



Formed on the belief in the restorative power of music, the Charlotte Symphony has partnered with Queens University and Southminster for an exciting study examining how those with dementia and Alzheimer's respond to live orchestral music.

This partnership is part of the Symphony's umbrella Healing Hand program, which has sent professional orchestra musicians into Charlotte and surrounding area hospitals, nursing homes, and senior care centers for nearly 20 years.

With guidance provided by the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, the partnership uses intentional musical selections to determine levels of audience engagement. Queens University Music Therapy students will conduct the intensive study, designed for mid- to late-stage patients, consisting of 10 performances by former Charlotte Symphony cellist Deborah Mishoe and current flutist Amy Orsinger Whitehead, at low and high socio-economic senior care centers.

Five performances each take place at Complete Care Management Myers Park and Southminster. Residents from the host facilities will make up the study participant group. The purpose of the diverse socio-economic study is to determine whether music has a universal impact on memory recall or if having had previous exposure to orchestral music makes a difference in recognition.

The study has been formally vetted by an Institutional Review Board to ensure that ethical practices are being followed and no known harm will come from participation in the study.

Components of the study are graciously funded by Southminster, which has long been a Symphony supporter and partner for mainstage concerts, on-location ensemble performances, and continuing education opportunities.