

# The Impact of Nature in Healthcare

## A Study of a Woman's Clinic in a Swedish Hospital - Part 2

**Authors:** Lalla Thord, R.N., Master of Arts, Artist, lalla.thord@telia.com  
Ingrid Ainalem, R.N., Master in Palliative Care, ingrid.ainalem@skane.se

**A stressful hospital environment influence staff and patients in a negative way and might affect both patients' healing processes and staff working conditions negatively.**

Lalla Thord R.N. initiated with a group of nurses a change of the ward with inspiration from Nature and Research. Aquariums, plants, wallpaper pictures and photos from the local nature surroundings were introduced on the ward. The aim was to observe if and how introducing positively inspiring and restorative themes of local Nature could reduce the experience of stress in both patients and staff.

**Method:** This is the second year of a three-year project of quantitative and qualitative measurements, with a questionnaire, including both closed and open questions, distributed to staff, patients and visitors. The respondents were n= 54 (14 staff, 37 patients and 13 visitors).



**RESULTS** The working atmosphere was experienced as calmer and more enjoyable. Overtime and sickness leave were reduced and it became easier to recruit new staff. Patients, staff and visitors declared that themes of beautiful Nature were valuable and healing, important for giving calm and hope. Patients and visitors wished for music, more colour and more plants. The staff wished for more varied Nature photographs and more plants. The improvement of the ward made it easier and more stimulating for patients to get out of bed and think about other things than their sickness.

**CONCLUSIONS** Wellbeing increased in both staff and patients. It facilitated recovery for the most severely ill, resulted in a calmer staff, more able to inspire strength in the patients. The staff felt more united. Even if the workload was the same it felt more fun to go to work. Themes of Nature give feelings of beauty, hope and calm, improving the possibilities for enriching conversations. It helped patients feel hope, a sense of inner strength, inspiration and beauty.

**It is possible by simple means to create a dignity in health care, which is of benefit for many?**