

CATEGORY: HORTICULTURAL THERAPY & HEALTH SERVICES

Horticultural Therapy & Therapeutic Horticulture (HT & TH)

Key Organization

[American Horticultural Therapy Association \(AHTA\)](#)

<https://www.ahta.org/ahta-definitions-and-positions>

“**Horticultural Therapy (HT)** is the participation in horticultural activities facilitated by a registered horticultural therapist to achieve specific goals within an established treatment, rehabilitation, or vocational plan. Horticultural therapy is an active process which occurs in the context of an established treatment plan where the process itself is considered the therapeutic activity rather than the end product.

Therapeutic Horticulture (TH) is the participation in horticultural activities facilitated by a registered horticultural therapist or other professionals with training in the use of horticulture as a therapeutic modality to support program goals. Therapeutic horticulture is the process through which participants enhance their well-being through active or passive involvement in plant and plant-related activities” (AHTA, 2021).

Research being done nationally and internationally continues to expand the knowledge base of the field including physiological and other health domain impacts across populations. These include neuropsychological improvement of hospitalized children (Abu Dabrh et al., 2022), depression intervention (Chen, 2022; Chu et al., 2019), cancer patients’ psychological well-being (Mori et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2022), adolescents with anorexia nervosa (Curzio et al., 2022), extrapyramidal symptoms in patients with schizophrenia (He et al., 2021), and postoperative rehabilitation of hand injuries (Huang et al., 2019) among others. Mental health continues to be an important topic, and strategies like HT/TH that can address and alleviate mental health challenges (Armstrong et al., 2023; Joubert et al., 2024; Lasater, 2022).

A recent development in the field has been the implementation of a free online [therapeutic horticulture activities database \(THAD\)](#) which was established by practitioners, with the purpose of expanding available TH activities and practitioner knowledge.

Books, journals & epublications on horticultural therapy & therapeutic horticulture

[Acta Horticulturae](#)

[AHTA Magazine](#)

Bolton, G., & Delderfield, R. (2018). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development*. Sage.

Chicago Botanic Garden. (2023). [Resources](#) (on line with books, Garden for Life Fact Sheets etc.)

[Cultivate](#) epublication (Florida Horticulture for Health Network)

[Digging In](#) epublication (Nova Scotia Horticulture for Health Network)

Cooper Marcus, C., & Sachs, N. (2013). *Therapeutic landscapes: An evidence-based approach to designing healing gardens and restorative outdoor spaces*. Wiley.

Everhardt, S., Jauk-Ajamie, D., Carmody, SB., & Gill, Bl. (2024). *Gardening behind bars: Clinical sociology and food justice in incarcerated settings*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Fleming, L. (2016). [Therapeutic horticulture a practitioner’s perspective](#). Smashwords.

Fung, CYY., & Chow, NHL.(2024). *Horticultural therapy: Connecting plants in life*.

Haller, R., Kennedy, K., & Capra, C. (2019). *The profession and practice of horticultural therapy*. CRC

Press.

Haller, R.L., & Kramer, C.L. (2006). *Horticultural therapy methods: Making connections in health care, human service, and community programs*. Hawthorne Press.

[HortScience](#)

[HortTechnology](#)

[Journal of People Plant Environment](#)

[Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture](#)

Layman, G. (2018). *Gather & make*. Azara Publishing.

Shoemaker, C., Rumpf, L., & Starling, L.A. (Eds). (2021). *XV International People Plant Symposium and II International Symposium on Horticultural Therapies: The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-being and Social Development*.

Research & articles on horticultural therapy & therapeutic horticulture

Recently published selected research & articles:

Abu Dabrh, A.M., Meore, A., Wilson, E.W., & Perlman, A. (2022). Horticultural therapy: An ancient integrative approach for modern times. *J Integr Complement Med.*, 28(4), 290-293.

Allah Yar, M. & Kazemi, F. (2020). The role of dish gardens on the physical and neuropsychological improvement of hospitalized children. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 53.

Andzaurova, P.O., & Nartova-Bochaver, S.K. (2023). Gardening and garden therapy as a resource for human psychological well-being. *RUDN Journal of Psychology and Pedagogics*, 20(2), 331-351.

Altman, G.L. (2020). Guidelines for telehealth horticultural therapy. *AHTA Magazine*, 48(3).

Armstrong, A., Nolan, C., Cremin, K. et al. (2023). The relationship between horticulture, recovery and occupational therapy in mental health: A scoping review. *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health*, 1-26.

Bae, S.J., Lee, S.H., & Kim, D.S. (2021). The effect of horticultural therapy on cognitive function, depression, self-esteem and activity daily living (ADL) in dementia care-A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Korean Society of Rural Planning*, 27(4), 97-107.

Beyliklioğlu, A., & Arslan, S. (2019). Effect of lavender oil on the anxiety of patients before breast surgery. *Journal of PeriAnesthesia Nursing*, 34(3), 587-593.

Borella, E., Melendugno, A., Meneghetti, C. et al. (2023). Effects of an outdoor horticultural activities program on cognitive and behavioral functioning, mood, and perceived quality of life in people with dementia: A pilot study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1182136.

Boyle, C.L., & Pryor, J. (2019). Therapeutic horticulture: A mechanism for participate to learn in inpatient rehabilitation. *Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses' Association (JARNA)*, 22(1).

Brown, B.J. (2019). People–plant response: Theoretical support for horticultural therapy. In *The profession and practice of horticultural therapy*. CRC Press, 105-124.

Buru, T., Buta, E., & Cantor, M. (2022). The influence of therapeutic horticulture activities on quality of life (QOL) issues. *Scientific Papers. Series B. Horticulture*, 66(1).

Buru, T., Kallay, E., Olar, L.E. et al. (2021). Studies regarding the influence of therapeutic horticulture on the human-nature relationship and the increase of well-being. *ISHS Acta Horticulturae 1330: XV International People Plant Symposium and II International Symposium on Horticultural Therapies: The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-being and Social Development*.

Chang, TW., Tsai, ST., Huang, HY. et al. (2024). Slow well-being gardening: Creating a sensor network for radiation therapy patients via horticultural therapeutic activity. *Sensors (Basel)*, 24(12), 3771.

Chang, Y.S., & Tu, P.C. (2021). Healthy horticulture for senior citizens. *Acta Hortic.*, 1313, *International Symposium on Horticultural Therapies: Past, Present and Future*, 27-32

- Chen, Q. (2023). A review of studies on the efficacy of horticultural therapy interventions based on physical and mental health indicators in the elderly. *Journal of Innovation and Development*, 3(2), 93-96.
- Chen, H. (2021). The effect of horticultural therapy in depression intervention. *Journal of Landscape Research*, 13(6), 13-22.
- Chen, M.L., Lo, L.C., & Lou, S.J. (2018). Effects of strength-based approach horticultural therapy on primary students' resilience. *Creative Education*, 9(16), 2973.
- Chou, H.C., Cheng, S.F., Yeh, S.C., & Tang, P.L. (2024). Effectiveness of a multicomponent activity and horticultural intervention for the hospitalized older adults: A randomized controlled trial: Effectiveness of Intervention for the hospitalized older adults. *Geriatr Nurs.*, 55, 112-118.
- Chua, M., Tan, J., Lee, S. et al. (2021). Horticultural therapy reduces biomarkers of immunosenescence and inflammaging in community-dwelling older adults: A feasibility pilot randomized controlled trial. *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci.*, 76(2), 307-317.
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- Diehl, E., Morrison, D., & Tisher, C. (2019). Therapeutic horticulture as a quality of life intervention in chronic hemodialysis patients. *Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture*, 29(2), 1-13.
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Examples of horticultural therapy & therapeutic horticulture programs

Bullington Gardens Horticultural Therapy, Hendersonville, NC.

<https://bullingtongardens.org/horticultural-therapy/>

Cape Fear Botanical Garden therapeutic horticulture program with Wounded Warrior Project considers visible and invisible wounds, support for coping with military service and health goals related to healing, depression, loneliness.

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/Warriors-Grow-Hope-in-Lifes-Garden>

Chadwick Arboretum and Leaning Gardens in Ohio has a horticultural therapy program, garden for adults with physical and developmental disabilities and other populations.

<https://chadwickarboretum.osu.edu/our-gardens/learning-gardens/horticultural-therapy-garden>

Chicago Botanic Garden Horticultural Therapy Services, Chicago, IL. has a variety of services available including direct service, consultation, and speakers.

<https://www.chicagobotanic.org/therapy>

Five outdoor gardens at *Barclay Friends* senior living are platform for their horticultural therapy program in West Chester, PA.

<https://bf.kendal.org/horticultural-therapy/>

Kingsbridge Heights Community Center's gardening, nutrition and horticultural therapy programs in the Bronx, NY include a wide array of plant-based activities in this community setting.

<https://www.khcc-nyc.org/program/gardening-nutrition-and-horticultural-therapy-programs>

Missouri Botanical Garden Therapeutic Horticulture Program, St. Louis, MO

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/learn-discover/adults/therapeutic-horticulture.aspx>

New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) launched a program, THRIVE in 2029, combining horticultural therapy and gardening activities, to help veterans heal their minds and bodies.

<https://www.nybg.org/content/uploads/2019/11/NYBG-THRIVE-Program-Release.pdf>

NYU Langone's Rusk Rehabilitation, New York City, NY delivers HT at multiple sites including NYU Langone Orthopedic Hospital, Tisch Hospital and its Psychiatric Unit, Epilepsy Unit among others.

<https://nyulangone.org/locations/rusk-rehabilitation/rehabilitation-support-services-for-adults/horticultural-therapy-for-adults>

Plants & People Horticultural Therapy Program @ Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Miami, FL. are programs for individuals living with dementia and children with autism spectrum disorder along with care partners and family.

<https://fairchildgarden.org/group-programs/>

The Blossom Programme: Nature-based Therapy for Survivors of Domestic Abuse shares insights into a program working with this population.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWDXLAluMSM&t=2s>

The Therapeutic Horticulture Program at Wilmot Botanical Gardens Univ. of Florida, Gainesville, FL. Programs for veterans, women veterans, student wellness group, alumni, Parkinson's Care Partners and Florida Recovery Center groups.

<https://wilmotgardens.med.ufl.edu/programming-2/therapeutic-horticulture-program/>

Videos, webinars & websites on horticultural therapy & therapeutic recreation

Australia: More Grows in the Garden than the Gardener Sows presentation in 2024 outlines a patient-driven HT program with an accessible kitchen garden where spinal rehab, occupational therapy and sustainable therapy program make for a successful program.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEPdnpijdTE&t=1s>

Evidence-based Practice in Horticultural Therapy Interventions webinar from IPPC, Kansas State University and AHTA (2021) with Matt Wichrowski, HTR and Derrick Stowell, HTR talking about evidence-based practice (EDB).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5YMvqQrcIE>

Florida Horticulture for Health YouTube channel offers a variety of videos on horticultural therapy and related topics including fragrance in the garden, horticulture in neurorehabilitation, plant programming for seniors, self-regulation and HT/TH and more.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSdBCsV3o-hoVXqH_wJESoQ

<https://www.flhhn.com/recorded-webinars.html>

Gardening Through Grief: A Conversation with Practitioners in the Field webinar from the Florida Horticulture for Health Network presents Carrie McCann and Eleanor Wroath who use HT/TH and gardening to cope with, address and work with bereaved individuals.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-TGhOZWWQM>

Horticultural Therapy 101: History, Definitions and examples.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3exkUHK88VM>

Horticultural Therapy for Veterans YouTube presentation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdcoRkUxDeo>

Horticulture in Neurorehabilitation YouTube webinar by Erin Lovely shares ideas and practices at Craig Hospital, a neurorehab facility with a therapeutic garden, HT and TH programming.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qp-asbT5XA&t=1s>

La Asociación Española de Horticultura y Jardinería Social y Terapéutica, AEHJST Spanish speaking association with 10 countries worldwide.

<https://aehjst.org/>

Need to Know Developments in HT & Horticulture for Health YouTube video discusses children's social and emotional learning in gardens and green space settings by HT practitioner Lesley Fleming, 2023.

[New Developments in Horticultural Therapy and Horticulture for Health - YouTube](#)

Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research website explains horticultural therapy, listing goals for its HT research exchange group, activities, presentations and contacts.

[Horticultural Therapy | Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research | Memorial University of Newfoundland \(mun.ca\)](#)

North Carolina Botanical Garden website introduces horticultural therapy, which is delivered at the garden and off-site, in conjunction with its community partners – UNC Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<https://ncbg.unc.edu/2016/03/04/horticultural-therapy-at-ncbg/>

Opportunities for Therapeutic Horticulture at Botanical Gardens YouTube webinar by Lesley Fleming, HTR & Heather Kelijian identify what is happening, what opportunities exist and how to work with public gardens delivering TH.

https://youtu.be/nVvj273_lil

Plant Programming for Seniors webinar YouTube from the Florida Horticulture for Health Network uses a forum of HT practitioners to share ideas in this realm.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPtsg3uAfw0>

Portugal: Social and Therapeutic Horticulture in Portugal – Challenges for the Future explores current and future paths for this therapeutic modality.

[SS24 - Social and Therapeutic Horticulture in Portugal - Challenges for the Future \(youtube.com\)](#)

THAD (Therapeutic Horticulture Activity Database) offers 185+TH activities across populations, tested by practitioners with a range of populations. (activities: milk jug 2 mini greenhouse, moss frame, pansies in pumpkins, planting pea shoots).

<https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/therapeutic-horticulture-activities-database/>

The Farm at Penny Lane Horticultural Therapy Program

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8VpSVoPovgc>

Trellis Scotland has online plant activities appropriate for many populations including indoor flowering bulbs, printing using natural material, and the craft garden.

<https://www.trellisscotland.org.uk/content/live-zoom-sessions>

UK: Defense Gardens Scheme Concept to Capability presentation outlines the success of Trellis Scotland, Defense Gardens Scheme, Eden Project, these organizing and delivering HT services and nature-based services for armed forces and military recovery process.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hL3SBYb2CZM&t=1s>

Ukraine: The First Interdisciplinary Educational and Scientific Program “Garden Therapy” in Ukraine, was the focus of a 2024 presentation through Trellis Scotland.

[SS24 - The First Interdisciplinary Educational and Scientific Program "Garden Therapy" in Ukraine \(youtube.com\)](#)

University of Florida video discussing therapeutic horticulture research with healthy women doing gardening tasks, citing other research areas as well.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v925701JQc4>

What About the Research Evidence webinar with speakers Candice Shoemaker, Diane Relf and Sin Ae Park delivered through IPPC, AHTA and Kansas State University in 2021 on HT research.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knGazh-Vjgs>

What's on the Radar for Horticultural Therapy & Horticulture for Health? Presentation by Lesley Fleming, HTR for Trellis 2024 Symposium touching on current research, self-regulation, polyvagal theory, and mental health-HT connections.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9BzIIKAbw>

Related organizations

[Association for Horticulture and Therapy in Germany](#)

[California Horticultural Therapy Network \(CHTN\)](#)

[Canadian Horticultural Therapy Association \(CHTA\)](#)

[Carolinas Horticultural Therapy Network](#)

[Green4C Alliance](#)

[Hong Kong Association of Therapeutic Horticulture \(HKATH\)](#)

[Institute of Horticultural Therapy](#) – Peru (Spanish & English website)

[International People Plant Council](#)

[Mid Atlantic Therapeutic Horticulture Network \(MAHTN\)](#)

[Spanish Association in Social and Therapeutic Horticulture](#)

[THRIVE](#) (UK)

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