

THE VALUE OF GARDENS IN HOSPITALS

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ATTENTION RESTORATION THEORY Kaplan & Kaplan

- Better concentration after spending time in nature
- Exposure to nature has a restorative effect on the brain's ability to focus
- The restorative influences of viewing nature develops a more positive state
- We learn to associate restoration with natural settings



ATTENTION RESTORATION THEORY Kaplan & Kaplan

- Positive distraction
- Improved creative thinking and improved problem solving capacity
- Elevation in mood, effective in reducing depression
- Reduction in stress





PIVITOL RESEARCH – Roger Ulrich

View through a window may influence recovery from surgery, Science 1984

Sample: 46 patients who had undergone cholecystectomy, a common type of gall bladder surgery.

Groups: Wall-view (largely featureless brick wall) and tree-view (small stand of deciduous trees)

Results: In comparison with the wall-view group, the patients with the tree view had:

- 1. Shorter postoperative hospital stays,
- 2. Had fewer negative evaluative comments from nurses,
- 3. Took fewer moderate and strong analgesic doses,
- 4. Had slightly lower scores for minor postsurgical complications.

Summary: The results imply that hospital design and siting decisions should take into account the quality of patient window views.

Note: Research data is up to 40 years old. Technology advances have influenced surgery

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH – Dr. Rona Weerasuriya, 2016

Health & wellbeing experiences during access to gardens in healthcare settings

Doctoral research by Deakin University utilising Austin Health gardens

A qualitative study exploring people's lived experience via semi-structured interviews

72 participants - 36 staff, 18 visitors, 18 patients (6 Acquired Brain Injury and 12 general patients)

Nine key themes thematically coded and centred on "a connection to a restorative setting"

- **Living Energy** seasonal changes, growth and regeneration
- **Connections to people** socialisation, conversations (that couldn't be facilitated indoors)
- **Provided "an escape"** from ward to more "normal" setting, reflected world outside of hospital.
- Provided spiritual connotations (Participants used terms such as "good for the soul", "a safe haven", "peaceful", "tranquil" and "blessed")
- Provided a welcoming, safe and comfortable space to spend time in (good maintenance)

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH – Dr. Rona Weerasuriya, 2016

Health & wellbeing experiences during access to gardens in healthcare settings

- Facilitated relaxation & rejuvenation ("calming", "relaxing", "serene", "tranquil" and "soothing")
- Enhanced affective state (Improvements to positive affect; "reflecting a level of pleasurable engagement with the environment, depicted by happiness, joy, excitement, enthusiasm, and contentment", as well as decreased negative affective states such as anxiety, depression and hostility
- Afforded reminiscing positive memories of past experiences / childhood
- Afforded intrigue and exploration opportunity to exert control over seeking and discovering new things



GARDENS & GROUNDS PROJECT AT AUSTIN HEALTH

Creating gardens to improve the therapeutic environment of Austin Health

Environmental Management Strategy 2009 - 2012

Gardens & Grounds master plan 2010

Implementation 2011 - Gardens & Grounds Project Officer position (Australian first)

- Develop gardens & facilitate research

Gardens funded by non-operational sources and external donations/grants





GARDENS & GROUNDS PROJECT AT AUSTIN HEALTH

Since 2011:

25 projects completed to date

Acute care, aged care, mental health, rehabilitation, child care, open spaces

\$768,000 spent on garden projects

7000 plants

Community engagement – media, guided garden tours, community speaking





SECURE EXTENDED CARE UNIT COURTYARD

Challenges

- Unused overgrown rear garden enclosed by high wall
- Locked area with poor access

Desire

- A retreat space quiet, relaxed, meditative
- Additional edibles for the cooking program
- Mural and inspirational quotes
- Supervised space

Funding

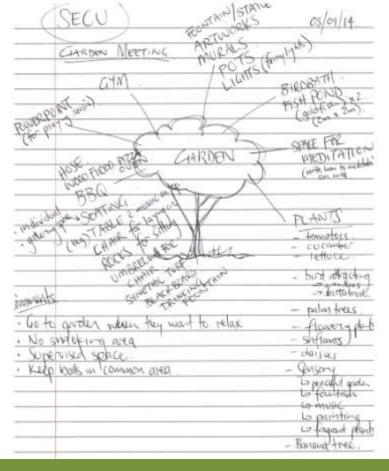
• Gender specific grant

Design Process

- Consumer and staff input
- "Dreams are free", then paired back accordingly

Solutions

• Not all desires possible, but many were included



SECURE EXTENDED CARE UNIT COURTYARD







Every day brings new choices

SECURE EXTENDED CARE UNIT COURTYARD







"The garden now provides a more community based alternative space within the unit for relaxation and assists with decreasing anxiety" Kerry Duff (NUM)



ACUTE PSYCHIATRIC UNIT

Challenges

- Under-utilised central courtyard garden (open access)
- Reduced use across year due to lawn/dirt surface

Desire

- More functional all-purpose area
- Additional edibles for the OT cooking program
- Reduced maintenance needs (poor maintenance access)

Funding

• Grant

Design Process

Management & staff input

Solutions

- Improved surfacing , heavy durable planters & seats
- Raised beds for plants and edibles



ACUTE PSYCHIATRIC UNIT



ACUTE PSYCHIATRIC UNIT



- A more usable space used throughout the year
- Patients and families members spend time in it
- A welcoming space
- Increased use for variety of leisure activities





PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA RECOVERY SERVICE











GARDENS FOR RESPITE, RELAXATION & RECOVERY

"Emotionally the garden has been a refuge

a calm place for therapies and visits from family and friends,
reconnecting my rehab world and real world in a supportive and positive way
and speeding my recovery"

Kate (past patient)