



Mental Health First Aid

A two-day workshop designed to improve the mental health literacy of the community

What Is Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)?

First Aid is the help given to an injured person before medical treatment can be obtained. Mental Health First Aid 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.

Why Mental Health First Aid Training?

There are many reasons why people need MHFA:

- Mental health problems are common
- There is stigma associated with mental health problems
- Many people do not recognize mental health problems
- Professional help is not always available
- Many people do not know how to help

Course Content

The course covers helping adults in mental health crisis situations and/or in the early stages of mental health problems.

Crisis situations covered are:

- Suicidal behaviour/thoughts
- Acute stress reaction
- Panic attacks
- Acute psychotic behaviour

Mental health problems covered are:

- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar disorder

Participants will learn the signs 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.

About The Program

The Mental Health First Aid Program was developed in 2001 at the Centre for Mental Health Research at the Australian National University by Betty Kitchener and Professor Tony Jorm.

The Program has been well evaluated and found to be effective in improving mental health literacy, reducing stigma and increasing helping behaviours. These evaluations have been carried out in a workplace and a community setting. The program has spread to every state and territory of Australia and internationally.



The Five Step Action Plan for MHFA:

1. Assess the risk of suicide or harm
2. Listen non-judgementally
3. Give reassurance and information
4. Encourage the person to get appropriate professional help
5. Encourage self-help

Who should attend?

This course will be of great benefit to social housing professionals who work directly with tenants.

This course will teach you:

1. The signs and symptoms of the most common mental health problems so that you can begin to recognise them and make appropriate referrals to mental health or other services as needed
1. To dispel the myths around mental illness so you can respond appropriately and compassionately to clients with confidence and without fear
2. How to respond to crisis situations such as aggression and disclosure of acute suicidality.

How is the course delivered?

The 12-hour course is broken down into 4 x three-hour modules.

The workshop engages participants in a variety of small and large group case scenarios and activities that allow you to practice and reinforce the learning gained in the information and content lessons. You will be given ongoing feedback during the practical group sessions to ensure the techniques you practice will be effective in the 'real' environment.

Participant Feedback

"I found all presented aspects to be relevant and worthwhile."

"It was brilliant- the presenter was very clear and concise- learnt more in this training course than any other presented."

"It made me more aware of the needs of our clients."

"Gives me a much better understanding about mental health issues and overcame my fear of them."

"I believe this workshop should be mandatory for ALL staff- very useful information."