



Mary Potter Hospice by Design WELL.

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## People's Choice Winner, Mary Potter Hospice Healing Garden

BY NATHAN JAMES CRANE

DesignWELL Landscape Architects in collaboration with myhomegarden won this year's Adelaide Review People's Choice Award at the AILA awards. The project was funded by the Mary Potter Foundation.

### What was the brief from the client?

The Mary Potter Hospice is renowned for holistic and compassionate care for people who cannot be cured. The physical environment plays an important role in reducing anxiety levels and our aim is to provide a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment. One of the important aspects of the Hospice is that all rooms open up to the outdoors.

### How did you go about creating a space that responded to the sensitive nature of its context?

As patients and families who are facing end

of life, access to nature becomes increasingly important. DesignWELL worked closely with the Hospice and stakeholders to create an uplifting, contemplative and supportive environment where patients, families and staff can deal with their grief but also celebrate life. A place to reflect, a place to restore and a place to celebrate life. The garden contains a sensory garden and an edible garden. Patients, families and staff are encouraged to actively or passively enjoy the gardens. The impact of the barren space changed dramatically thanks to the design and installation of a beautiful garden offering patients and their families a haven to spend time outdoors.

Could you expand on some of the different spaces like the sanctuary and reflection gardens and the memorial garden? Was it important to create diverse experiences?

This garden is a Therapeutic Garden which means it is an outdoor garden space that has been specifically designed to meet the physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs of the people using the garden as well as their caregivers, family members and friends.

The Mary Potter Hospice Healing Garden, while small, had to deliver a lot. There was a need to create quiet spaces in which to escape and reflect while also offering spaces to socialise and do activities. The northern end of the garden is a sensory garden where the plants have been chosen specifically to stimulate the five senses. The gardens are a mix of colours, textures, scents and sounds. Seasonal change was an important consideration in the design. When we see the seasons change, it shows that time does go on and life continues even when our lives are in turmoil. It gives comfort and hope.

The southern end of the garden is an edible garden. A series of raised garden beds have made the dwarf fruit trees, herbs and vegetables accessible for everyone.