



**United Way**  
**Central & Northern**  
**Vancouver Island**

## Music Therapy Offers Patients and Families a Relaxing Environment

Lynn\* was tired, stressed and couldn't think straight as it was her ninth consecutive day by her mother's side at the in-patient palliative care ward of the hospital. It was getting late and she hasn't slept well in days.

She could hear calming music in the hallway and opened the door so that her Pam\*, her mother, could hear it too. Lynn's mother was resting comfortably, but non-responsive. Pam always loved listening to music and not long after the music began, she opened her eyes, and focused on her daughter. Pam could not speak, but Lynn could see through her eyes that she was grateful for the music and suddenly Lynn felt at peace.

Lynn was able to step away for a short while so that she could be in contact with other family members. Later in the evening Pam's son arrived from out of town and a nurse was able to find him a guitar so that he could sing to his mother - something that he loved to do and she loved to listen to. Throughout this time, Pam remained with her eyes open focusing on her family.

**“We never expected to have such happy memories surrounding the death of our mother.”**

After they started to listen to music and sing every evening, Lynn was sleeping much better. “These hours were often the most difficult as I was fatigued, and would become more anxious and fearful as night started to fall.”

A couple days later, Pam passed away. Lynn and her brother were grateful for the music as well as to play the guitar and sing to their mother during her last days. “It makes me so happy knowing that my mother spent her last few days enjoying the calming music and listening to us sing. We never expected to have such happy memories surrounding the death of our mother.”



The settling program helped Lynn and her brother turn a very difficult and sad time into an enjoyable experience. Your help is needed to ensure that people like Lynn and her brother have a positive grieving experience.

Your donations help fund music therapy programs with the purpose of calming and settling palliative care patients and their families.

To read more stories about people you have helped, visit [uwcncvi.ca](http://uwcncvi.ca).

*\*Names have been changed.*