WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

Mental health first aid is the help provided to a person who is developing a mental health problem, or who is in a mental health crisis, until appropriate professional treatment is received or the crisis resolves.

ABOUT US

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) International, trading as ‘Mental Health First Aid Australia’, is a national non-profit health promotion charity focused on training and research. The MHFA program was founded in Australia in 2000 by Betty Kitchener OAM and Professor Tony Jorm. MHFA Australia the organisation was established as a Company Ltd by Guarantee in September 2011. The organisation is tax except and has Deductible Gift Recipient Status. It employed staff from August 2012. MHFA Australia operates under the governance of a Board of Directors and a small team of dedicated staff based in Parkville, Victoria. MHFA Australia derives funding from Government and philanthropic grants, public donations and through its training programs.

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.”
September 2011 saw a new chapter in the history of the Mental Health First Aid Program, with the formation of the new organisation Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Australia.

The Mental Health First Aid Program had its beginnings in 2000 when Betty Kitchener worked as a part-time volunteer to develop the course together with Tony Jorm, who was a mental health researcher at the Australian National University. By the end of 2004, there was a national network of instructors teaching the course in every state and territory of Australia and it had spread to a number of other countries. In 2005, we moved the program to Melbourne where it ran under an auspicing arrangement with Orygen Youth Health Research Centre. This arrangement worked well until 2010, when a change in the Board of the auspicing organisation occurred, leading to loss of control of Program funds, stock and in making necessary staff appointments. The program began to languish and it became apparent that it needed its own dedicated organisation if it was to survive and continue to serve the community.

The reasons for needing an organisation dedicated to Mental Health First Aid were:

• It was necessary to have full control of finances and financial transparency;
• There was a need to be able to enter into direct contractual arrangements, to have the capacity to get philanthropic support, and to have a vehicle for lobbying governments;
• There was a need to have a hub for Mental Health First Aid Program activities internationally, including the ongoing development of international mental health first aid guidelines, the accreditation of courses and the spread to additional countries;
• There was a need to work outside the focus of the auspicing organisation, which is ‘youth specific preventative psychiatry’.

The new company was formed in September 2011. It was soon invited to apply for a selective tender by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to train frontline community workers in mental health first aid skills. This funding was part of the Australian Labor Party’s election policy “Taking Action to Tackle Suicide”. MHFA Australia was one of three organisations to receive funding. The funding covers the training of three types of frontline workers: financial counsellors, medical students and nursing students.

Additional funding came from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid course, which was greatly in need of an Aboriginal manager to support the existing Aboriginal MHFA instructors, train new ones, and further develop the program.

On 6th August 2012, six staff working on the program resigned their previous positions and began to work for MHFA Australia. They were soon joined by four new staff, bringing the current complement to ten.

As well as servicing the Department of Health and Ageing projects, resuming the training of additional Mental Health First Aid instructors, and supporting the existing instructors, the staff have worked hard to develop new training materials. These include:

1. Writing 3rd editions of the Standard Mental Health First Aid Manual and the Youth Mental Health First Aid Manual to replace the 2nd editions which were published in 2010. These new editions will be released in 2013.
2. Producing a new teen Mental Health First Aid course for adolescents to support their peers. This new 3-hour course, with training films and a new manual, was supported by a grant from the Jack Brockhoff Foundation. The new course is being piloted in 2013.

For an organisation that only started employing staff in August 2012, these rapid developments are a tribute to the talent, commitment and hard work of the staff. They are an amazing team and the greatest asset of the program.

We would also like to thank the members of the Board who have given so generously of their time and expertise to support the organisation during the challenging time of its transition to independence. The renaissance of the program would not have been possible without their support.

Anthony Jorm, Chair       Betty Kitchener, CEO
Instructor Training and Support

Instructor Training

Once we employed staff in August 2012, we hit the ground running. After a hiatus from running Instructor Training earlier in the year, we had a long list of expressions of interest and were quickly able to process enrolments. From August to December 2012 we ran three 5 day Standard MHFA Instructor Training Courses, one 5.5 day Youth MHFA Instructor Training Course and one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Instructor Training Course.

New Instructors Trained from August - December 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Type</th>
<th>New Instructors (Aug - Dec 12)</th>
<th>Total Accredited Instructors (Dec 12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard MHFA</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth MHFA</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMHFA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback from these Instructor Training Courses was overwhelmingly positive. Most trainee Instructors commented after the training that they felt very well prepared to instruct the 12-14 hour MHFA courses. They also identified strengths of the training including the experience and knowledge of the trainers, the well-researched course materials and large amount of valuable information provided to trainees.

Teaching Materials

An important early priority for MHFA Australia is to publish 3rd editions of the Standard and Youth MHFA Manuals. There is new mental health research and updated statistics to include, updates in the mode of action of some psychiatric medications, new evidence on the efficacy of treatments, and new helpful resources such as websites and books.

We completed significant work on both 3rd edition Manuals by December 2012. The Youth MHFA Manual will be the first launched in April 2013.

A major improvement in the 3rd edition Youth MHFA manual is the incorporation of the Communication Guidelines developed by Dr Claire Kelly, Manager of Youth Programs, and Julie Fischer from the Population Mental Health Group, University of Melbourne. Some alterations to artwork and layout will also occur.

These new editions will not necessitate Instructors attending a training day, as was needed for the update from 1st Edition to 2nd Edition. It will, however, require new PowerPoint slides and teaching notes. We are really excited about the changes and improvements to the manuals and look forward to launching these in 2013.

Annual Conference

One-hundred and sixty-seven delegates attended the 7th Annual MHFA Instructors’ Conference 2012 across two days, Monday 10 and Tuesday 11 of September at the Jasper Hotel in Melbourne’s CBD. In 2012, we brought a stronger focus on professional development, networking and skills-based sessions to support the effective delivery of MHFA in communities and workplaces under the theme “Mental Health First Aid: The Second Decade.”

A number of new activities were included such as:
- Concurrent streams for the Youth, Standard and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander courses, so that Instructors with different accreditations could choose to hear about updates and discuss issues relating to the separate courses.
- Practical examples of delivering MHFA in settings such as universities, government agencies, and large corporates, and in vulnerable populations such as adults with an intellectual disability.
- Presentations on hot topics in mental health research, policy and practice tailored to be relevant to the work of MHFA Instructors
- Skills-based sessions on enhancing facilitation skills, cultural competency, managing difficult situations, media and marketing
- The opportunity for Instructors to brainstorm and plan with other Instructors from their state and territory in state-based discussion groups
- Recognition of MHFA Instructor excellence with the launch of the 1st annual MHFA Instructor Awards for Excellence presented on Day 1, followed by a networking cocktail function.

CEO and co-founder Betty Kitchener began the conference with a keynote address outlining a vision and strategy for the future direction of MHFA Australia. We were very proud to have a dynamic and diverse mix of keynote speakers including Professor Dennis McDermott from Flinders University; Liam Leonard from Gay Lesbian Health Victoria; and motivational speaker Rachael Robertson in her role as ambassador for RUOK? Day.

Overall delegate feedback indicated a positive response to the program structure, content and venue. Comments included:

“It was great to meet people in my area.”
“All speakers spoke with confidence and knowledge.”
“I liked the difference from last year in regards to the change from presenter based to networking/interactive.”
MHFA Australia Awards

In 2012 we launched the inaugural annual Mental Health First Aid Australia Awards to showcase the inspiring commitment and achievements of those involved in conducting MHFA courses across Australia.

The Awards acknowledge personal commitment and dedication of MHFA Instructors, proactivity demonstrated by communities in addressing the need for better mental health literacy, and leadership within workplaces to address a need for mental health first aid strategies.

Along with the dedication of the MHFA Australia team, the people involved in conducting MHFA courses are helping to fulfil MHFA Australia’s aim to increase early detection and treatment of mental health problems and reduce the stigma attached to mental illness. All of their efforts help to ensure that the skills to assist people with mental health problems spreads beyond mental health professionals.

In the awards’ inaugural year, we received over 40 nominations, all of which were of a very high standard, making it a very difficult decision for the judging panel. In total, we awarded six winners and three Certificates of Commendation across four award categories at a ceremony during our 7th Annual MHFA Instructors’ Conference held in Melbourne in September 2012.

Award winner Sue Horton commented:
“I was absolutely surprised and thrilled when told I’d won the award as I wasn’t aware that I’d been secretly nominated by my peers. I am very humbled firstly in having my colleagues recognise my work and contributions in the mental health area and going to the lengths of submitting the nomination, and then secondly on being selected by MHFA to receive the award, it’s a real honour.”

MHFA Instructor Champion Award 2012 Winners
• Fay Jackson, Vision In Mind NSW
• Deborah Reveley, Brain Ambulance WA
• Senior Sergeant Sue Horton, Victoria Police

MHFA Community Award 2012 Winners
• Live4Life Macedon Ranges VIC
• Certificate of commendation – Deniliquin Mental Health Awareness Group NSW
• Cape York Social and Emotional Wellbeing Collaborative QLD (Certificate of commendation)

MHFA Workplace Award 2012 Winners
• Essential Energy NSW
• Corrective Services NSW (Certificate of commendation)

MHFA Education Sector Award 2012 Winner
• University of Tasmania
Highlights from the 7th Annual MHFA Instructor Conference
September 2012, Melbourne

Welcome to Country - Aunty Diane Kerr (Wurundjeri Tribe)

MC Derek Guille and a MHFA Instructor meet and greet

CEO Betty Kitchener discussing the future directions for MHFA Australia

Liam Leonard speaking on the mental health of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered Australians

MHFA Instructors catching up and networking at morning tea

Discussion and questions time

State-based Instructor break-out sessions

Film Premiere “Mates” - part of the new teen MHFA Course
Course Development and Evaluation

One of the main reasons identified in setting up MHFA Australia as an independent organisation is the freedom to expand course development to cover diverse groups across the lifespan. MHFA frequently receives requests for adaptations for different populations and groups. To this end, a number of new versions of MHFA courses are planned which will contribute to demand for Instructor training, course delivery and course materials. These courses are in various stages of development and are core areas of focus, as growth in this area will contribute to the stability of MHFA’s financial state into the future.

MHFA for Chinese Australians

MHFA for Chinese Australians is a translated and adapted version of the 2nd edition Standard MHFA manual in traditional and simplified Chinese. We are grateful to beyondblue for providing a print run of these manuals, which are available for accredited Standard MHFA Instructors to distribute to Chinese-speaking course participants.

Teen MHFA

In 2013 we will be launching teen MHFA, a program for adolescents assisting each other, usually to get help from an adult for a mental health problem. Two videos and a manual will accompany the course, which will run over three classroom periods.

In late 2012, two pilot teen MHFA courses were run in Melbourne. The feedback was wonderful. The participants loved both the drama video, “Mates”, seen by many Instructors at the 2012 conference, and also the talking heads video, “Talking About It”. They were very happy with the manuals, which include illustrations by two artists at a local comic artists’ collective and artwork by young people with mental illness.

We will be running a trial in a large high school in Melbourne in February and March 2013 and look forward to making announcements about Instructor training later in the year.

We are grateful to the Jack Brockhoff Foundation which provided the funding for the development of the film clips for teen MHFA.

MHFA for the Older Person

Mental Health First Aid for the Older Person (OMHFA) is a new initiative to address mental illness in the context of ageing. It is a training course that will be designed for adults working or caring for older adults aged 65 and over, to be delivered in aged care settings and other community and health settings. Based on the Standard MHFA Course, it will contain a new chapter on MHFA for Confusion, covering dementia and delirium.

The input for the first draft of the OMHFA manual is from a group of clinicians at Aged Care Psychiatry Services (Prince of Wales Hospital) led by psychogetrician, Dr Chanaka Wijeratne. We are now awaiting on news about several grant applications we have submitted to support the development of this new program, including an Instructor Training program.

MHFA in GLBTIQ communities

Individuals who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex or questioning (GLBTIQ) are at higher risk of anxiety, depression and related disorders such as substance misuse, and of attempting or completing suicide. Importantly, these individuals are also known to perceive unique barriers to seeking treatment, such as stigmatising attitudes among some health professionals towards non-heterosexual individuals.

We hope to develop a supplementary booklet and other resources to accompany the Standard MHFA course for presentation to those living or working with GLBTIQ communities. We are awaiting the outcome of a funding application to support us carrying out a Delphi expert consensus study which would inform the content of this supplementary booklet.
MHFA for Frontline Community Workers

MHFA Australia, along with Wesley Mission and The Salvation Army have been very fortunate to receive a two year grant from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) as part of their ‘Taking Action to Tackle Suicide’ 2010 election commitment. Without this well-timed grant, the MHFA Program would not have been able to move out into its own organisation.

This two year initiative aims to train frontline community workers in the financial and legal sectors, relationship counsellors, and healthcare workers to better identify and respond to the needs of people at risk of suicide or who have attempted suicide.

MHFA Australia has been funded to develop and deliver tailored training for the following frontline workers: financial counsellors, nursing students and medical students.

The grant provides funding until 30 June 2014 for:

- 50 suitably experienced individuals to complete the 5-day Standard MHFA Instructor Training Course
- 100 MHFA Instructors to deliver tailored training resources in face-to-face courses to 1500 financial counsellors, nursing students and medical students
- At least 2000 students to complete e-learning training.

To better understand what financial counsellors need know in order to help clients with mental health problems we are conducting a Delphi expert consensus study which will inform the additional resources we develop for the project. We have formed three working groups comprising of expert professionals to help guide our work.

The Sydney Medical School at The University of Sydney has embraced this project. By December 2012 Betty had trained nine of their lecturing staff to pilot a tailored MHFA course to their first year medical students. They are contributing funds and personnel to develop three films demonstrating how a medical student can assist a fellow student with mental health problems.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders MHFA

MHFA Australia was also successful to receive funding through the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing for the MHFA for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Program (AMHFA). This three year grant will support the ongoing functioning of the AMHFA Program.

December 2012 AMHFA Instructor Training Course

In addition to allowing us to employ two staff members to provide ongoing support to our existing Instructors, we are also developing a number of new resources over the next few years. This includes:

- a lower literacy workbook to broaden the breadth of delivery of the 14-hour course;
- a Delphi study to develop guidelines on how to give MHFA to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander adolescent;
- a supplementary booklet with these guidelines to accompany the AMHFA manual and;
- a film showing how to give MHFA to an Aboriginal adolescent.

A working group of 14 Aboriginal mental health professionals has been established to support the development and implementation of these projects.
Funding and Advocacy

DoHA funded grants

MHFA Australia is very thankful to the Australia Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) for funding over the next couple of years to develop and deliver tailored training for the following sectors: financial counsellors, nursing and medical students, and people helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescents.

The aim of this tailored training is to help these sectors in our communities to have the skills, confidence and competence to be able to recognise and give appropriate mental health first aid to someone impacted by mental illness or in the mental health crisis of being suicidal.

The Jack Brockhoff Foundation

In 2012, The Jack Brockhoff Foundation (which makes grants to eligible charitable organisations all across Victoria in three key priority areas: Children and Youth, Medical and Community) generously provided funding for the development of film clips for the teen MHFA Program.

Youth MHFA for pre-service teachers

In October 2012, the Family and Community Development Committee, Parliament of Victoria tabled their recommendations following an inquiry into workforce participation by people with mental illness held earlier in 2012. Prof Tony Jorm, Chair of the MHFA Australia Board, had provided a submission to the Committee discussing relevant research conducted at the University of Melbourne on mental health and the workplace.

One of the Committee’s recommendations in the report was that “the Victorian Government develops a strategy to support the education sector to identify the risk factors of mental illness, including ... incorporating Mental Health First Aid as part of teaching training” (p. 79).

In response to this recommendation, MHFA Australia has drafted a funding proposal to train pre-service secondary teachers in Victoria in Youth Mental Health First Aid.

We have also received letters from Deakin University and the Australian Catholic University supporting the need for this training to prepare teachers-in-training to work with school students who may be at risk of developing a mental health problem. We are working to meet with the Victorian Minister for Mental Health to discuss this proposal in 2013.

International MHFA

The MHFA Australia Program has now spread from Australia to 20 other countries. These are: Bermuda, Cambodia, Canada, China, England, Finland, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Nepal, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, USA and Wales.

In November 2012, we compiled the 3rd edition of the MHFA International Newsletter to allow an opportunity for MHFA organisations across the globe to share achievements and to strengthen and inspire the international MHFA network.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

In September 2012, Betty travelled to Riyadh, capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to deliver and consult with some mental health professionals about a MHFA KSA program. Currently the program is being adapted for the KSA. Dr Abdulhameed Allhabeeb, a Director of Mental Health in the Saudi Ministry of Health and General Secretary of the National Committee Caring for Mental Patients and their Families (NCCPF), is the driving force behind developing a MHFA KSA Program.

The Inaugural MHFA Saudi Arabia Course
Operations and Governance

A critical step in establishing the MHFA program as an independent entity was the management of the physical and structural transition to Mental Health First Aid Australia from its previous auspiced position. This included recruiting Directors to the Board (see p. 12).

Much of our energy was devoted to finding a suitable office location and setting up financial, IT and relevant HR systems, procedures and policies, in a smooth and cost-effective manner.

Place of business

Finding a suitable place of business for MHFA Australia was essential in making a smooth transition. We identified our priorities as being nearby to the Population Mental Health Group at the University of Melbourne (our research partner), close to public transport, and lots of natural light! After much searching around the Parkville, Brunswick and Carlton areas, we were lucky enough to find vacant office space at 369 Royal Parade Parkville. The existing office fit-out suited our needs perfectly. Fortunately, we are located in the same building as Frank Skender at FS Pack and Mail Services, who looks after our stock and dispatch management. We are also able to access a training room on the ground floor. In conjunction with our boardroom, this means we have suitable space to run Instructor Training on the premises. We have signed a 3-year lease and purchased the majority of our furniture second hand and our computers via a lease with Apple.

We have also recruited new 3 staff members. Kathryn Chalmers was appointed as a research assistant, primarily working on the Aboriginal Youth Guidelines. Kathy Bond was appointed as a research assistant, focusing on the MHFA for Financial Counsellors. Lastly, we appointed Maria Ibarra as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander MHFA Program Officer.

Systems, Policies and Procedures

An important first step in setting up the new office was establishing our systems, policies and procedures. We were fortunate to have the assistance of Tim Marwick, our IT Consultant, who ensured that our network, internet and phones were operational on our first day of business. on the 8th August 2012. By September Nataly Bovopoulos, Deputy CEO had prepared a manual to cover all our HR policies and procedures, followed by a Finance policy and procedures manual. Both manuals have been distributed to staff for feedback and have had input from members of our Board of Directors.

Our MHFA website and associated web database are being upgraded. More than a source of information about the MHFA program, our website is a comprehensive administration tool for coordinating MHFA instructors and administering, promoting and tracking MHFA courses. This Web Instructor Management System (WIMS) is an essential administrative cornerstone of the MHFA Australia program.

We are embarking on a redevelopment of our website and WIMS, using Drupal, a more modern and standardised code base. Drupal will facilitate our ability to easily share our MHFA Australia web technology with our international MHFA partners around the world. An important goal of this development is to create a WIMS system that international MHFA organisations can more easily adopt, with some local customisation, into their own programs. This upgrade is due to be launched in mid 2013.

Staff

We were very fortunate that we were able to offer employment to all existing MHFA program staff who had been employed by the University of Melbourne. We were also fortunate that of the seven staff, six chose to resign from their University positions and take up employment with MHFA Australia under the same conditions. Most of the staff have had their positions adjusted to fill roles required by the organisation. For example, Leanne Northausen has undergone bookkeeping training and is now responsible for all finance activities as the MHFA Finance Officer. Nataly Bovopoulos is now the Deputy CEO in addition to already being in the role of Company Secretary. AJ Williams has been appointed as the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander MHFA Project Manager. Katherine Birt is now focusing on marketing and promotion of MHFA Australia as the Web and Communications Officer. Louise Woodruff Sanz is responsible for administration for the Standard and Youth MHFA Courses. Additionally, our contracted staff continued, including Gloria Claessen, Tony Hoare and Katrina Dart as trainers of MHFA Instructors, David Jorm and Tim Marwick as IT systems developers, and Frank Skender as responsible for storage and dispatch of MHFA stock.
Some 2012 Mental Health First Aid Australia Team Activities

MHFA and PMHG Team Christmas party 2012 - Princes Park

Algee helping with the move

Welcome to our new office

Claire decorating her new office

Tim, our IT Consultant, plugging us in!

Algee straight to work, whilst enjoying the view!

MHFA Australia Team at the MHFA Instructor Conference - September 2012
Our People - 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**
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.

**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.
Our People - Staff and 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), MIPH (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 and Youth MHFA Program Officer

Maria Ibarra, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander MHFA Program Officer
CertIIBA (ABTI), CertIVBus (ABTI)

Katherine Birt, Communications and Web Officer
BA (Deakin), GradDipPsych (Monash), PGradDipPsych (Deakin), DPsych (Clinical) Candidate (Deakin)

Kathryn Chalmers, Research Assistant
BA (Monash), MMktg (Deakin)

Kathy Bond, Research Assistant
BSc (Towson), GDipCouns (TC), MHSc (Sexual Health) (Sydney)

Consultants

Gloria Claessen, MHFA Trainer of Instructors and Standard MHFA Coordinator
CertIVTAE, CertIVComm, BA (Macq), DipEd (LaTrobe), MEd (UC), GradDipPDEd (UC)
Director, RICO Training, Processes & Strategies

Tony Hoare, MHFA Trainer of Instructors
RN BA (Melb), BAppSc (LaTrobe) MNst (LaTrobe)
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
Our Supporters

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Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
The Jack Brockhoff Foundation

Individuals

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Betty Kitchener
Sydel Weinstein