



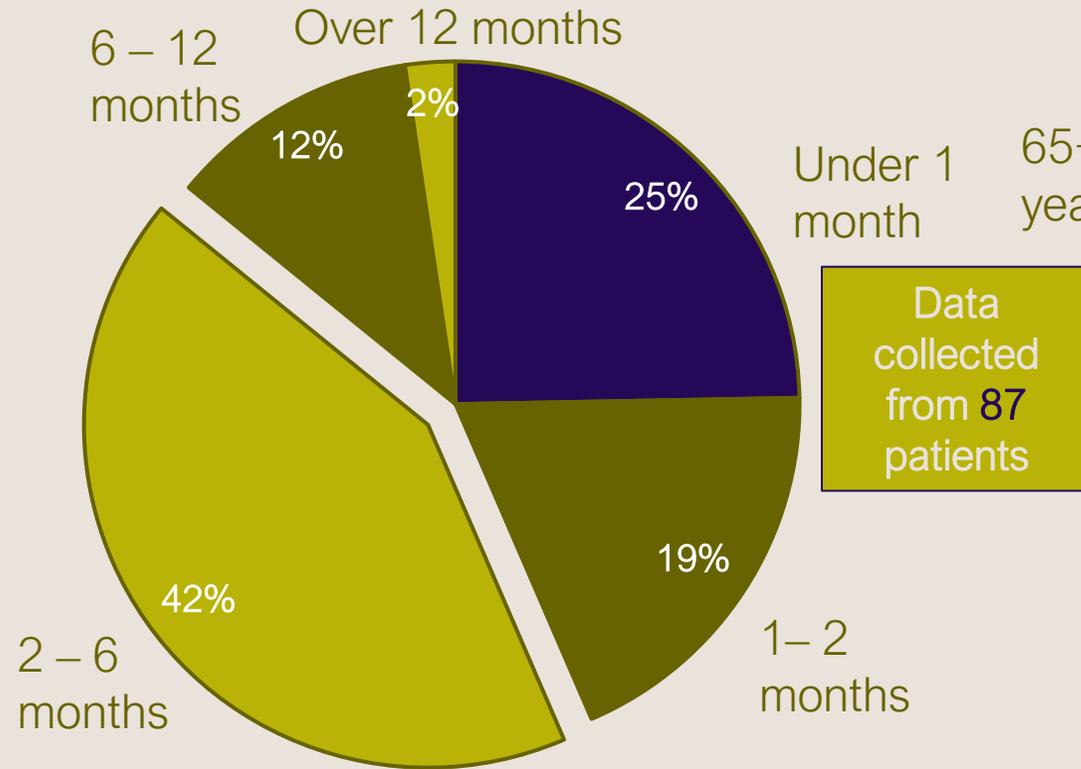
HORATIO'S GARDEN

Impact Report 2020

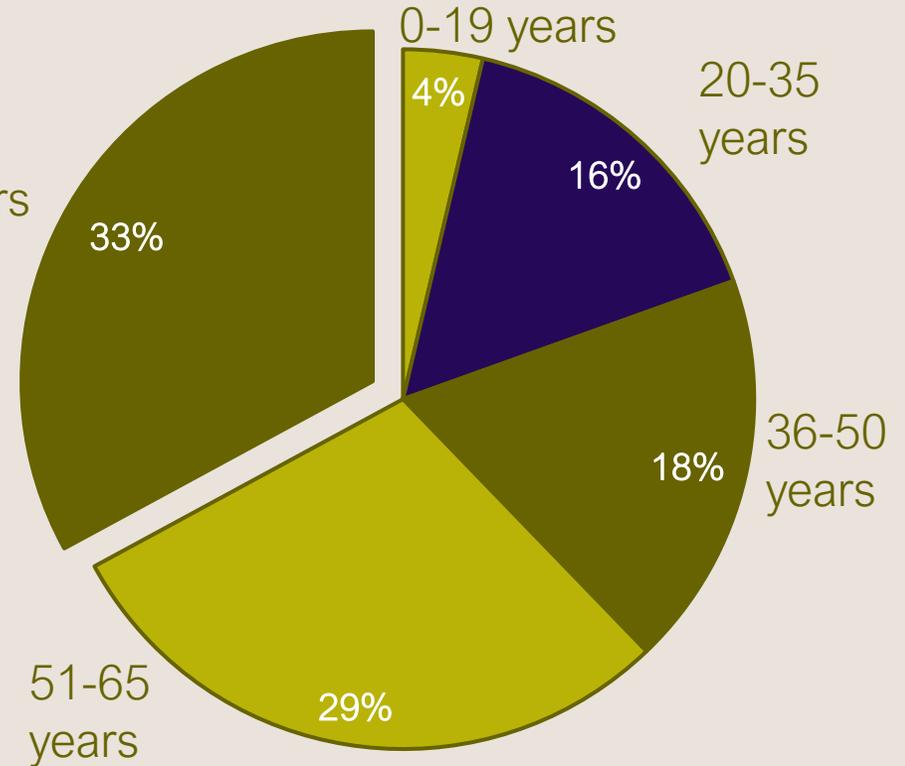
PATIENT DEMOGRAPHICS



Time spent as a patient



Age



The average length of hospital stay for patients with a spinal cord injury is longer than for those whose cause of injury is disease. (Jang et al, 2011). Trying to improve their time here is particularly important.

COVID-19



We asked patients, staff and visitors whether having access to the garden improved this situation. This was true for:

86% of patients

89% of staff

88% of visitors

During lockdown, **62%** of adults in the general UK population with long-term health conditions say they have felt anxious or worried, with **30%** saying they are not coping well in the situation.* This gives us an insight into how vital the charity's work is, particularly in recent months.



*"There is a real **sense of community and friendship** between the patients, staff, visitors and the Horatio's Garden staff and amazing volunteers. During this time of Covid-19 it has **polarised its importance**. Horatio's legacy has been embraced by all."*



*"I cannot imagine how we would have coped throughout the lockdown period without this **beautiful space** for our patients to escape to. Having the garden makes an **enormous difference** for so many of our patients."*

*Source: mentalhealth.org.uk

POPULARITY OF THE GARDENS



"I spend most of my breaktimes in the garden and try to get out as much as I can. I find it very calming being able to escape."

PATIENTS

- 95%* use Horatio's Garden at least once a week
- 74%* use Horatio's Garden with visitors and 86%* say it improved the experience

STAFF

- 99% of staff believe the patients benefit from the gardens, and 97% encourage patients to use it
- 90% of staff use the garden on their own

VISITORS

- 82% of visitors use the garden on almost or all of their visits

"A truly wonderful project inspiring nothing but positivity. Thank you Horatio and those who made it happen."

"It's lovely to get out in the fresh air, have a friendly chat with the gardeners and with other patients, read, and enjoy the beautiful flowers and plants. It's a real heaven, even in bad weather with the pockets of shelter."

* = not inc. bedrest

IMPACT ON PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE



Mental health disorders are much more prevalent among those with spinal cord injuries than in the general population.*
The gardens serve to mitigate psychological difficulties experienced by these patients.

* Source: Buckelew et al, 1990; Craig et al, 2008; Weismann, 1979



90% of patients
say Horatio's
Garden improves
their wellbeing

87% of patients
say Horatio's
Garden improves
their mental health

"Horatio's Garden has provided me with a peaceful and tranquil escape both mentally and physically."

"I will never forget the freedom from the four walls of the ward Horatio's Garden has given me."

"The garden helped ground me, giving me time and space to process everything that happened."



IMPACT ON PHYSICAL STATE



Not only do the gardens positively impact mental wellbeing, they also have benefits for physical wellbeing.



65% of patients believe that being outside in Horatio's Garden enhances their physical rehabilitation

46%* of patients believe that being in Horatio's Garden during the day has a positive effect on their sleep

"Because the garden is well designed, it encourages me to go around corners, which enhances my wheelchair use."

"Being in the sun in the garden made me feel soporific. I slept better as a result."

"Having a tranquil place to come to balance the challenging mental strain of 24/7 rehab is amazing. I practice walking here and wheelchair-based exercised in fresh air."



* The remaining patients reported no change

IMPACT ON SOCIAL STATE



The gardens also have profoundly positive effects on people's social state. They help people to adjust to public use of a wheelchair, meet other patients and maximise their visiting experiences.



86%* of patients believe that Horatio's Garden has made a positive difference to visits from friends and family.

*"The garden has helped me to feel **comfortable** in the presence of strangers as I become a wheelchair user.*

*"I have made some **lifelong friends**. I have never **laughed so much** as I have since being here, it's a good sound!"*

*"Every evening we all go out into the courtyard and have a good chat. **It's our place!**"*

*"Horatio's Garden is a nice place for the children to play. It helps to extend their visit **without pressure** to stay sitting in a chair in hospital."*



* The remaining patients reported no change

STAFF VIEWS



116 staff were also asked about their perspectives of the garden. Staff unanimously believed that the gardens has a beneficial effect for patients, and that the gardens helped improved wellbeing for staff as well as for patients.



89% of staff believe that they benefitted from having access to Horatio's Garden during lockdown

*'During the stress of Covid-19 the garden was a **haven** for both staff and patients to **escape** the everyday uncertainty and worry. Patients engaged in group sessions, events and activities in the garden, despite not being able to see their family. It created a **real sense of community.**'*

*'It's been an **absolute godsend** during the pandemic.'*



VISITOR VIEWS



17 visitors were asked about visits and how they think the gardens have benefitted both patients and themselves.



89% of visitors believe that they have benefitted from having access to Horatio's Garden during Covid-19

100% of visitors believe that patients benefit from having access to Horatio's Garden during Covid-19

'Horatio's Garden has been a blessing for us all as a family, it has enabled us all to try and have some normality in our lives.'

'It's one of the only things to keep my friend going through a tough patch!'



KATIE'S STORY



Katie was just two days away from graduating when the accident happened. She had decided to go for a swim to let off steam after a day spent working as an intern in London. Diving straight in without checking the depth of the water, she ended up with a broken neck. "Not my smartest moment," she admits.

Following the accident, she spent time in an intensive care unit in London before being transferred to the NHS spinal treatment centre in Stoke Mandeville. The change in environment was extreme: she went from being stuck in a hospital where she "couldn't even see out the window" to having a whole garden at her disposal.

Katie's first visit to the Horatio's Garden at Stoke Mandeville will always stand out in her mind. "A couple of days in, my physio took me downstairs and showed me the garden and I was just so happy to be outside. I was only allowed out for half an hour, but I didn't want to come in."

Before the accident, Katie loved to spend time outdoors, describing herself as the sort of person who used to "climb trees

every day". After transferring to Stoke Mandeville, she spent most of her time in the garden, reading, drawing, painting or just watching Netflix with her sister.

She also valued the garden for the sense of community it encouraged, from the "lovely" volunteers to the chance to spend time with other patients. "I was one of the youngest patients in there but I would sit down there and chat with Stella who was 80 and Kay who was also a pensioner."

In spite of the significant age gap, she felt like she had a lot to learn from the older patients, and "still made some really nice friendships".

She finished treatment about a month ago and is now looking forward to "getting back into life and getting back to work."

She's planning to embark on a Masters course at Edinburgh University, despite the added challenge the hills and cobbles will



pose to someone in a wheelchair. She also wants to continue playing wheelchair rugby, a sport she was introduced to at Stoke Mandeville.

Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus crisis, these plans have been delayed indefinitely.

The virus is especially concerning for people with spinal cord injuries: as Katie explains, "I've only got lungs at 30-50% capacity and I can't cough so I've had to self-isolate, so I've put life on hold for a bit longer."

At least her experiences have enabled her to be philosophical about the situation: "I was in hospital for seven months before this [...] so not much change!"

Katie is keen to stress her gratitude for all who support Horatio's Garden. At an incredibly difficult juncture in her life, she really appreciated the chance to spend some time in nature:

"I don't know what I would have done without it. Just being able to go outside again was amazing for me and although Horatio's Garden couldn't be my wilderness, it could be my home until I was ready to go back and face my own."



www.horatiogarden.org.uk