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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Music therapy research steps onto world stage

London will become the centre of international music therapy research this week at the inaugural meeting of MANDARI, a pioneering research collaboration for Music and the Neuro-Developmentally At-Risk Infant.

Leading music therapists and neuro-scientists from around the world will meet with composers, parents and other stakeholders at Goldsmiths University of London to develop a music therapy research agenda for fragile infants.

MANDARI has been established by a small group of neo-natal intensive care specialists headed by Australian music therapy researcher and clinician, Dr Helen Shoemark.

Dr Shoemark, from Australia's world-renowned Murdoch Childrens Research Institute (MCRI) in Melbourne, has created MANDARI over the past year with a core group of British and American collaborators.

MANDARI Core Group members include neuro-scientist Dr Lauren Stewart from Goldsmiths, researcher and clinician Dr Deanna Hanson-Abromeit from the University of Kansas, and leading British music therapy researchers.

Dr Shoemark said music was used with babies in neo-natal intensive care units (NICUs) as a multisensory tool to trigger the senses of hearing, feeling, balance and movement.

"Music can support development outcomes such as self-regulation, feeding and transitions from the sleep to wake cycle," she said.



Dr Helen Shoemark: leading research to give fragile infants a better start in life.

“MANDARI combines these clinical applications of music therapy with the latest research in the area to help give a better start in life to our most fragile little citizens.

“British music therapy is building a research agenda on long clinical experience, while Europe, Australia and the USA lead the global research into music therapy for fragile infants.

“The UK is the ideal place to bring together the world’s foremost researchers and clinicians to create powerful international research collaborations.”

MANDARI will include a professional development seminar to outline the latest research-based clinical music therapy practices for fragile hospitalised infants, while the workshop will set future research priorities.

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