



Mental Health First Aid Australia

2013

ANNUAL REPORT

Jan - Dec

***Our core
purpose is
to improve
the mental
health
literacy
of the
community***

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About MHFA Australia

Developed in 2000 by Betty Kitchener OAM and Professor Tony Jorm, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Australia is a national not-for-profit organisation focused on mental health training and research.

What We Do

MHFA Australia develops, evaluates and provides a variety of training programs and courses:

- Evidence-based MHFA courses to teach mental health first aid strategies to members of the public.
- Instructor Training Courses to train and accredit suitable adults to deliver these MHFA courses to communities, schools and workplaces across Australia.

Our Purpose

The MHFA program was developed by wife and husband team Betty Kitchener OAM and Prof Tony Jorm in order to improve the mental health literacy of the community, following the model that has been successfully applied with conventional first aid.

Mental health literacy

Mental health literacy, a term coined by Prof Jorm and colleagues in 1997, refers to the “knowledge and beliefs about mental health problems which aid their recognition, management or prevention.” When the community has good mental health literacy, community members are able to recognise mental illness, know how to seek relevant information, and understand the risk factors, appropriate treatments and professional help available. They also have attitudes that promote recognition and appropriate help-seeking.

Our Vision

The vision of Mental Health First Aid Australia is “an empowered community providing support to one another in times of mental health problems and mental health crises, with positive and inclusive attitudes towards people with mental health problems.”

Our Mission

Mental Health First Aid Australia’s mission is the “provision of high quality, evidence-based mental health first aid education open to all members of the community.”

Our long-term goal is to achieve parity with physical first aid training, which has 12% of the adult population with current certification.

Message from the Chair and CEO

By the end of 2013, at least 225,000 adults had attended a MHFA course in Australia since 2001. This represents 1.2% of the Australian population aged 15 years and over.

MHFA also continued its spread internationally, with an MoU signed during 2013 with Denmark, bringing the total number of countries outside Australia to 20 currently with an active MHFA Program.

This is the second annual report of Mental Health First Aid International (trading as Mental Health First Aid Australia) as an independent not-for-profit company.

There have been many achievements in the past year, as documented in this report with some highlights listed on the next page.

These achievements were only possible because we have such wonderful, talented and dedicated staff and consultants. They are the greatest asset of the program and its guarantee of a bright future.

The continued rise in number of Australians trained is due to the work of the MHFA Instructors located across the country. Their connections with local communities are a key to the widespread availability of MHFA courses

in so many locations and diverse settings. We currently have 1,120 accredited Instructors, some with multiple accreditations, including over 800 accredited to deliver the Standard MHFA, 400 to deliver the Youth MHFA and 150 to deliver the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Instructors. During 2013, approximately 200 new Instructors were trained.

We will be greatly assisted in some of our new developments during 2014 with funds donated by the 2013 Black Dog Ride to the Red Centre. We thank the riders for their generosity and hope this will now be an annual event.

Finally, we wish to thank the Directors of MHFA International, who all give so generously of their time and expertise to assist the CEO and staff.



B Kitchener
**Betty Kitchener OAM
CEO**



Anthony Jorm
**Professor Tony Jorm
Chair**

Highlights of the year

2013 was a busy year which saw many developments of MHFA course curriculum and resources, and several significant achievements and recognition for MHFA Australia.

These included:

- The MHFA Program was added to **SAMHSA's** National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)
- **Black Dog Ride** raised \$300,000 shared between MHFA Australia and Lifeline
- **Danish Mental Health Foundation**, Copenhagen adopted and adapted MHFA Program
- **Edition 3** Youth and Standard Courses launched
- Tailored Courses launched for **medical students, nursing students and financial counsellors** (eLearning and face-to-face)
- Simplified **Aboriginal MHFA workbook** launched
- Guidelines developed for **financial counsellors** to help people with both financial difficulties and a mental health problem
- Guidelines developed for giving mental health first aid to **Aboriginal adolescents**
- **teen MHFA Program**, for adolescents helping their peers, was developed, piloted and successfully evaluated.

Instructor Training

A total of 17 Instructor Training Courses were conducted in 2013

These included:

- 9 x 5-day Standard MHFA
- 4 x 5-day Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA
- 3 x 5.5-day Youth MHFA
- 1 x teen MHFA

197 New **Standard** MHFA
Instructors trained

49 New **Youth** MHFA
Instructors trained

63 New **Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander**
MHFA Instructors trained

3 New **teen** MHFA Instructors
trained



312 New Instructors trained
in 2013

Instructor Recognition

Master and Principal Master Instructors

Congratulations to all MHFA Instructors whose extensive experience conducting MHFA courses was formally recognised in 2013.

Master Instructors - those who have conducted an impressive total of at least 30 MHFA Courses.

Kylee Brown	Rita Sanderson
Nicole Cassar	David Segal
Sudha Coutinho	Lisa Shanahan
Marie Cox	Bill Spawton
Katrina Dart	Nicole Turner
Eve De Silva	Bernadette (Bernie) Waterhouse
Pedro Diaz	Nareida Wyatt
Jodie Farrow	Nicqui Yazdi
Lesley Freeman	Jimmy Yeow
Shyama Fuad	
Toni Garretty	
Tash Hanley	
Donna Harriss	
Mike Hazelton	
Ellen Heathwood	
Gary Janke	
Susanne Lampitt	
Johnathan Link	
Catherine McCarthy	
Jean McGuinness	
Victorina Mckenna-White	
Toby Raeburn	
Priscilla Reid	
Rita Riedel	

Principal Master Instructors - those who have conducted 10 or more MHFA courses since their last annual accreditation anniversary.

Geoffrey Ahern	Rod Lambert
Judy Beven	Susanne Lampitt
Keiran Booth	Ian Magor
Martha Brzywczy	Andrew Markovs
Karen Bull	Caddie Marshall
Anthony Cameron	Mark McGrath
Gloria Claessen	Jackie McRae
Cate Clark	Kate Rickerby
Dianne Christine Colbert	David Segal
Katrina Dart	Fred Stern
Eve De Silva	Richard Thompson
Jodie Farrow	AJ Williams
Catherine Fitzgerald	Nareida Wyatt
Shyama Fuad	Joseph Zammit
Dianne Gill	
Philippa Harris	
Donna Harriss	
Mike Hazelton	
Annie Hepner	
Jose Hernandez	
Diane Hickey	
Anthony Hoare	
Bryan Jeffrey	
Mark Kearns	

33 MHFA Instructors gained Master status in 2013

38 Principal Master Instructors in 2013

Instructor Support

Introduction of Instructor Annual Membership fee

In August 2013, MHFA Australia introduced an annual \$100 MHFA Instructor membership fee. Since the formation of the MHFA Australia company, the Board of Directors and the Executive of MHFA Australia had been considering the introduction of this fee, as part of MHFA Australia's restructuring process to ensure future sustainability. This fee will help MHFA Australia to continue to fund the existing support and information we provide to MHFA Instructors via email, phone, web and newsletters. It will also help us develop new activities for MHFA Instructors, such as an expanded professional development program in 2014.

Annual Conference – Instructor Professional Development

In 2013, MHFA Australia hosted the last Annual MHFA Australia Instructor Conference. The 8th Annual Mental Health First Aid Australia Instructor Conference 'Mental Health First Aid: Growth through Diversity' was held on Monday 14 – Tuesday 15 October 2013 in Melbourne's CBD. MHFA Instructors were required to attend the conference at least once every 3 years. In 2013, the conference provided a mix of professional development, networking and skills-based sessions to support the effective delivery of Mental Health First Aid in communities and workplaces. The winners of the 2nd Annual MHFA Australia Awards were also announced during a special ceremony.

Australian comedian and sought-after speaker, Nelly Thomas, was MC for the event. Keynote speakers included: Associate Professor Yin Paradies from Deakin University "Racism and Poor Mental Health", Christopher Hall, Director of the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement "Complex Grief" and Mark Pacitti, Consumer and author of blog 'Dancing with the Black Dog' "Talking about the Black Dog".



Web Instructor Management System (WIMS) Re-development

In 2013, MHFA Australia began re-developing the MHFA website and Web Instructor Management System (WIMS 1) to support a range of new features aimed at promoting the further uptake of MHFA training by the Australian community, dubbed WIMS 2.

The new features that WIMS 2 was re-designed to support include:

- The launch of eLearning courses
- MHFA public courses participant registration, to allow MHFA to remind participants to complete refresher training every 3 years
- Online professional development opportunities for Instructors.

Unfortunately our previous framework, WIMS 1, was not able to support these features. WIMS 1 evolved alongside the MHFA Program over many years and is a customer application. As the MHFA Program expanded, more functionalities were added to WIMS 1 and it has become more complicated to maintain and extend. New features needed to be built from scratch using coders familiar with the custom code. Moving forward we have chosen to build the site in Drupal, a free open-source content management system, as this framework is familiar to many developers worldwide with many 'out of the box' functions that can be further customised to meet the needs of the MHFA program.

After planning and research, in mid-July 2013, we launched an exclusive Instructor only release of WIMS 2.0 in order for Instructors to update their information prior to the full release of the site in 2014. Also, in August 2013, we successfully launched eLearning courses within the new site. The site continued to be built in late 2013, in time for a full launch planned for early 2014.



Instructors at the 2013 MHFA Instructor Conference.

MHFA Australia Awards

The Annual MHFA Australia Awards were launched in 2012 to showcase the achievements of individuals, communities, organisations and education providers who have worked to improve mental health literacy through their support of MHFA courses, which began in 2001. The Awards acknowledge the high standard and commitment demonstrated by those involved in delivering MHFA courses across Australia.

The 2013 MHFA Australia Awards were presented on Monday 14th October 2013 at a ceremony held during the 8th Annual MHFA Instructor Conference (14-15 October, CQ Functions Melbourne CBD).

MHFA Instructor Champion Award 2013 Winners

An individual effort in any of the MHFA Courses:

- Clifford Nelder (Far North Queensland) - for his personal commitment and dedication to the MHFA program over many years.
- Ms Katie Papertalk (WA) - for her personal commitment and dedication to the delivery of the MHFA program in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Caron Cahill (QLD) - for her personal commitment and determination to provide Youth MHFA training in the community.

MHFA Community Award 2013 Winners

A community wide effort by an organisation to increase mental health literacy by conducting MHFA courses:

- Central Coast Mental Health Service, Central Coast Local Health District (NSW)
- Certificate of Commendation – INBMHS Homeless Health Outreach Team (QLD)
- Certificate of Commendation - St Vincent De Paul Society (QLD)

MHFA Workplace Award 2013 Winners

A workplace wide effort by an organisation to increase mental health literacy of employees by conducting MHFA courses:

- Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Service (QLD)
- Norton Rose Fulbright (Global legal practice)

MHFA Education Sector Award 2013 Winners

A whole of university/institution approach to increasing mental health literacy by conducting MHFA courses to staff and students:

- Monash Residential Services, Monash University (VIC)
- The University of Western Sydney (NSW)



2013 MHFA Australia Award winners

MHFA in Action

MHFA Instructors' Experiences

500th Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (QLD) employee completes MHFA Course

Business Support Officer Uma Nath, from the North Coast Region, was the 500th employee of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services QLD to complete the 12-hour MHFA Course.

The MHFA Course Uma attended was held in Caboolture for managers and supervisors from across the department, in 2013.

Senior Adviser Sandra Bond and Principal Adviser Nicole Hughes from Human Resources and Ethical Standards are both accredited MHFA Instructors who deliver the program within the department. Nicole commented:

“Over 60 MHFA Courses have been delivered across the Department since December 2008 for employees who, as part of their job, are required to respond to others experiencing psychological distress. Our course participants are using the skills to assist not only work colleagues and clients but also members of their family and wider social network.”



MHFA for QRL staff



Master MHFA Instructor Michael (Mick) Burge, from Toowoomba (QLD), conducted a 12-hour Standard MHFA Course in Brisbane in 2013 for a group of Queensland Rugby League (QRL) CEOs and coaches.

This course was organised by Murray Hurst, QRL Welfare and Education Manager Queensland. Murray commented:

“We had 20 participants from the Queensland Cup Competition (QLD Rugby League) and all participants were very interested and appreciative.”

One of the QRL MHFA course participants, Glenn Ottaway (Executive Officer, Mackay Cutters), commented:

“I thought the content was very valuable. We were a club directly affected by tragedy this year so it was important for us to continue to educate ourselves on mental health issues. Moving forward I would ideally like to see the game (or sport as a whole) invest in developing a similar program that is specifically aimed at young athletes playing at a professional level in their chosen sport. I believe young athletes that have the sporting world at their feet, so to speak, are a very specific case and have certain pressures that other young people may not have.”

MHFA Courses

As usual MHFA Instructors were very busy in delivering MHFA Courses across Australia, within their workplaces and communities.
From January to December 2013:

Total **2,900** MHFA Courses were delivered across every state and territory of Australia

963 12-hour **Standard** MHFA Courses *training* **24,548** participants

640 14-hour **Youth** MHFA Courses *training* **10,075** participants

297 14-hour **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** MHFA Courses *training* **2,663** participants

Total **37,286** **NEW MHFAiders** - members of the public trained in how to provide mental health first aid to people developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

MHFA in Action

It is always encouraging to hear how the MHFA Action Plan has impacted peoples' lives and given them the strength, courage and willingness to assist friends and family who have a mental illness or are facing a mental health crisis.

MHFAiders' Experiences

Residential Advisor at Charles Sturt University Assists Fellow Student

Carissa Perkins, MHFA Instructor and Student Equity and Diversity Officer in the Student Services division at Charles Sturt University (CSU), conducted a 12-hour Standard MHFA course in 2013 with the Residential Advisors (RAs, or student dorm supervisors) at CSU. A couple of weeks following the course, one of the RA students came and spoke to Carissa to let her know how grateful she was for the training when she came into contact with one of her 'dormies' who had some long-term issues with non-suicidal self-injury.

This RA student was proud that after completing the MHFA course she was able to deal with the situation calmly and openly, listening to the fellow student's comments and concerns without judgment or fear. She commented:

"I really didn't believe I would need the MHFA training so soon, but within two days of the students moving in, I was approached by a student who was self harming. I was so thankful that I had done the MHFA course as I was able to help the student and give her the encouragement to get the help that was needed. This scenario made the MHFA course a reality and I was so thankful that the university had given me the chance to do this. Mental health should be a topic that receives more attention, and through the MHFA course I believe it is."

The RA was able to recommend appropriate help to the fellow student, who is now seeking treatment and showing some initial signs of being on the road to "recovery". The RA and staff have also set up a support network, as the student is away from home for the first time without friends or family.

Aunty May Helps her Grandson

A NSW Aboriginal female Elder, named Aunty May attended an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA course in her local community in 2013. As Aunty May was learning about the signs and symptoms of depression, she started to recognise these in her 20-year-old grandson who lived with her.

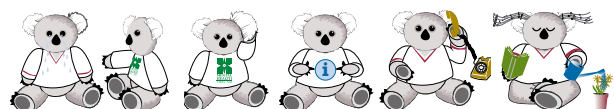
She decided to practice the MHFA Action Plan ALGEE to assist her grandson.

"I asked my young'in upfront whether he was feeling depressed - he told me yes! I then asked whether he wanted to kill himself. Again, he said yes", Aunty commented.

Aunty immediately took her grandson to the local emergency department.

"ALGEE has helped me to learn how to help others. We have many young people committing suicide in our community. Often they don't have anyone to talk to. And when they do talk – do we really listen and respond correctly? The training of ALGEE saved my grandson. We need more of this to save other peoples' grandsons and granddaughters".

MHFA Australia thanks Aunty May for sharing her story.



- A**pproach, assess and assist with any crisis
- L**isten non-judgmentally
- G**ive support and information
- E**ncourage appropriate professional help
- E**ncourage other supports

Course Development & Evaluation

teen MHFA – teaching adolescents in years 10-12 how to help their peers

The 3.5-hour teen MHFA Course was developed in 2012 with the aim to teach students in Years 10-12 how to help peers who are developing mental health problems by using the teen MHFA Action Plan. The course also teaches a little about specific mental health problems, and about the way feelings, thoughts and beliefs influence each other.

In 2013, funding was successful from *beyondblue*: the national depression initiative to carry out an initial uncontrolled pilot evaluation of the teen MHFA course with Year 10 students in 4 schools. We aimed to test the intervention in diverse schools, so we included a government school and a private school in Melbourne, and a government school and Catholic school in rural Victoria. Schools received the pilot very positively and we already have others wanting to receive this course. To evaluate the effects of the teen MHFA program, questionnaires were given to students pre-training, post-training and at a 3-month follow-up. 631 students participated in the evaluation.

Following the intervention, students were more confident in helping peers, were more open in talking about mental health problems, showed reductions in stigmatising attitudes, and their mental health improved. Effects were generally maintained at follow-up. There were also no negative outcomes reported by students receiving the teen MHFA training or subsequent first aid assistance.

We learned some valuable lessons from this pilot, including how to fit the program into the school timetable with minimal disruption, the importance of involving school support services (which have to deal with any students who initiate help-seeking as a result of the intervention), and the best ways of organising parental consent and the administration of questionnaires. We have incorporated these lessons in the next phase of the evaluation of teen MHFA, as well as our Instructor Training.

Dr Claire Kelly, Youth Programs Manager, who delivered the teen MHFA Courses to students, commented:

“One of the biggest attitudinal changes I’ve noticed is that, initially students are resistant to the idea of telling an adult that a friend is struggling, but by the end of the training they appear to be a lot more comfortable with it.”

Students were particularly appreciative of the films created by MHFA Australia to complement the course. One of these videos is a three-part ‘talking heads’ style video called “Talking About It”, in which two young people, Ali and Luke, describe their experiences living with depression. The other is a drama called “Mates” in which an adolescent male assists a school friend who is depressed and experiencing suicidal thoughts.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Program

Edition 2 Workbook

With funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA), we developed and had printed a simplified workbook with a lower literacy level, which AMHFA course participants can use.

Kanowski LG, Williams-Tchen AJ, Kitchener BA. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid Workbook*. 2nd ed. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013. ISBN: 978-0-9871819-5-4.d

In 2013, this workbook was made available for AMHFA Instructors to use in their MHFA courses. MHFA Australia thanks the advisory group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who helped to guide the content of this workbook.

Guidelines for how to best Communicate with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adolescent with a Mental Health Problem

Also with funding from DoHA, we used the Delphi method to develop guidelines for how to be culturally appropriate when providing mental health first aid to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander adolescent with a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. The Delphi method aims to gain consensus between experts. The first stage in this research project was to conduct a literature search on the topic. This search informed the development of a questionnaire, which was then rated over three rounds by a large group of Aboriginal mental health professionals from across Australia according to whether or not they believed that the statements should be included in the guidelines about how to give mental health first aid to an Aboriginal adolescent. The consensus of the responses to this questionnaire informed the Guidelines e.g. how to engage young people, what to discuss and what body language to use. The following quote is taken from the guidelines:

“Although some adolescents prefer confiding in people of their own cultural background, don’t assume that this is always the case; ask if they would prefer this. Be aware that gender and cultural differences between yourself and the adolescent might be exacerbated by discussing private issues ... If the adolescent shows any concern about a cultural or gender difference between the two of you, you should explore the possibility of getting help from someone the adolescent feels more comfortable with.”

A journal article written by lead author Kathryn Chalmers on this research was accepted 10 December 2013 for publication:

Chalmers KJ, Bond KS, Jorm AF, Kelly CM, Kitchener BA, Williams-Tchen AJ. *Providing culturally appropriate mental health first aid to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander adolescent: Development of expert consensus guidelines.* International Journal of Mental Health Systems (in press).

These guidelines, available on the MHFA website here: under the ‘Resources’ > ‘Guidelines’ menu, will be used to inform the writing of a Youth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Supplementary Booklet for use in both Youth and Aboriginal MHFA courses.

Edition 3 Standard MHFA and Edition 3 Youth MHFA Programs



In August 2013, MHFA Australia launched Edition 3 of both the Standard and the Youth MHFA Manuals and associated teaching materials. The changes made predominantly reflected changes to diagnostic criteria in the Fifth Edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), launched in early-2013.

Kitchener BA, Jorm AF, Kelly CM. *Mental Health First Aid Manual.* 3rd edition. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013. ISBN: 978-0-9871819-3-0

Kelly CM, Kitchener BA, Jorm AF. *Youth Mental Health First Aid. A manual for adults assisting young people.* 3rd edition. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013. ISBN: 978-0-9871819-4-7

Additional changes in the Edition 3 Youth MHFA Manual incorporated information from the research we published:

Fischer JA, Kelly CM, Kitchener BA, Jorm AF. Development of guidelines for adults on how to communicate with adolescents about mental health problems and other sensitive topics: A Delphi study. *SAGE Open* 2013;10-15.

The guidelines can be downloaded from the MHFA website, under the ‘Resources’ > ‘Guidelines’ menu. In developing these guidelines, the Delphi methodology was again used. This process involved the development of an online questionnaire containing potential guideline statements developed following a literature search and input from two focus groups. Two expert panels (Youth Mental Health First Aid instructors and young consumer advocates) rated the questionnaire over three rounds, according to whether or not they believed that the statements should be included in the guidelines.

Tailored MHFA Courses for Frontline Workers: Nursing Students, Medical Students and Financial Counsellors



The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) provided funding from mid 2012-mid 2015 to develop and deliver three tailored MHFA courses to the following three groups: nursing students, medical students and financial counsellors. More info on each of these tailored courses at the MHFA website.

The initiative aims to train frontline community workers to better identify and respond to the needs of people at risk of suicide.

To achieve this, the Edition 3 Standard MHFA Course was tailored into both face-to-face and eLearning MHFA courses for these three groups: New films, scenarios, resources and supplementary booklets were developed as part of this tailoring, to address the specific needs of these cohorts.

MHFA for Nursing and Medical Students

Over July-August 2013, the 13-hour face-to-face and self-paced eLearning MHFA courses for nursing and medical students were launched. Two additional supplementary booklets were published as additional teaching materials:

Kitchener BA, Bovopoulos NE, Kelly CM, Bond KS. *Mental Health First Aid: Supplementary Booklet for Medical Students.* Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013.

Course Development & Evaluation cont'd

Bovopoulos NE, Kelly CM, Bond KS, Kitchener BA. *Mental Health First Aid: Supplementary Booklet for Nursing Students*. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013.

These courses teach skills in how to provide mental health first aid to a fellow student, covering depression, anxiety problems, psychosis, substance use problems, eating disorders and associated crises. By the end of 2013, across Australia we had trained:

- 59 Instructors to deliver the MHFA for Nursing Students Course. By December 2013, more than 1,200 nursing students undertook this training.
- 33 Instructors to deliver the MHFA for Medical Students Course. By December 2013, 300 medical students received this training.

Roll-out of MHFA for Nursing and Medical Students at Monash University

Shyama Fuad, a psychologist and a MHFA Instructor, up-skilled to deliver the MHFA for Nursing and Medical students courses in 2013. Shyama is involved in providing these courses to Monash students. Here, Shyama updates us on the roll-out of this training at Monash University and students share their positive learning experiences:

Over a four month period in 2013, 78 medical students across the Clayton, Gippsland and Bendigo Regional campuses of Monash University and 69 nursing students from the Clayton, Peninsula and Berwick campuses have been trained in the tailored MHFA course for Medical and Nursing Students.

I have immensely enjoyed working with this student cohort and look forward to being involved in further MHFA training in 2014. I would like to acknowledge and thank the 2013 wellbeing chairs of the Monash University Medical Undergraduates' Society and the academic and professional services staff of the School of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences who made this happen.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and it is heartening to note comments indicating how the transfer of learning will take place, not only professionally but also in how these student MHFAiders will help peers and friends.

One of the nursing students commented:

“The first topic covered in the two-day course was depression, an extremely common mental illness that I had seen often, but particularly in a close friend of mine. In the past I had tried to bring up the concern I had for him, but found it difficult to progress and have him seek support. Perhaps I had come on a little too strong. After the first session, I thought to myself, I have learnt a lot today, why not give it a go?”

So that weekend during a study session with my friend, I began to tell him about the course I was halfway through.

From there, I began speaking about what I'd learnt about depression and it was here that he commented, ‘Those symptoms sound a lot like what I am going through’. It was here I recognised this would be a key opportunity to have a conversation. I began with ‘A’ and assessed the situation within the privacy of his home. From there, I moved onto ‘L’ and listened sensitively, being careful not to have him feel judged or criticised. As I'd already given information which comes under the letter ‘G’ in ALGEE, I reassured him and moved on to ‘E’ and encouraged him to seek professional support. At first he sharply said no and it was here that I'd always gone wrong. In the past I always pushed him, but instead, I told him that when he was ready to take the next step, I'd be there for him. A few days later, I got a call, and after a lot of thought, he felt comfortable enough to seek therapy.”

One of the medical students commented:

“As a medical student, this workshop was not only relevant to my future practice, but also holds current application. Without ‘over-medicalising’ things, it has enabled me to better recognise the boundaries between day-to-day difficulties and more serious conditions. In the context of medical school— where stress levels are high and people are too proud to ask for help— it has made me more aware of the silent struggles that may be going on behind-the-scenes, myself included.”





MHFA Guidelines for Financial Counsellors and Financial Institution Staff

As part of our funding from DoHA, we developed mental health first aid guidelines tailored specifically for financial counsellors. We also received funding from ANZ, GE, NAB, Westpac and beyondblue to develop guidelines for financial institution staff serving customers with mental health problems and financial hardship. All concerned felt it was a great opportunity to combine these two projects so that the guidelines could be more comprehensive.

We used the Delphi consensus method to develop these guidelines, which involved receiving expert consensus about what information should be included. The expert panel comprised financial counsellors, financial institution staff, mental health consumers, carers and mental health professionals.

This project involved three rounds of surveys that were completed by financial counsellors, financial institution staff, mental health consumers with financial difficulties, mental health professionals and carers of people with mental health problems.

The project 'struck a chord' with many people as evidenced in the number of people willing to give of their time to participate in the project, as well as through the numerous positive comments we have received. One of the consumer expert participants commented:

“From the perspective of someone who has been touched by mental health issues personally and through family, and also having experienced the stigma associated with it even in this modern world, I just want to commend you for what you are doing. It’s easy to overlook the minorities and those with less perceived social value, despite this being far from actuality. But to look at a population as you have, and problem solve with an open mind, and a non-judgmental, warm heart, especially in a world still often set in its beliefs about certain cohorts, is honestly brilliant. Practical measures will help in the financial dealings associated with people affected by mental illness - it is a relevant and ongoing problem, but there is a solution, there always are solutions when one is prepared to look for them. And you have, which is remarkable. So thank you.”

MHFA for Financial Counsellors Course

The MHFA Course for Financial Counsellors was launched in September 2013. An additional supplementary booklet was published as additional teaching material:

Bond KS, Kitchener BA, Bovopoulos NE. *Mental Health First Aid: Supplementary Booklet for Financial Counsellors*. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013.

The course teaches skills in how to provide mental health first aid to a client, covering depression, anxiety problems, psychosis, substance use problems and associated crises.

By the end of 2013, we had trained:

- 14 Instructors to deliver this course and approximately 100 financial counsellors in MHFA.

Feedback from course participants / financial counsellors:

“I found the course helpful and insightful. It deepened my level of empathy and knowledge to be able to use these skills effectively. I liked the ALGEE approach.”

“More financial counsellors should attend this course in view of the high number of clients facing financial difficulties that have a mental illness.”

Program Recognition & Support

SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs & Practices (NREPP)

MHFA added to SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)

In July 2013, the Mental Health First Aid Program was added to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP):

<http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=321>

The NREPP is a searchable database of mental health and substance abuse interventions to help the public find programs and practices that may best meet their needs and learn how to implement them in their communities. All interventions in the registry are independently assessed and rated for Quality of Research and Readiness for Dissemination. In this sense, NREPP can be used as a first step to promoting informed decision-making.

Grants received in 2013

The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing continued funding the development and delivery of tailored MHFA training to financial counsellors, nursing and medical students, and people helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescents.

beyondblue provided a small grant to conduct an uncontrolled trial of the teen MHFA course.

A joint grant from ANZ, GE, NAB, Westpac and *beyondblue* was received to develop guiding principles for how staff in banking institutions can work sensitively with customers with both financial hardships and mental health problems.-

Donations received in 2013

MHFA Australia would like to thank the generosity of the following individuals and organisations for their financial donations during 2013:

Individuals

- Kathy Bond
- Tan Boon Lee
- Michael Ellingford
- Anthony Jorm
- Natasha Lakaev
- Shirley Lu
- Mirella Pallanza
- Cecilia Skagerfalt
- Ann Woodruff

Organisations

- Black Dog Ride
- Myer Foundation

Program Recognition & Support

Black Dog Ride



MHFA Australia and Lifeline were fortunate to be the beneficiaries of the 2013 week-long Black Dog Ride (BDR) to Australia's Red Centre, which invited riders from all over the country to ride for a single purpose of raising awareness about depression and suicide prevention and to meet in the middle of Australia.

BDR began in 2009 by Steve Andrews to raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention. When asked what prompted him to start BDR, Steve commented:

"I lost my Mum to suicide about 20 years ago and then five years ago my best mate's wife died by suicide. None of us saw it coming. At my friend's wake I decided that I had to do something to raise awareness of this silent killer, which was bringing such tragedy and misery to peoples' lives."

After months of planning and a week of riding thousands of kilometres, 300 Black Dog Riders capped off the 2013 Ride to the Red Centre with a procession through Alice Springs' Todd Mall. In total, over 650 Black Dog Riders from each state and territory in Australia participated in this year's Ride to the Red Centre. There were riders in their 20s, riders in their 70s and everything in between.

Due to the amazing efforts of these Black Dog Riders, this year's BDR to the Red Centre raised \$350,000 in funds for Lifeline and MHFA Australia, making it their most successful ride yet. Lifeline and MHFA Australia received 50% each, after expenses were extracted.

MHFA Australia put some of the funds raised towards training a selection of Black Dog Riders as Mental Health First Aid Instructors so that communities in Australia can benefit from enhanced awareness of mental health problems and increased capacity to support people developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

Betty Kitchener, CEO of MHFA Australia, went along in the support vehicle from Sydney for a couple of days – travelling from Sydney to Nyngan and Broken Hill. Betty commented:

"Steve Andrews harnessed the enthusiasm and compassion of the fellow bikers, many of whom had been touched by mental illness. They were a generous and compassionate group of people on this ride. It opened my eyes to the world of bikers, and if I was younger, I would love to join them next year on a bike!"

MHFA Australia feels so fortunate to have been chosen as a beneficiary, along with Lifeline Australia, of the 2013 Black Dog Ride to the Red Centre. We would like to sincerely thank National Coordinator Steve Andrews, the rest of the Black Dog Ride team, all of the generous donors and of course the inspiring motorbike riders who devoted their time, energy and passion to raising awareness of depression and other mental illnesses across Australia, and over \$300,000 shared between MHFA Australia and Lifeline!

This donation came at a wonderful time for MHFA Australia. In August 2012, we moved out of an auspiced position and established ourselves as an independent national not-for-profit organisation focused on training and research. The very generous donation of the Black Dog Ride will contribute to the continued growth of MHFA Australia, such as further development and diversity of our MHFA courses for varying populations. In this sense, we see the donation as helping us continue to strive for our mission to decrease the stigma associated with mental illness, and increase the mental health literacy (the knowledge and beliefs about mental disorders which aid their recognition, management and prevention) of the Australian community and communities worldwide.



MHFA International



MHFA Denmark

In late June 2013, the Danish Mental Health Foundation (PsykiatriFonden) began the process of adapting MHFA - 'Psykisk førstehjælp' for their country. 'Our' Mary - HRH Crown Princess of Denmark is the patron of this Danish Foundation.

Betty Kitchener, CEO of MHFA Australia and Dr Claire Kelly, Manager of Youth Programs, flew over to Copenhagen for a week's work with a wonderful group of mental health clinicians and educators in Copenhagen to direct the development of a Standard and Youth MHFA Denmark Program. By the end of the week, the first Standard MHFA Manual draft was written and translated into Danish and the graphics were well underway. Once this group returns from summer holidays, a pilot evaluation of the new course will be conducted in the Copenhagen area. A randomised controlled evaluation is also planned in the near future. This very solid beginning augurs well for the MHFA Denmark program.

MHFA International publications in 2013

1. MHFA: A growing movement trains laypeople to spot mental health concerns. What does it mean for psychologists? *American Psychological Association Monitor*, July/August 2013

Full article: <http://bit.ly/APA-MHFA>

2. Mendenhall AN & Jackson SC. Instructor insights into delivery of MHFA USA: A case study of mental health promotion across one state (Kansas). *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion* 2013.

DOI: 10.1080/14623730.2013.853420

Abstract: <http://bit.ly/MHFA-Kansas>

This study documents the experiences of MHFA Instructors who deliver the MHFA course in the USA. Instructors from one state in the USA (Kansas) were

interviewed and surveyed about these experiences. Results demonstrated that a common reason for becoming an MHFA instructor was to have a community impact.

3. Mendenhall AN, Jackson SC, Hase S. Mental Health First Aid USA in a Rural Community: Perceived Impact on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behavior. *Social Work in Mental Health* 2013. DOI: 10.1080/15332985.2013.812542

Abstract: <http://bit.ly/USA-rural>

This study investigated the perceived impact of MHFA on individuals who took the course through a community mental health centre in rural Kansas. 176 MHFA individuals who completed the course were surveyed to assess their perception of the impact of completing the MHFA course. Findings corresponded with previous Australian MHFA studies that found outcomes including improved mental health literacy and changed attitudes and behaviours.

4. Otsuka KI, Suzuki Y, Fujisawa D et al., The activities of Mental Health First Aid-Japan Team. *Seishin Shinkeigaku Zasshi* 2013.

Abstract: <http://bit.ly/MHFA-Japan>

The MHFA-Japan team was established in 2007. This article reports on Japan's rollout of MHFA for gatekeepers in Japan to help them assess risk factors and refer patients for professional care, and contribute to suicide prevention, as well as informing instructional activities in the area of the Great East Japan Earthquake.



MHFA Publications

MHFA 2013 Publications

Bond KS, Kitchener BA, Bovopoulos NE. *Mental Health First Aid: Supplementary Booklet for Financial Counsellors*. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013

Bovopoulos NE, Kelly CM, Bond KS, Kitchener BA. *Mental Health First Aid: Supplementary Booklet for Nursing Students*. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013.

Chalmers KJ, Bond KS, Jorm AF, Kelly CM, Kitchener BA, Williams-Tchen AJ. (2014) Providing culturally appropriate mental health first aid to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander adolescent: Development of expert consensus guidelines. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems* 2014; 8:6 (accepted 10/12/13).

Fischer JA, Kelly CM, Kitchener BA, Jorm AF. Development of guidelines for adults on how to communicate with adolescents about mental health problems and other sensitive topics: A Delphi study. *SAGE Open* 2013; 10-15.

Kanowski LG, Williams-Tchen AJ, Kitchener BA. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid Workbook*. 2nd ed. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013. ISBN: 978-0-9871819-5-4

Kelly CM, Jorm AF. Suicide in men with cancer: recognising and responding to the warning signs. *Trends in Urology and Men's Health* 2013; 11-13.

Kelly CM, Kitchener BA, Jorm AF. *Youth Mental Health First Aid. A manual for adults assisting young people*. Third edition. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-9871819-4-7

Kitchener BA, Bovopoulos NE, Kelly CM, Bond KS. (2013) *Mental Health First Aid: Supplementary Booklet for Medical Students*. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia.

Kitchener BA, Jorm AF, Kelly CM. (2013) *Mental Health First Aid Manual*. Third edition. Melbourne: Mental Health First Aid Australia; 2013. ISBN: 978-0-9871819-3-0



Operations & Governance

One of our goals in 2013 was to begin a strategic planning process to guide MHFA Australia's work. In September 2013, Board members participated in a half-day strategic planning workshop.

Board of Directors



Professor Tony Jorm, Chair

BA(Hons) (UQ), MPsych (UNSW), PhD (UNSW), DSc (ANU), FASSA

Tony Jorm is a researcher with particular interest in building the community's capacity to take action on mental health. He is a Professorial Fellow, NHMRC Australia Fellow at the Population Mental Health Group, Melbourne School of Population Health at the University of Melbourne. With Betty Kitchener, he was a co-founder of Mental Health First Aid training. He has had numerous honorary positions, including being a President of the Australasian Society for Psychiatric Research, Editor-in-Chief of the Australasian Journal on Ageing and Board member of the Mental Health Council of Australia. He has had a long association with Australian Rotary Health, including as Chair of its Research Committee.



Professor Nick Allen, Deputy Chair

BSc(Hons) (Melbourne), MSc (Melbourne), PhD (Melbourne)

Nick Allen is Professor in the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Melbourne. Professor Allen is a leading researcher in the area of clinical depression, especially for his work on risk for depression during adolescence. His research work asks how children and adolescents are affected by the environments in which they grow up. He has published over 150 scientific papers and 4 books on depression and related problems, especially during adolescence. He has regularly appeared in the media as a commentator on issues related to depression and adolescence.



Ms Michele Barry

BAppSci (RMIT), MPH/HP & HM (La Trobe), MBA (Melbourne)

Michele is currently the Business Operations Manager – Education, for the Centre for Palliative Care. This role is part of the CPC executive team and is responsible for the management of CPC education programs. Michele is the former CEO of LifeTec Queensland (04-09). Prior to this, Michele held various senior roles in the sector including Service Director at Vision Australia, as well as with the Victorian Office of the Public Advocate, and senior roles in the health and aged care services within local government. Michele is proud to be part of an organisation that promotes the importance of mental health for all through practical accessible tools.

Operations & Governance

Board of Directors *cont'd*



Sara Duncan

BEng BSc (Biomedical), GradCert Arts

Sara Duncan is a policy professional with over 15 years' experience in government, as well as the health and community sectors. She has a strong commitment to the role of evidence informed policy as a driver to systemically improving performance and as an enabler for the provision of cost effective and clinically appropriate care for individuals. Sara is the Policy and Communications Manager for Palliative Care Victoria the peak body for Victoria's palliative care services and is a community member of the Mental Health Review Board. Sara is currently completing a Masters of Business Administration at Melbourne Business School and has a Graduate Certificate in Arts (Sociology), Bachelor of Engineering (Biomedical) and Bachelor of Science.



Mr Kevin Ferguson

FCP, CA

Mr Ferguson is a Fellow of CPA Australia, having been admitted as a member in 1967 and a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICAA). He has been in public practice since 1967 and since 1978 specialised in Forensic Accounting particularly Family Law Matters. Since Incorporation in 2000 he has been the Chairman of Directors of the Institute for Breathing and Sleep (located at Austin Health). Other interests include membership of various Accounting Professional Development Groups; Voluntary Mentor to Learner Drivers in the L2P Program and co-ordinator of Walking Group for Parkville – Carlton Probus Club.



Ms Susan Goldie

Cert IVTAE, BA/LLB(Hons), MMgt (CommMgt)

A lawyer by profession, Susan has spent almost 20 years working in the not for profit sector after completing a Masters of Management (Community Sector). A broad range of roles have included extensive experience in adult education and workplace training, community program development and management, volunteer management and leadership in mental health, end of life and cancer supportive care services. Susan's association with MHFA spans almost 10 years, including Australia-wide delivery as a Master Instructor of Adult and Youth MHFA, National Consultant and Instructor Trainer. Susan is currently Manager of the Cancer Peer Support Unit at Cancer Council NSW and is delighted to continue her association with MHFA.

Susan retired from the Board on the 15th March 2013.

Our People

Staff & Consultants

Staff

Ms Betty Kitchener OAM, CEO and Adult Programs Manager

BA (UNSW); GradDipSpecEd (Canberra); GradDipCommCouns (Canberra); BNurs (Canberra) & MNurs (Canberra)

Nataly Bovopoulos, Deputy CEO and Company Secretary

CertIVTAE (MRWED), BLibStud(Hons) (Sydney), MPH (Sydney)

Dr Claire Kelly, Youth Programs Manager

BA(Hons) (ANU), PhD (ANU)

AJ Williams-Tchen, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander MHFA Project Manager

CertIVTAE (HBTA), CertIVGov (BHNLC), DipComServices (Swinburne), BSocWk(Hons) (VU), GradCertCarEd (RMIT), GradDipCarCouns (RMIT), MSocWk (Melb), MEd (VU)

Leanne Northausen, Finance Officer

CertIVBkpg (IBI)

Louise Woodruff Sanz, Standard MHFA Program Officer

Maria Ibarra, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander MHFA Program Officer

CertIII BA (ABTI), CertIVBus (ABTI)

Chrisi Kirova, Youth & Frontline Programs Officer

(began April 2013)
GradDipArts (UOA), BA(Hons) (UOA)

Katherine Birt, Communications and Web Officer

BA (Deakin), GradDipPsych (Monash), PGradDipPsych (Deakin), DPsych (Clinical) Candidate (Deakin)

Brendan O'Keefe, eLearning Support Officer
(began October 2013)

Kathryn Chalmers, Research Assistant

BA (Monash), MMktg (Deakin)

Kathy Bond, Research Assistant

BSc (Towson), GDipCouns (TC), MHSc (Sexual Health) (Sydney)

Emiliano Fernandes, Assistant Accountant

(began November 2013)
BCom, CPA Australia

Consultants

Gloria Claessen, MHFA Trainer of Instructors and Standard MHFA Coordinator

CertIVTAE, CertIVComm, BA (Macq), DipEd (La Trobe), MEd (UC), GradDipPDEd (UC)
Director, RICO Training, Processes & Strategies

Tony Hoare, MHFA Trainer of Instructors

RN BA (Melb), BAppSc (La Trobe) MNSt (La Trobe)
Director, Action Education

Katrina Dart, MHFA Trainer of Instructors

BA (CSU), MSocWk (Deakin)

Frank Skender, Stock Storage and Dispatch

Director, FS Pack and Mail Services

David Jorm, IT Systems Development

Tim Marwick, IT Systems Development

