



Early View

Correspondence

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Karaoke as a feasible alternative therapy for pulmonary rehabilitation for COPD

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We read with great interest the article on the effect of singing as a part of pulmonary rehabilitation for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) by Kaasgaard et al. [1]. A previous Cochrane review of this research question did not provide a clear conclusion [2]. They showed that singing for lung health training is noninferior to standard physical exercise training. Although the authors anticipated higher adherence to singing therapy, no difference was observed in adherence between the two intervention methods, and 25.5% of the patients dropped out of the singing for lung health training. We believe that adherence to singing therapy could be improved using some ideas, and we discuss some strategies to increase adherence.

One of the reasons for failing to maintain adherence may have been the difficulty of attending the singing therapy itself. Accessibility problems have been reported as a barrier to pulmonary rehabilitation in a previous report [3]. Hence, we propose the use of karaoke in singing therapy. Karaoke is a type of interactive entertainment, where people sing along to recorded music using a microphone. It has become a popular leisure activity for several people worldwide following the development of the karaoke machine in Japan in the 1970s; it allows patients to practice singing without going to medical facilities. It has been reported that karaoke training can improve respiratory function [4]. Singing loudly at home may cause inconvenience to our family, whereas in a karaoke box, we can sing without any worries. There are machines that give us a score for our singing ability at karaoke, which helps increase motivation.

Due to the recent corona outbreak, group karaoke was found to cause cluster outbreaks [5]. Nevertheless, there are numerous karaoke stations that provide private rooms, wherein we need not worry about the risk of infection. Some people may feel embarrassed to sing in front of others, but if they sing in a private room, they may be less likely to resist. However, training in a private room has the risk of losing the benefits of group training. Group singing is effective in motivating participants to compete with each other [6]. It has been reported that with an online training environment, effective group practice can be conducted in a private room [7].

There are several karaoke stations in Japan that are easily accessible, although karaoke may not be very popular in some countries. The number of private conference rooms has been increasing recently due to the corona pandemic, and by making use of them, it may become easier to access an environment where people can sing freely. If such a meeting room is unavailable, one can also sing in the car using an online karaoke application. Online training can solve the problem of having a small number of teachers to train the songs.

Some people like singing more than physical exercise; therefore, singing is considered as a better alternative training approach to physical exercise. The use of karaoke, with high adherence, might be a feasible alternative to pulmonary rehabilitation for COPD.

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