASD. The enthusiastic TIME-A team members were quick to pick up this new trend (see picture!).

Members of the TIME-A UK team practicing their autistic skills at the meeting in New York.

(From left to right: Belinda Lydon, Grace Watts, Alexandra Georgaki)

The internal discussions at that meeting circled around the discussion whether or not to continue recruitment beyond the impressive number of more than 300 that were already randomised by that
time. Taking into account the (ambiguous) recommendations from the Data Monitoring Committee, the funding situation, and the level of energy of all involved, we decided to allow further participants to be randomised for a few more weeks only, but then to close recruitment. Therefore, with the last participants randomised in early November, the study now includes a final number of 364 participants from nine countries worldwide. That is a very impressive number, and it is hard to think of any similar studies in the field.

The next meeting took place in July this year in Vienna, in connection with the 10th European Music Therapy Conference. Because we expected everybody to be exhausted from the conference, we decided to have only a relaxed afternoon in a café garden (see picture). We discussed many aspects related to interpreting results and working towards the main publication. At the end, some of us took a ride on the “Lilliput” train in the nearby Prater, and some could not get enough of the roller coasters! (I’m not mentioning any names, but you know who they were.)

Happy and proud TIME-A team members at the meeting in Vienna.
(From left to right: Monika Geretsegger, Jinah Kim, Łucja Bieleninik, Grace Thompson, Christian Gold, Cochavit Elefant, Tali Gottfried, Ferdinando Suvini, Karin Mössler, Hellen Odell-Miller, Amelia Oldfield)

In addition, a TIME-A online meeting was held in April 2016. At the 10th European Music Therapy Conference in Vienna (5-9/07/2016), there were several contributions linked to TIME-A (I hope we have not forgotten any):

1) Short-term effects of improvisational music therapy for children with autism spectrum disorder: findings from the TIME-A randomised trial – Gold & Bieleninik
2) Musical and emotional attunement: unique and essential in music therapy with children on the autism spectrum – Holck & Geretsegger

3) Shaping the therapeutic relationship with the child with autism spectrum disorder in improvisational music therapy – Kim

4) Hearing parents’ voices – experiences of Music-Oriented Counseling for parents of children with autism – Gottfried

5) Musicking as a form of social play and supporting creative connections with children with autism spectrum disorder – Thompson

6) What’s this adorable noise? Relational qualities in music therapy with children with autism – Mössler & Schmid

7) Round table: Music in everyday life by parents with their children with autism - Gottfried, Thompson, Carpente & Gattino

8) Round table: The good, bad and ugly: joys and challenges of being involved in international research with children with autism - Gattino, Elefant, Geretsegger, Mössler, Suvini, Odell-Miller & Watts

9) 'We are singing together!' Promoting vocal, language and communication skills in children with autism spectrum disorder – Papadopoulou

Right now, several TIME-A researchers are attending the XI Autism-Europe International Congress in Edinburgh, UK (16-18/09/2016). Again, there are several TIME-A contributions there:

1) Oral presentation: Tracing the temporal stability of autism spectrum diagnosis and severity using ADOS: a systematic review and meta-analysis – Bieleninik, Geretsegger, Posserud, Thompson, Elefant & Gold

2) Oral poster presentation: Music Therapy empowering young children with autism and their families; Reporting back from the largest non-pharmacological randomised control trial in autism – Watts, Georgaki, Oldfield, Grant, Odell-Miller, Bruecker, Lydon, Papadopoulou, Sandford

3) Poster presentation: Investigating the causes of informant discrepancies in the assessment of autism spectrum conditions – Finnemann, Barnes, & Oldfield

4) Poster presentation: What’s this adorable noise? Relational qualities in music therapy with children with ASD – Mössler & Schmid

**Upcoming events:**

The most important date for all involved in the study is **31/10/2016**: On this day, all 12-months assessments should be complete. That gives Jörg and me two weeks to analyse the data – a very tight schedule! So please make sure to get all that done and entered on time, and let us avoid having to send too many reminders. Of course, for all earlier participants, you don’t have to wait until that day!

Then, on 14-16/11/2016 we will have the next TIME-A meeting in Bergen. It will be the closing meeting for TIME-A (hard to believe, but true!) and at the same time the first international meeting for Shared Moments (one of several TIME-A spinoff projects, but the only one coordinated in Bergen). A detailed programme will follow soon, but there will be space for internal discussions on Monday and Wednesday and a public seminar day on Tuesday.

Another upcoming event is the 15th World Congress of Music Therapy, Tsukuba, Japan (4-8/07/2017), where several abstracts have been submitted by TIME-A team members.

In terms of writing, we are hoping to complete and submit the main study report in December 2016 (the official closure date for the Research Council of Norway) and the secondary reports for individual countries (e.g. to the NIHR for the UK site) by February 2017.

Below you will find, as usual, the news from some of the sites. Please note that not all are listed because not all had any news to report. As always, many thanks to Łucja Bieleninik for putting together this information.

Best wishes,
News from (some of) the sites

It was great to see many TIME-A collaborators in Austria again when we all gathered at the 10th European Music Therapy Conference in Vienna this July. A number of presentations at EMTC2016 were linked to TIME-A, and I particularly enjoyed that in addition to my role as co-organiser of the conference, I was also able to actively participate in two of them: an oral presentation of first author Ulla Holck from Aalborg University about her ongoing work with TIME-A video material examining musical and emotional attunement processes, and a roundtable presentation with five other TIME-A site managers discussing various joys and challenges of being involved in international research with children with autism.

I would also like to let you know that an article discussing the feasibility of TIME-A study procedures using data from the Viennese subsample has been published earlier this year: Geretsegger, M., Holck, U., Bieleninik, Ł., & Gold, C. (2016). Feasibility of a trial on improvisational music therapy for children with autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Music Therapy, 53*(2), 93-120.

Right now, I am getting ready for a different part of my life as my maternity leave starts on August 01, 2016. I will certainly continue to follow what's happening within the TIME-A group, and I look forward to joining the activities again in autumn 2017.

Monika Geretsegger, (now) Uni Research Health, Bergen, Norway

The Brazilian site of the TIME-A study are approaching of the final stages. At this moment, we will start the last assessments of the twelve months. The month of August will be special for the Brazilian site, because we will receive the USA's site manager, John Carpente, who will share some experiences of his work conducted at the Rebeca Center of Music Therapy during the first Brazilian Seminar of Music Therapy and Autism. One important result for the Brazilian music therapy as a consequence of the TIME-A study was the translation and cross-cultural adaptation of the Individual Music-Centered Assessment Profile for Neurodevelopmental Disorders (IMCAP-ND), assessment used by the USA site at the TIME-A study, for use in Brazil.

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

In Pisa we are mainly working on the upload of the last data of the Italian randomized patients (55). After the seventh month of break planned in the project, some patients have asked to continue and others from the standard care group (no MT sessions) would like to start an MT intervention. In November 2016 a Training Course in Music Therapy will be offered in
Pisa, thanks to an interesting collaboration among the University of Pisa, the Conservatory of Livorno and Stella Maris Research Center. An extremely exciting good news for Italian music therapists. We are also planning to conduct a Time A Conference and meeting in Pisa in Spring 2017. It would be a wonderful chance for us to have such a qualified international music therapy team in out site. We would be honoured if some of you could take part in the conference. It also might be an opportunity for you to come to Pisa and visit Tuscany.

**Filippo Muratori and Ferdinando Suvini, IRCCS Fondazione Stella Maris, Italy**

Greeting from the USA! The Rebecca Center for Music Therapy at Molloy College completed data collection in January of 2016. Since completing our data collection, the Rebecca Center, together Gustavo Gattino and his team, is utilizing TIME-A data in testing the IMCAP-ND assessment tool for predictive, concurrent, convergent validity. I look forward to seeing the TIME-A family this coming November!

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

The TIME-A study in the East of England included 33 children in six schools in across Cambridgeshire, Essex, and North London. Recruitment was carried out in blocks to facilitate clinicians’ travelling between the schools, and recruitment and enrolment was conducted between September, 2014 and November, 2015. Sarah Faber Research Assistant left the team in July 2016 and will be replaced. Alexandra Georgaki has been very active presenting at the British Association for Music Therapy annual congress, on a round table Chaired by Amelia Oldfield, where all music therapists in the UK project participated, on the theme of the music therapy itself, and discussed intensive treatment 3 time a week amongst other topics. Alexandra also presented in a joint paper with music therapist Laura Bruecker. Helen Odell-Miller took part in the round table at the European Congress of Music Therapy in Vienna on TIME-A, and most importantly, Alexandra Georgaki has gained a fully funded PhD scholarship at Anglia Ruskin University in which she will research shared history and meaningful moments including video analysis. Laura Bruecker from the other Cambridge based project has also started a funded PhD this year at Anglia Ruskin University based upon TIME-A work, and resilience specifically.

**Helen Odell-Miller, NIHR funded TIME-A team in the UK – Eastern Region, London, UK**

The London sites (Central and North West London and Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trusts) met their recruitment targets and completed all music therapy sessions by March 2016. All final follow-up interviews are due to be completed in October. Our current rate of
completion at 5 months is 83% and at 12 months is 81%.
CNWL Music Therapists ended their school residency with presentations for teaching staff which were very well received. We will be planning future meetings with the Parent Advisory Group to discuss dissemination of the Trial results and the impact of the findings.
The London team (along with their colleagues from Cambridge) have been busy with a number of conference papers including presentations at: ‘International Perspectives on Improvisational Music Therapy and Autism Spectrum Disorder’, Molloy College, New York; ‘Resourcing Music Therapy for Contemporary Needs’, British Association for Music Therapy Conference, Glasgow and; the EMTC conference, Vienna.
Amy Claringbold, Central and North West London and Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trusts, London, UK

Amy Claringbold, Central and North West London and Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trusts, London, UK