

**Submission
No 141**

**INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr Edward Mieluk

Date received: 22 February 2018

I'm a musician who has been performing for seniors at retirement villages, nursing homes, dementia units, leisure learning 50+ organisations for the past 10 years. The significant health benefits of music to the seniors community is proven beyond doubt yet none of the 3 tiers of Government have been prepared to sufficiently acknowledge its benefits. I hope this latest Government initiative is more than a talkfest. Some examples. At a show yesterday a senior thanked me because our music made her feel happy again after attending 2 funerals in the past fortnight. Performing for a dementia unit last year a senior lady thanked me. Why? She said "see my husband over there, he didn't know who I was and refused to dance with me. After 10 minutes of you playing your rockNroll, he called me by my name, asked me to dance and he sang along remembering the lyrics to your songs. Thankyou for giving my husband back to me for 3 hours". Playing at other dementia units we receive less than \$100 for 1 hour performance by 3 musicians because the carers cannot afford to pay any more. Musicians need insurance and often take over \$10K value of equipment to their shows. OK we will continue performing for seniors whether or not the Government provides a genuine strategy of financial assistance but the point here is that the other vast majority of musicians who have the potential of improving seniors health care through music will not because of the lack of genuine commitment by Governments to date. There is no doubt that the cost of health-care for seniors will continue as the baby boomer generation continues to age. Have Governments carried out a cost-benefit analysis into the savings to the tax-payer through better control of depression by exposing seniors to regular music performances? OK, I am aware that depression goes beyond seniors but we have to start with the seniors.