

Dr Ruth Bright, AM

A pioneer music therapist since 1960, Ruth Bright is well-known for her work and writings on music therapy; she is the author of 12 books, 3 of which have been published in translation - one each in German and Spanish, and two in Japanese. She has written about music therapy in psychiatry, geriatric rehabilitation, dementia and grief resolution; and is on the state committee of the Australian Music Therapy Association. Ruth has served two terms as National President of that association and has also served a three-year term as President of the World Federation of Music Therapy. She is also an Adjunct lecturer for the University of New England's School of Health, and gives guest lectures at several other academic institutions.

Formal retirement some years ago has not brought her work to a complete stop, and she still does some clinical work as well as lecturing at the Universities in Sydney where music therapy is taught. She is currently engaged in the study of all aspects of culture and stigma, as found in Australia, and is planning a research project on the use of music to re-build emotional bonds that are impaired by dementia.

She is in demand as speaker and visiting lecturer, and (in addition to her tasks as an Adjunct lecture) is a member of the Implementation committee of the University of New England's School of Health, which committee was established following the recent external review of the School; Ruth is co-supervisor for a PhD Candidate and travels to Armidale a few times each year to attend meetings or give seminars.

In 2007, Ruth taught a 16-hour course in transcultural health care (part of a Bachelor's degree in Nursing) and (at the request of the University's School of Health) wrote a new post-graduate course on that same topic.

In recognition of her work for community health through music therapy, Ruth was created a Member of the Order of Australia in 1992 and, in 2002, Melbourne University conferred on her an Honorary Doctorate in Music (one of only 17 such degrees in the University's 150 years of existence) for 'outstanding eminence' in music therapy.