



The Mental Health First Aid Training and Research Program

What is Mental Health First Aid?

First Aid is the help given to an injured person before medical treatment can be obtained. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is the help given to someone developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves.

What Mental Health First Aid Courses are Available?

Standard Mental Health First Aid for Adults Helping Adults

A 12-hour course has been developed for members of the public and workplaces and is based on international MHFA Guidelines.

This course covers how to help adults in any of the following crisis situations:

- Suicidal thoughts and behaviours
- Non-suicidal self injury
- Panic attacks
- Traumatic events
- Severe psychotic states
- Severe effects from alcohol and other drug misuse
- Aggressive behaviours

The course also trains the public to give help to people with mental health problems before a crisis develops.

The problems covered are:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Psychosis
- Substance Misuse

Participants learn the sign and symptoms of these mental health problems, where and how to get help and what sort of help has been shown by research to be effective.

Youth Mental Health First Aid for Adults Helping Youth

A 14 hour course has been developed for adults working or living with adolescents. This course covers the same topics as the Standard course, but with a youth focus, and includes an additional topic on eating disorders.

Mental Health First Aid for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

This 14-hour course provides information on mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, and grief and loss issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Mental Health First Aid for Vietnamese Communities

The 12-hour Standard MHFA course has been modified and translated for Vietnamese communities living in Australia.

Who Runs the Mental Health First Aid Training and Research Program?

The Program was developed in 2001 by Betty Kitchener and Professor Tony Jorm. It currently operates under the auspices of Orygen Youth Health Research Centre at the University of Melbourne.

Is Mental Health First Aid effective?

Evaluations of Mental Health First Aid training show a number of benefits:

- Better recognition of mental health problems
- Beliefs about treatment become closer to those of professionals
- Reduced stigma
- Increased confidence in providing help to others
- Greater amount of help provided to others in the 6 months following the course

Want to Get Mental Health First Aid Going in Your Region?

There are over 900 accredited MHFA Instructors across Australia in every state and territory. Their details are listed on our website at www.mhfa.com.au. To become an accredited MHFA Instructor, you need to meet the selection criteria and successfully complete an intense 5-day training course. After training, instructors can run courses funded by their employer or on a fee-for-service basis.

Where Can I Get More Information?

Visit the Mental Health First Aid website at www.mhfa.com.au for more information on:

- Course availability
- Instructor training
- Evaluation results
- List of instructors
- Mental Health First Aid Guidelines

www.mhfa.com.au



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