



OLDER PERSON MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID COURSE

What is the Older Person Mental Health First Aid course?

This 12-hour course teaches adults how to provide mental health first aid to the older person (65+). **Mental health first aid is the help provided to a person who is developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.** The first aid is given until the appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves. Curriculum content is evidence-based, informed by the input of mental health professionals, researchers and consumer advocates.

Course content

Course participants learn about the signs and symptoms of the common mental health problems in older people, how to offer initial help, where and how to get professional and other help, what sort of help has been shown by research to be effective, and how to provide first aid in a crisis situation.

Mental health problems

- Depression
- Anxiety problems
- Confusion and dementia
- Psychosis.

Mental health crises

- Suicidal thoughts and behaviours
- Panic attacks
- Delirium
- Unsafe behaviours due to confusion - wandering, unsafe to drive and unsafe in current place of residence
- Challenging behaviours due to confusion.

This course offers a highly interactive learning experience and the opportunity to apply MHFA skills through the use of films, role-plays and scenarios.

Why the Older Person MHFA course?

In older age, mental illnesses can particularly occur in association with physical illnesses, loss of independence, bereavement and brain changes that occur with ageing.

Mental health problems are under-diagnosed and under-treated in this population, often misattributed to ageing or poor physical health. Stigma and poor mental health literacy in family and carers of older Australians are likely to contribute to the lack of supportive interactions, diagnosis and treatment of mental health problems.

The aim of the Older Person MHFA Course is to train the community to respond appropriately as early as possible to older people developing mental health problems, rather than wait for a mental health crisis before taking action.

Course Format

This is a 12-hour course, which can be delivered as either a 2-day course (6 hours + lunch breaks per day), OR 4 separate training modules (3 hours each). Course participants receive a copy of the Older Person MHFA Manual to keep and a Certificate of Completion.

Who can attend an Older Person MHFA course?

Any interested adult, particularly those who work or live with older people, can attend. Please note this course is not a therapy or support group, rather it is an education course to learn how to give first aid to others.

Why attend an Older Person MHFA course?

As a participant you will gain improved knowledge of mental illnesses and their interventions, knowledge of appropriate first aid strategies, and confidence in providing first aid to individuals with a mental health problem.

How do I sign up for a course?

Upcoming courses are listed on the MHFA Australia website, and are often available Australia wide. Individual Instructors set their own course fees, so you may wish to gather quotes from several local Instructors. If you wish to book a course for a workplace or a community, or have an enquiry, you can search for a local Instructor on the MHFA Australia website to discuss your needs.

Become an Accredited Mental Health First Aider?

Participants who complete this training are eligible to complete an online Accreditation Assessment in order to receive a Mental Health First Aider Certificate of Accreditation valid for 3 years.

Other available MHFA Courses

MHFA Australia offers an expansive and growing suite of online, blended and face-to-face courses teaching participants how to appropriately apply MHFA skills to varying populations and target groups. Populations include adults, youth and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Target groups include the suicidal person, white collar workers, lawyers, pharmacists and tertiary students. See the MHFA Australia website for more information about these courses.

Note:

The information provided in MHFA courses is for general mental health first aid only and is not intended to be and should not be relied upon as a substitute for specific professional medical advice.