

SOCIAL & THERAPEUTIC HORTICULTURE FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

One in six adults have symptoms of depression or anxiety in any given week.



Social Therapeutic Horticulture (STH) is a health intervention where trained practitioners work with plants and people to improve physical and psychological health, communication, and thinking skills.

OUR RESEARCH SHOWS THAT STH CAN REDUCE SYMPTOMS OF MILD TO SEVERE DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

STH provides an alternative treatment option and can support the 1.2million patients currently on waiting lists. It can also be used alongside other treatments and may help to address inequalities in access to services



IMPROVE WHOLE PERSON HEALTH

STH also improves physical health, promotes social interaction and reduces loneliness. It could therefore support the growing number of people with physical, mental and social comorbidities

BE USED FOR LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OF SYMPTOMS



STH has few to no side effects and can be used flexibly for prevention of mental ill-health and throughout recovery and relapse. It can reduce the demand for services, which may result in cost savings to the NHS.

SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

Participants develop horticulture skills and knowledge. They may also be able to gain horticultural qualifications and increase their employment opportunities.



BE EFFECTIVE IN DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS & SETTINGS



STH has been shown to be effective when delivered indoors and outdoors and in both community and healthcare settings, enabling it to cater for diverse patient groups.

ACTIONS REQUIRED:

- Read our [research](#) and visit the [STH information hub](#) and [Trellis](#).
- Provide long term and continuous funding for STH to ensure sustainability and accessibility.
- Prioritise holistic services such as STH to address mental, physical and social comorbidities and health inequalities.
- Integrate the use of STH into mental health policy and commissioning guidelines.
- Develop training on STH for health professionals in collaboration with leading STH organisations.

This poster was co-produced with lived experience experts and STH stakeholders.