



What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is the initial help given to someone who is developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional support is received or until the crisis resolves.

The MHFA course is a 12-hour course (4 modules, each 3 hours) that teaches people how to assist someone who is developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. Participants will learn the signs and symptoms of mental health problems and what sort of help has been shown by research to be effective. They will learn a framework for communication, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person towards appropriate treatments and other supportive help.

Emerging mental health problems covered include:

- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Anxiety
- ✓ Psychosis
- ✓ Substance Misuse

Mental health crises covered include:

- ✓ Suicidal thoughts and behaviours
- ✓ Self-harm
- ✓ Panic attacks
- ✓ Traumatic events
- ✓ Severe psychotic states
- ✓ Severe effects of alcohol or other drug use
- ✓ Aggressive behaviours

Course Format:

The course format caters for all learning styles with opportunities to participate, discuss scenarios and practice skills. Our instructors provide a comfortable learning environment and are trained to support your participation and learning. Course participants receive a copy of the MHFA Manual and a Certificate of Completion.

Why MHFA?

- ✓ Mental health problems are common
- ✓ Many people are not well informed about how to recognise mental health problems, how to respond to the person, and what supports are available
- ✓ Many people with mental health problems delay seeking help or do not seek help at all
- ✓ There is stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems
- ✓ Professional help is not always immediately available

Evidence that MHFA works

Course content is derived from a number of consensus studies incorporating the expertise of hundreds of researchers, clinicians, service user advocates and carer advocates across the English speaking western world. The programme has been extensively evaluated and found to be effective in improving mental health literacy, reducing stigma, increasing helping behaviours and improving participants' own mental health. These evaluations have been carried out in the workplace and community settings. The MHFA programme is available in 23 countries worldwide.

Evaluation and Research

Participants are asked to complete an anonymous evaluation form at the end of the course for the purpose of maintaining and improving the quality of the programme. The results of the course evaluation will be made available through publications on our website, in academic journals and other

We are also seeking participation in a research project to evaluate the impact of MHFA Training. By taking part in the research you are helping MHFA Ireland understand the impact of the training and how useful the skills taught have been to participants. Participants who give consent for follow up contact with MHFA Ireland will be sent an e-mail with a link to a brief online survey. We are evaluating the programme approximately 6 months, 12 months and 2 years following the training. Participation in follow up evaluation is entirely voluntary.

Contact us:

Mental Health First Aid Ireland
t: 01 2771458 www.mhfaireland.ie