

Five Levels of Mental Health Explained

The NHS 5-levels model of mental health has been widely adopted to provide a framework that Therapists and providers can both use to ensure referrals are appropriate to the patient's needs and that everyone remains safe.

The 5 Levels are:

- Level 0 A person who has taken their own decision to improve their mental well-being through engaging in an activity or independently accessing advice or self-help resources.
- Level 1 A person who is receiving support from their GP and/or or a link worker and want to be able manage their mental well-being through social prescribing pathways.
- Level 2 A person who needs GP support and access to psychological therapies, short term medication and/or ongoing monitoring and intervention, and are able to manage their mental health with this support. This person may need initial support to access provision through social prescribing pathways.
- Level 3 A person who has more complex needs and requires more than one area of support, including specialist and local mental health team support. This person needs support to access provision through dedicated social prescribing pathways; provided by services with resources and expertise tailored to people with more with complex mental ill health
- Level 4 A person who is experiencing acute mental health crisis and receiving inpatient or intensive support, or a person who has a long-term serious mental illness which affects how they function and need regular care and support. This person

will access specialist provision, delivered by mental health professionals.

You will need to decide to what levels your staff, your site and your organisation will provide social and therapeutic horticulture. Generally, providers will offer therapy to those in Levels 0, 1 and 2. Specialist provision is generally regarded as being required for Levels 3 and 4.

The Therapeutic Horticulture Stakeholder Group has taken this model further and defined 5 types of gardening for mental health that map to those 5-levels:

- *Self-directed gardening*: Gardening activities in everyday life. Aligns with Level 0.
- *Social Gardening*: Social or community-based gardening with a supportive leader. Programme of gardening activity informed by garden needs or growing preferences. Aligns with Level 1.
- *Social & Therapeutic Horticulture*: Gardening within an inclusive setting, led by a trained practitioner. Programme of gardening activity informed by garden needs, tailored to individual preferences. Aligns with Level 2.
- *Enhanced Social & Therapeutic Horticulture*: Structured and facilitated gardening activities within an inclusive setting, led by a trained practitioner. Person-centred programme of gardening activity. Aligns with Level 3.
- *Horticultural Therapy*: Structured and facilitated gardening activities, within a restricted-access setting, led by a trained practitioner with close involvement of a health or care specialist. Person-centred programme of gardening activity. Aligns with Level 4.