

## BACKGROUND:

Research suggests green spaces can benefit in-patients, including improving mood and wellbeing. Recently, Chapel Allerton hospital installed two new green spaces for the benefit of stroke patients: The Stroke Association's "Garden for Recovery", transplanted from the Chelsea Flower Show; and a therapy garden designed by Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT) Estates staff to provide an alternative setting for therapy. Other stroke units also have access to green space, yet little is known about the use of green space post-stroke.



## AIMS:

To explore use of hospital-based green spaces for stroke in-patients, potential benefits, challenges, key elements and relevant contextual factors.

## METHODS:

Mixed-methods multisite case study (three stroke units with access to green spaces). Data collection includes:

- description of the space and service,
- behavioural mapping of usage in different seasons
- interviews with
  - stroke unit staff (n=30),
  - in-patients (n=45; including green-space users and non-users) and their visitors.

Interview data will be analysed using the Framework approach; mixed-methods data synthesised, and programme theory and recommendations drafted.

The recommendations will be refined by expert groups of stroke survivors, carers and staff in three other locations.

## RESULTS:

Behavioural mapping has demonstrated large differences in use between the green spaces (median user-observations per day: 4 vs 38). There is some evidence of seasonality from winter and spring observations. Patients were most frequently observed communicating and gardening; common staff activities included communicating/taking calls and eating/drinking. Summer and autumn observations are planned. Interviews and analysis are ongoing.



## CONCLUSIONS:

The findings, recommendations and further work have the potential to transform the stroke rehabilitation environment, improve patient outcomes, support staff well-being, and promote sustainable healthcare practices.