

“This is one of the most enjoyable classes we have. It helps ground me and brings up my mood no matter how I’m feeling beforehand. It has many beneficial aspects in regards to helping me meet my goals. It’s nurturing and keeps me in the here and now. It is wonderful.”

“Horticultural Therapy classes provide a holistic approach to healing from within, which I know with practice, awareness and hope can provide me with a life worth living.”

“I feel more relaxed and grounded after Horticultural Therapy and am able to process the day’s events in a much more relaxed manner. I feel that the classes have let me be more open and trusting with people, and helped me start to respect myself again.”

“This is not an escape. Rather, the sessions provide an introduction to a more balanced life. The topics are varied and not those I would have explored otherwise. I find them to be interesting and feel much better after allowing this natural stimulation to work on my thoughts and feelings. I can see this in others and hear them express the same.”

Homewood Health Centre is a leader in mental health and addiction treatment providing specialized psychiatric services. A fully accredited facility, Homewood has achieved the highest standards in quality care. Awards include the prestigious Canada Award of Excellence - Quality Award, Healthy Workplace Award and the Order of Excellence Award. Homewood has been improving lives since 1883.

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For more information about Horticultural Therapy at Homewood, please call 519-824-1010, ext. 2180 or 2211 or 2161. Or e-mail:
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For more information about Homewood's clinical programs or for a referral, please contact our Admitting Office at 519-824-1010 ext. 2551.

Please note: Homewood is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the property.

Homewood is compliant with current privacy legislation. Homewood collects personal information for assessment and treatment, as well as for operational and organizational, research and teaching, and legal and regulatory purposes. For questions or concerns contact the Privacy Officer at privacy@homewood.org or (519) 824-1010, ext. 2443.

Nurturing
the Soul

Healing with
Horticultural
Therapy

Horticultural Therapy

Horticultural Therapy promotes a natural sense of wellness. As a clinically validated and experiential-based program, it encourages patients to engage and actively participate in the natural world. The use of living material, requiring nurturing and cultivation, helps patients develop new ways of thinking about life and self-care. Patients also develop positive leisure skills, and experience increased self-esteem through the acquisition of new skills and the completion of successful projects.

Facilities

Homewood Health Centre hosts the largest and longest running Horticultural Therapy program in Canada. Facilities feature a conservatory and classroom, as well as 47 acres of garden and woodland including walking trails, a labyrinth, and raised garden beds designed to increase access for those with physical restrictions.

Treatment Team

Homewood Horticultural Therapists are part of an interdisciplinary treatment team. They are involved in assessing an individual's cognitive functioning, physical, behavioural and social abilities, and spiritual connections and developing and implementing a treatment plan. Staff and volunteers also help patients learn positive social, leisure and work skills that they can take with them post-discharge to more effectively manage the challenges of daily life.

Program Description

At Homewood the Horticultural Therapy is offered in every treatment program and provides specialized programming for patients diagnosed with:

- post-traumatic stress disorder
- addiction
- eating disorders
- affective disorders
- dementia
- schizophrenia
- other mental illnesses.

Horticultural Therapy programs are designed to engage a patient's interest, match their capabilities and foster creativity and imagination. These activities exercise the body, stimulate the senses and encourage an awareness of the living external environment. Anxiety is relieved by providing a safe and forgiving forum for expressing negative and creative energy. Horticultural tasks and projects reflect the seasons and seasonal events to help connect patients to the passage of time and events outside the hospital. Activities encourage self-nurturing, healing and development.

"Rediscovering and connecting to the wonders of nature can create a profound change in lifestyle for people who are learning to feel positive about themselves once more. By nurturing plants, they develop renewed energy and new skills to offer back to their families and the community they once rejected."

— Mitchell Hewson, HTM

Program Objectives

- provide a non-threatening environment to positively alter patients' mood and enhance or rehabilitate emotional and physical well-being
- promote self-esteem through a meaningful activity using a variety of horticultural media
- provide intellectual stimulation through lectures and seminars regarding plant culture and care, nature studies, herbology and psycho-aromatherapy
- develop positive leisure skills to aid in the recovery process
- promote socialization and interaction between group members
- provide relief from anxiety and stress, and an outlet for creativity and imagination
- introduce concepts of spirituality and nature, grief gardening and creating sanctuary
- achieve understanding and acceptance
- reawaken hope



Horticultural Therapists Julie, Tamaura and Mitchell