

kinds anywhere. You're given your basket with the oasis in it and you just start - you put heathers, whatever you like in it. **It's so nice being able to take flowers and make something for yourself with them.** I can't believe it," he says, gesturing to the beautiful bouquet he has just made, and which he plans to give to his wife, Julia. "When I get home my wife will think I've stolen this! I've got to convince her that I made it!"

"It's relaxing, it's interesting, and the staff couldn't do more for you. It really has relaxed me. I shall definitely be here for a few more sessions, or until they kick me out! I think anyone who doesn't do it is really missing something, they really are."

We are privileged to care for people like Steve and his family, at probably the most difficult time in their lives, but we can only do this with the generosity of our local community.

We have to raise over £20,000 every day in order to provide care, free of charge, to our patients and their relatives.

For further information about how to support Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care, contact our Fundraising team on:

01252 729446
support@pth.org.uk

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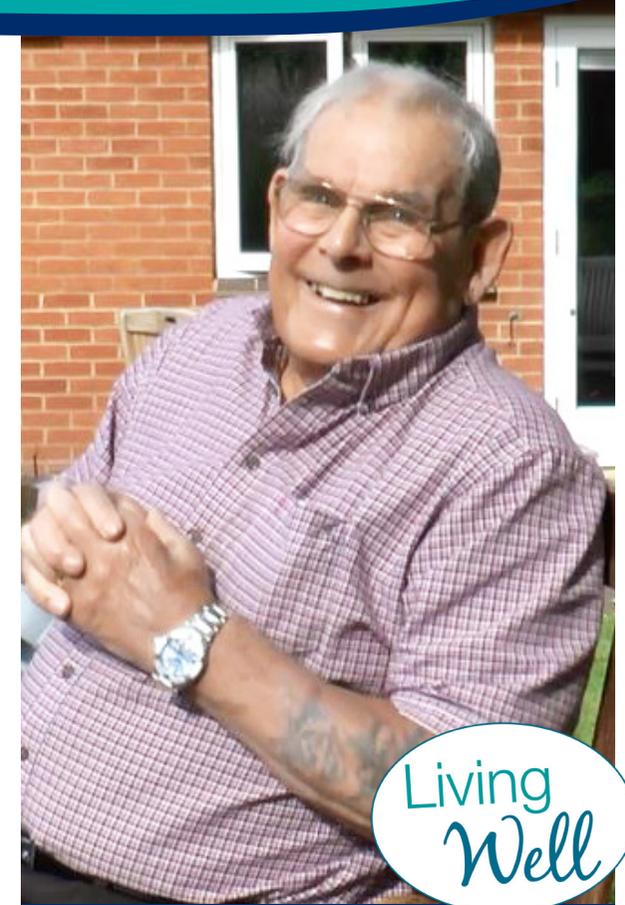
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Our patients are inspiring...

"This has been a blessing."



Living Well

Steve's Story

Therapies Through Nature sessions.

October 2017

Phyllis Tuckwell[®]
Hospice Care 
...because every day is precious

Steve's Story



As well as providing Medical and Nursing Care, Phyllis Tuckwell's Living Well services offer a variety of therapies to help patients cope with their illnesses.

One of these is Therapies Through Nature, or Social and

Therapeutic Horticulture (STH) as it is also known. This group activity brings the garden indoors, enabling all patients to access the therapeutic benefits of nature, and using aspects of nature to promote wellbeing, helping patients to live well in body, mind and spirit.

Sitting around a table, listening to soothing recordings of birdsong, patients are given all the equipment necessary for the session, including items such as pots, plants, soil and gravel. The Occupational Therapist leading the session shows the group a finished version of the item they will be making, such as a planter, a pot of herbs or a bowl of pot-pourri, before guiding them through the process of making it themselves. Once finished, they are able to take it home, to keep or give to a loved one.

As many of Phyllis Tuckwell's patients have lost a degree of strength and mobility because of their illness, they often find that they are unable to enjoy gardening in the same way they used to. Research shows that gardening, or spending time surrounded by nature, can reduce stress levels, increase self-esteem, restore energy levels and improve quality of life, but many patients who loved being outdoors, digging and pruning, are no longer able to tend to their own gardens



in the same way as they once did, and so these sessions are very important in helping them get back to nature and experience its beneficial influence.

One patient who has experienced the positive effects of these STH sessions is Day Hospice patient Steve Doyle.

"I used to love gardening," says Steve. "I used to spend at least two hours a day in my garden, and since what's happened to me I can't do it, but this has really been an eye-opener."

Since his diagnosis, Steve has been visited regularly by a District Nurse, Sister Grace. She realised that his illness wasn't only impacting on his physical condition, but that he was also starting to suffer from depression.

"She recommended me to come here," says Steve, "which has been a blessing, it really has. I was very wary of it at the time, but it's been a real eye-opener. I was very depressed, basically because in the last 18 months they've told me so many things that they can't do anything for. But

coming here really has helped me and it's made me realise there's more to life than rushing around."

"The thing that surprised me most coming to Phyllis Tuckwell in the first place was how friendly everybody is,"

continues. "The staff, they just can't do enough for you. The other thing that has surprised me is the Social and Therapeutic Horticulture. I've never really been this side of it before. I've always been the person who goes out in the garden, sticks the bulbs in the ground, gets the plants to come up and my wife picks them all!"

"The actual sessions are unique really. There are maybe ten, twelve people in the room who are all there for the same purpose, and the staff come round and say who would like to do this, who would like to do that. I've got to be honest, the first week I just didn't want to do it, but I think if I hadn't have done it would really have upset me, knowing what I know now.

They've got me to relax through making me do things that I never thought I'd do. *We potted up a tea plant last week - I've never even seen one before, let alone planted one in a pot! I've got it at home, when the great grandkids come round I'll say to them I'll give five pounds to whoever can tell me what that is!"*

"This week we made a bouquet," he continues. "When you first go to the table where all this takes place, the flowers are so beautiful and it seems as though the garden has come inside. It is breathtaking, it really is. There's an abundance of flowers all set out in vases. I don't think I've seen so many different

