A reflection and thank you for Betty
Seventeen years dedicated to Mental Health First Aid
...where the MHFA Program is now compared to 2001.

We wish to give sincere thanks to you, Betty Kitchener, for your enormous effort. Without you, none of this would have been possible. We look forward to continuing the work with you to help reach 6% of the Australian population in the next 10 years!

---

2001

- Approximately 250 people have attended a MHFA course
- 1 MHFA Instructor (Betty)
- 1 part-time staff (Betty)
- Operating only in Canberra, ACT
- Only the Standard (adults helping adults) course developed
- No awards
- No evaluation data.

2017

- Approximately 500,000 people in Australia and 2 million people world-wide have attended a MHFA course
- 3,335 MHFA Instructors have been accredited
- 24 MHFA staff and consultants
- Operating across all States and Territories in Australia and has spread to over 20 other countries
- 19 courses (9 face-to-face, 5 eLearning, 5 blended) plus Intellectual Disability and Chinese MHFA manuals. Many more courses in development!
- 20 awards to Betty and the MHFA Program
- Over 20 evaluation trials of the MHFA Program, including a meta-analysis and all published in peer review journals.
In October, Tony Jorm attends a National Workshop on Depression at the Australian National University, Canberra to develop the focus on depression under the Commonwealth Mental Health Strategy. During a break-up discussion group on community attitudes, Meg Smith coins the term ‘depression first aid’.

Later, on a dog walk with their King Charles Cavalier named King, Tony Jorm discusses the idea of a first aid course for depression and other mental illnesses with his wife Betty Kitchener, because she had experience teaching first aid courses for the Australian Red Cross, had recurrent episodes of severe depression and had faced discrimination in the workplace because of mental illness. Tony and Betty decide to try to develop such a course in their spare time on weekends and conduct it voluntarily as a service to the Canberra community. They choose to name the course Mental Health First Aid (MHFA).

1999

The Centre wants addition to ‘first aid’

KING, THE KING CHARLES CAVALIER DOG

How it all began...
2000

Because Tony and Betty do not make any progress on developing the course in their spare time, Betty decides to work one day a week as a volunteer to develop MHFA at the Australian National University (ANU).

A tender application to ACT Health is successful, funding Betty’s salary for 18 months at 4 days a week and Betty starts work at the ANU on 1st July.

A reference group is formed to guide the format of a MHFA course consisting of two mental health nurses, one psychiatrist, two teachers, one first aid instructor and three mental health consumers.

Tony and Betty write the first MHFA Manual.

The first MHFA course is run as a pilot in November to an invited group of participants in Canberra. Initially a 6-hour course, early feedback suggests that this is too brief and the course expands to 9 hours.
Betty runs numerous free 9-hour courses for the public at the ANU and for workplaces on-site.

In October, MHFA receives its first national media coverage with Norman Swan broadcasting a segment on MHFA in the Health Dimension ABC TV program.

Tony and Betty successfully apply with Richard O’Kearney of Southern Area Health Service (SAHS) for a New South Wales (NSW) Health Mental Health Promotion grant to do a randomised controlled trial of MHFA in the rural environment of south-east NSW.
BETTY WITH STAFF OF NSW SOUTHERN AREA HEALTH SERVICE, WHO WERE THE FIRST COHORT OF INSTRUCTORS, CANBERRA

FIRST ARTICLE ABOUT MHFA

FIRST BROCHURE ADVERTISING MHFA WITH THE YING YANG SYMBOL IN LOGO
By the end of June 2002 about 1,500 participants have attended a MHFA course, all trained by Betty.

Ruth Jorm redesigns the MHFA logo, replacing an original ‘ying yang symbol’ designed in 2001 with a stylised flannel flower (the Mental Health Council of Australia symbol of “Mental Health Awareness”). Ruth also designs the www.mhfa.com.au website.

In September the first 5 day Train-the-Instructor Course, is conducted by Betty at the ANU to the 6 NSW Southern Area Health Service MHFA Instructors (Karen Peterson, Tina Philip, Len Kanowski, Ian Gilfeather, Tracie Storay & Jenni Lampard).

Tony and Betty are successful in obtaining another tender from ACT Health, this time for a salary for 4 days a week for 12 months to develop and conduct a Train-the-Instructor MHFA course to 10 suitable people in the ACT.

5,000 MHFA Manuals for course participants are printed with a generous donation of $20,000 from Jennie Thomas in memory of her late husband Em Thomas who had recently died by suicide.

The first article reporting an uncontrolled trial of MHFA is published in BMC Psychiatry finding that course participants changed their beliefs about treatment to be more like those of health professionals, felt increased confidence in helping others and were more willing to help people with mental illness.

The ACT section of the Commonwealth Department of Health & Ageing provides a grant to develop Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) versions of the MHFA course and to train CALD MHFA Instructors.

In October the Commonwealth Mental Health Tasmanian Branch provides two years funding from its Suicide and Prevention Strategy to Tasmanian Division of Red Cross to train MHFA Instructors in Tasmania and facilitate the dissemination of MHFA courses throughout Tasmania.
With 6 Instructors trained, the NSW Southern Area Health Service MHFA project allows the course to be conducted for free to 800 people across this region.

Another generous donation of $22,000 from the Pivot Fertilizer Company allows 10 suitable people in rural areas to train as MHFA Instructors.

MHFA grows from a 9 hour to a 12 hour course based on feedback from course participants.

Betty is invited to Scotland to train 13 Scottish MHFA Instructors, the first overseas partner to adopt the program.

Betty received a Vice Chancellors Award for community outreach, it is the first award for Bettys MHFA work.

The MHFA Program also wins its first award, the Mental Health Promotion & Mental Illness Prevention Program Award at the National Mental Health Services (TheMHS) Conference in September.

Over the course of the year, 8 Instructor Training courses are held across ACT, Victoria, NSW and Tasmania.
Very sadly, a MHFA Instructor, Hollie Jackes, dies. Her family sets up a memorial scholarship to help fund half the fees for MHFA Instructors to train in rural areas. Eleven people are given the opportunity to be trained as Instructors via Hollie Jackes scholarships.

In late 2004, the Health Priorities and Suicide Prevention Branch of the Australian Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing provides a consultancy for the MHFA manual to be written in a form that is culturally sensitive to the Indigenous population. Len Kanowski is employed on this small consultancy. Len stays with the MHFA team until 2009 working as the Aboriginal MHFA Coordinator from 2005.

Two more articles are published reporting on randomised controlled trials of MHFA in a workplace setting and another in a rural setting.

Hong Kong adopts the program. Based on Hong Kong’s urging for the program to have a bear as a mascot, MHFA adopts a koala, called ‘ALGEE’ after the MHFA Action Plan acronym, as its mascot (the closest native animal in Australia to a bear).

The Inaugural Instructor refresher weekend is held in August in Canberra, attended by approximately 75 instructors.
A year in reflection 2005

In early 2005, Len Kanowski finalises 3 culturally and linguistically modified MHFA courses for Croatian, Vietnamese and Italian communities in Australia.

In April, the MHFA Program with a team of Prof Tony Jorm, Betty Kitchener, Claire Kelly and Len Kanowski, moves from the ANU to operating under the auspices of the Orygen Research Centre, Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne.

The Family Court of Australia obtains a National Suicide Prevention Strategy Grant for 2.5 years for a national rollout of the Family Court Mental Health Support Program. Len Kanowski is involved with the development of the mental health material and the successful pilot of this project.

Claire Kelly receives the Hugh Lydiard Fellowship from Australian Rotary Health, and works with Robyn Langlands to develop the MHFA Guidelines. Leanne Northausen also joins the team as a Program Administrator, and Frank Skender, begins providing pack/mailing services to support Instructors.

By the end of 2005, every state and territory of Australia has MHFA instructors, numbering over 300 in total.
WITH INSTRUCTORS ACCREDITED TO DELIVER CALD MHFA COURSES, MARCH

HCJP ARTICLE, APRIL

2ND HONG KONG MHFA INSTRUCTOR TRAINING DELIVERED BY BETTY

2ND HONG KONG MHFA INSTRUCTOR TRAINING DELIVERED BY BETTY
In April, The Senate Select Committee on Mental Health releases its final report: “A national approach to mental health – from crisis to community.” The enquiry is one of the largest and most comprehensive investigations into the state of mental health in Australia. The Committee recommends that 6% of the population be trained in MHFA, targeting those with the greatest probability of coming in contact with mental health issues – teachers, police, welfare workers and family carers. They also recommend rural police and ambulance services as a high priority for MHFA training.

A large research project continues to develop MHFA Guidelines which cover how to help people in various crisis situations, as well as the best first aid for developing mental disorders. The Guidelines are developed using systematic reviews of the scientific evidence and the consensus of panels of clinical experts, consumers and carers. Over several years, funding is sourced from Australian Rotary Health, National Health and Medical Research Centre (NHMRC), beyondblue and National Centre Prevention of Cannabis (NCPIC).

Betty and Tony write the Edition 1 Youth MHFA Manual aimed at adults working or living with adolescents.

50,000 MHFA manuals are printed since its first release in September 2002.

MHFA continues to expand with Canada, England, Finland, and Singapore adopting the MHFA program.

Instructors who run more than 30 courses are recognised as Master Instructors.

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) funds the Mental Health Council of Australia to co-ordinate the development of an e-learning MHFA course about helping people with mental illness in the workplace. This CD contains material from the 12-hour MHFA course as well as information about employment issues for people with mental illness.

Funding is provided from the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant to conduct the first evaluation of the Youth MHFA course - a randomised controlled trial of a modified Youth MHFA course for high school teachers in partnership with the South Australian Dept Education and Community Services.

The MHFA Training and Research Program receive Public Health Programs Award from VIC Health Minister Bronwyn Pike.
Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH) provides funding for a national roll out of the Aboriginal MHFA Program. The Funding provides 120 scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from OATSIH funded organisations to train as Instructors, a full time Aboriginal Administrative Assistant for 18 months, an Aboriginal MHFA Trainer and a part-time Research Assistant for 12 months to help evaluate the program. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid Program is officially launched in February with a 5-day Train-the-Instructor course held in Orange, NSW.

In April, the Youth Mental Health First Aid Program is launched with a 3-day YMHFA Train the Instructor course for existing accredited MHFA Instructors with some funding from the Australian Dept Health and Ageing under a National Suicide Prevention Community Based Grant.

By mid 2007, the MHFA website has over 70,000 visits annually.

Four Master Instructors (Gloria Claessen, Susan Goldie, Tony Hoare and Narelle Heywood), form a National MHFA Training Team to conduct the Train-the-Instructor program.

In September, the inaugural Vietnamese MHFA Instructor Training is conducted in Melbourne.

Work begins on developing MHFA Guidelines for Indigenous Australians with some funding from the beyondblue Victorian Centre of Excellence.

Wales adopts the MHFA program.

The MHFA team grows with Valentina Popvska joining the MHFA team as the Standard MHFA Program Administrator, (until July 12), Chris Scanlan as the first Youth MHFA Coordinator (until July 08), Kara Eddington as the Aboriginal MHFA Trainer (until October 08) and Rhys Kinsey as the Aboriginal MHFA Administrator (until July 10).
MHFA wins its first international award at the National Council for Behavioural Healthcare Annual Conference in Boston on 2 May 2008, for excellence in Mental Health Education.

On Australia Day, Betty Kitchener is awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for her efforts in developing and disseminating MHFA.

MHFA is introduced in Japan, New Zealand (Maaori) and the USA.

Dr Claire Kelly takes on the role of Youth Mental Health First Aid Coordinator.
Northern Ireland and South Africa adopt the program.

The 1st edition Intellectual Disability Mental Health First Aid Manual is launched as a supplement to the generic MHFA Manual.

At the 19th annual TheMHS conference in September, Betty Kitchener is awarded the Exceptional Contribution to Mental Health Services Award to “honour the outstanding innovation and dedication to mental health services through the creation of the Mental Health First Aid Training program, and through untiring commitment to the development of the program in Australia and globally”.

Professor Tony Jorm is awarded a Australia Fellowship with a component focusing on MHFA research.

Katherine Birt joins the MHFA Team as a Youth MHFA Program Administrator (until 2016).
The 2nd edition MHFA curriculum of the Standard (formerly called Adult) and Youth courses are launched in February, based on the International MHFA Guidelines. With help from a grant from the Department of Health and Ageing, one-day Edition 2 Up-Skill (E2U) Workshops are held across Australia all year, from Broome to Alice Springs, and Townsville to Orange.

The Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) – a research centre linked to Newcastle University – based in Orange NSW, in partnership with the Greater Western Area Health Service (GWAHS), take over the delivery and maintenance of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA (AMHFA) program.

MHFA Australia, England, Canada, Singapore and USA present together in a symposium at the 6th World Conference on the Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders in Washington DC, 17-19 November.

The MHFA Program is chosen as one of 10 case studies in a UK report on ‘Radical efficiency’ in action across the world. ‘Radical efficiency’ is about different, better and lower cost public services – innovation that delivers much better public outcomes for much lower cost.

The MHFA Program is taken to Sweden, China and Nepal.

A year in reflection 2010

GLORIA AND BETTY, EDITION 2 UP-SKILL, BROOME

THE 1ST MHFA INSTRUCTORS REUNION IN HONG KONG
Ten year anniversary
2011

beyondblue provides funding to develop a Chinese MHFA program for Chinese speaking Australians.

Dr Laura Hart, who previously had worked on the development of the ATSI MHFA Guidelines is employed as the teenMHFA Program Coordinator to develop a teen version of the program. Nataly Bovopoulos joins the team, as the Program Manager, to ensure the continuing expansion of the program in Australia and Internationally, while providing high level executive support, strategic guidance and operational management.

Betty Kitchener is inducted into the Victorian Women’s Honour Roll at the National Gallery of Victoria as part of International Women’s Day activities.

In August, the Aboriginal MHFA Program moves back to MHFA Headquarters in Melbourne.

MHFA reaches a 10 year milestone with over 170,000 first aiders. representing 1% of the Australian adult population, have been trained and 15 other countries have adapted the program for their own cultures. Between September 2002 and August 2011, 1,987 people have been accredited as MHFA Instructors; currently there are 965 accredited MHFA Instructors across Australia. An editorial is published in the Australian New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry marking this landmark achievement.

‘Mental Health First Aid International’ trading as ‘Mental Health First Aid Australia’ is incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee in September 2011 with deductible gift recipient status and governed by a Board of Directors comprising of the following volunteers, Prof Tony Jorm (Chair), Betty Kitchener, Dr Claire Kelly, Prof Andrew McKinnon and Susan Goldie (with Nataly Bovopoulos as Company Secretary). The intention is that it will become the future home of the MHFA Program instead of its auspiced position.

MHFA training reaches 1% of Australian adults

For personal use only.

FIRST MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, NOVEMBER

SUITE UP AND RIDE EVENT

BETTY WITH SOME OF THE TEAM AT VIC WOMENS HONOUR ROLE EVENT

FREE ICECREAMS
A big year of reflection for 2012

The new company Mental Health First Aid Australia is 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. The company is one of three organisations to receive funding and is contracted to develop and disseminate training for financial counselors, medical students and nursing students over three years.

Additional funding comes from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid Program over two years.

The company signs a three-year lease in an office space in Parkville in the same building as Frank Skender at FS Pack and Mail Services who manages MHFA stock and dispatch.

On the 6th August 2012 six staff working on the MHFA Program resign from their previous positions at the University of Melbourne and begin to work for MHFA Australia at new premises in Parkville. These staff being Betty Kitchener (now in the CEO position), Dr Claire Kelly (Youth Programs Manager), Leanne Northausen (Finance Officer), Nataly Bovopoulos (Deputy CEO), Katherine Birt (Communications Officer) and Louise Woodruff Sanz (Program Officer – Standard and Youth). The day is nicknamed ‘The Great Escape’ and it’s anniversary is celebrated every year as ‘Algee’s Birthday’ thereafter.

Four more staff are appointed in September and October 2012 these being Maria Ibarra (nee Vaid) (Program Officer – AMHFA), Kathy Bond (Research Assistant), Kathryn Chalmers (Research Assistant) and AJ Williams (AMHFA Program Coordinator).

Instructor Training recommences around Australia and work commences on updating the Standard and Youth MHFA Programs from 2nd to 3rd edition and developing the teen MHFA Program.

The inaugural annual Mental Health First Aid Australia Awards are launched to showcase the inspiring commitment and achievements of those involved conducting MHFA Courses across Australia. Over 40 nominations are received and six winners and three Certificate of Commendation across four award categories are recognised at a ceremony during the 7th Annual MHFA instructors Conference in Melbourne in September 2012.

The Jack Brockhoff Foundation provides funding for the developing of film clips for the teen MHFA Program.

In September 2012 Betty Kitchener travels to Riyadh the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to deliver and consult with some mental health professionals about the MHFA KSA Program.
POPULATION MENTAL HEALTH GROUP AND MHFA CHRISTMAS PICNIC

MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AND MHFA TEAMS FEBRUARY 2012

INAUGURAL MHFA AWARDS AT 7TH ANNUAL MHFA INSTRUCTOR CONFERENCE

MHFA TEAM AT THE 7TH ANNUAL MHFA INSTRUCTOR CONFERENCE
The great escape!
4th August 2012
The MHFA Program is added to SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

Three staff join MHFA Australia - Brendan O’Keefe, Technical Support Officer – eLearning, Emiliano Fernandes, Assistant Accountant, Chrisi Kirova, Program Officer for Youth and Frontline MHFA Programs.

Black Dog Ride to the Red Centre raises $350,000 shared between Mental Health First Aid Australia and Lifeline.

Danish Mental Health Foundation, Copenhagen adopts and adapts the MHFA Program.

In August 2013, Edition 3 Youth and Standard Courses are launched, incorporating changes to diagnostic criteria in the Fifth Edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5).

Tailored eLearning and 2-day face-to-face training is launched for medical students, nursing students and financial counselors.

A workbook for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Program is published.

Guidelines for providing mental health first aid for financial counselors helping clients with financial difficulties and a mental health problem and for helping Aboriginal adolescents are completed.

The teen MHFA program for adolescents in Years 10-12 helping their peers is developed, piloted and successfully evaluated.

By the end of 2013, at least 225,000 adults have attended a MHFA course in Australia since 2001, representing 1.2% of the Australian population aged 15 years and over.
6 MONTHS SINCE THE GREAT ESCAPE THANK YOU LUNCH, FEBRUARY

1ST ‘ALGEES BIRTHDAY’ BOARD DINNER, AUGUST

BETTY ON THE BLACK DOG RIDE NYNGAN, AUGUST

BETTY AND TONY WITH WINNERS OF 2ND ANNUAL MHFA AWARDS, SEPTEMBER

BLACK DOG RIDE BIG CHEQUE PRESENTATION, SEPTEMBER

KOREAN VISITORS TO THE MHFA OFFICE, MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER
In collaboration with Prof Tony Jorm’s research team at the University of Melbourne, Guidelines for providing mental health first aid to someone experiencing suicidal thoughts and behaviour and non-suicidal self-injury are re-developed.

A supplementary booklet on how to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescents (based on guidelines published in 2013) is published.

An evaluation of the tailored eLearning and face-to-face MHFA Courses for medical students, nursing students and financial counselors is completed.

Swedish researchers publish a systematic review and meta-analysis of 15 of the major MHFA trials. This is the best type of evaluation that can be undertaken to assess how effective an intervention is. Highly statistically significant improvements are found in knowledge, attitudes and helping behavior.

teen MHFA 3-day Instructor Training Program begins to roll-out nationally led by Dr Claire Kelly.

The MHFA Instructor Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program is re-launched to provide Instructors with flexible options to accumulate 2 required CPD points each year including webcasts and state-based workshops.

David Jorm (Betty and Tony’s son) who developed and supported the Web Instructor Management System over many years recommends that the website be redesigned to support future growth. Led by consultant Drupal Developer Tim Marwick, the MHFA website and Web Instructor Management System (WIMS) is re-launched using a new online operation system (Drupal) to allow for more sophisticated functionality and support eLearning courses.

The Youth MHFA Program receives recognition with the Program winning The Mental Health Services (ThMHS) Silver Achievement Award and Youth Programs Manager Dr Claire Kelly winning the Depression & Anxiety Consumer Research Unit (CRU) Medal, funded by the National Institute for Mental Health Research at the Australian National University (ANU).

The Victorian State Government Department of Health funds the provision of MHFA training to Victorian community groups.

Black Dog Ride raises over $164,000, contributing towards the roll-out of teen MHFA in disadvantaged secondary schools across Australia.

Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation provides funding to develop guidelines for the public in supporting gamblers to seek help and recover.

Myer Foundation provides funding (2014-2015) to develop the Junior teen MHFA Course.

In collaboration with Professor Tony Jorm’s research team at the University of Melbourne the following funding is procured:

- NHMRC project grant won to evaluate MHFA in the Workplace via eLearning and blended models (combination of eLearning and face-to-face training)
- Australian Rotary Health grant awarded to undertake a pilot randomised controlled trial of teen MHFA training in upper secondary schools in Victoria, also in collaboration with Dr Laura Hart at the University of Melbourne
- NHMRC project grant won for the development and evaluation of gatekeeper training to improve the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to prevent youth suicide.

The MHFA Australia Program spreads to Pakistan, the Republic of Ireland and New Zealand.

US Congress funds President Barack Obama’s ‘Now is the Time’ Plan, which recommends financing of MHFA for adults (i.e. teachers) who interact with youth.

The MHFA team continues to expand with three new members: Belinda Azzaro (nee Hood) as Marketing and Fundraising Officer, Yat Fung Yiu (Sunny) as Drupal Developer and DevOps Engineer, and Katrina Dart as a Consultant Trainer of Instructors for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Program.

A year in reflection 2014
Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a standardized, psychoeducational programme developed to empower the public to approach, support and refer individuals in distress by improving course participants' knowledge, attitudes, and helping behaviours related to mental ill-health. The present paper aims to synthesize published evaluations of the MHFA programme in a meta-analysis to estimate its effects and potential as a public mental health awareness-increasing strategy.

**Background**

Mental health problems are major contributors to the global burden of disease, with major depression and anxiety disorders accounting for 7.4% of the global burden of disease (WHO, 2013). In the European Union (EU) alone, the number of people with a diagnosable and treatable condition, or in regions where professional care is available, only 20% receive treatment over the course of a year (Wang et al., 2007). There are various putative explanations for this. Individuals with mental health problems may be unaware that they are experiencing a serious case of mental disorder, or in regions where professional care is available, only 20% receive treatment over the course of a year (Wang et al., 2007). The general public might be unaware of how it can be accessed. The general public might be unaware of how it can be accessed.

Mental Health First Aid is an effective public health intervention for improving knowledge, attitudes, and helping behaviours: A meta-analysis

GERGÖ Ö      HADLACZKY  ,       SEBASTIAN     HÖKBY  ,       ANAHIT     MKRTCHIAN  ,       VLADIMIR     CARLI &         DANUTA     WASSERMAN  

National Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention of Mental Ill-Health, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden

**Abstract**

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a standardized, psychoeducational programme developed to empower the public to approach, support and refer individuals in distress by improving course participants' knowledge, attitudes, and helping behaviours related to mental ill-health. The present paper aims to synthesize published evaluations of the MHFA programme in a meta-analysis to estimate its effects and potential as a public mental health awareness-increasing strategy.

Fifteen relevant papers were identified through a systematic literature search. Standardized effect sizes were calculated for three different outcome measures: change in knowledge, attitudes, and helping behaviours. The results of the meta-analysis suggested no systematic bias or differences in results related to study design (with or without control group) or publication quality. The MHFA programme appears recommendable for public health action.

**Background**

Mental health problems are major contributors to the global burden of disease, with major depression and anxiety disorders accounting for 7.4% of the global burden of disease (WHO, 2013). In the European Union (EU) alone, the number of people with a diagnosable and treatable condition, or in regions where professional care is available, only 20% receive treatment over the course of a year (Wang et al., 2007). There are various putative explanations for this. Individuals with mental health problems may be unaware that they are experiencing a serious case of mental disorder, or in regions where professional care is available, only 20% receive treatment over the course of a year (Wang et al., 2007). The general public might be unaware of how it can be accessed. The general public might be unaware of how it can be accessed.

Mental Health First Aid is an effective public health intervention for improving knowledge, attitudes, and helping behaviours: A meta-analysis

GERGÖ Ö      HADLACZKY  ,       SEBASTIAN     HÖKBY  ,       ANAHIT     MKRTCHIAN  ,       VLADIMIR     CARLI &         DANUTA     WASSERMAN  

National Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention of Mental Ill-Health, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden

**Abstract**

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a standardized, psychoeducational programme developed to empower the public to approach, support and refer individuals in distress by improving course participants' knowledge, attitudes, and helping behaviours related to mental ill-health. The present paper aims to synthesize published evaluations of the MHFA programme in a meta-analysis to estimate its effects and potential as a public mental health awareness-increasing strategy.

Fifteen relevant papers were identified through a systematic literature search. Standardized effect sizes were calculated for three different outcome measures: change in knowledge, attitudes, and helping behaviours. The results of the meta-analysis suggested no systematic bias or differences in results related to study design (with or without control group) or publication quality. The MHFA programme appears recommendable for public health action.

**Background**

Mental health problems are major contributors to the global burden of disease, with major depression and anxiety disorders accounting for 7.4% of the global burden of disease (WHO, 2013). In the European Union (EU) alone, the number of people with a diagnosable and treatable condition, or in regions where professional care is available, only 20% receive treatment over the course of a year (Wang et al., 2007). There are various putative explanations for this. Individuals with mental health problems may be unaware that they are experiencing a serious case of mental disorder, or in regions where professional care is available, only 20% receive treatment over the course of a year (Wang et al., 2007). The general public might be unaware of how it can be accessed. The general public might be unaware of how it can be accessed.
Betty is appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her MHFA work on 28th January 2015 and also receives the Chancellor’s Alumni Award at the University of Canberra in September 2015.

Three new tailored courses are launched for professional groups: eLearning MHFA in the Pharmacy, Blended MHFA in the White-Collar Workplace, and Blended MHFA for the International Legal Industry.

In April, the Mental Health First Aid Skilled Workplaces Initiative is launched to recognize and rewards workplaces that roll out MHFA courses for their employees. Fifty-nine workplaces apply and receive recognition during 2015.

The Mental Health First Aid International Manual is published for people living in developed countries, which have establish mental health care systems equivalent in standard to those in Australia and where the culture could be described as Western.

Guidelines for providing mental health first aid to people with mental health problems and financial difficulties, gambling problems and to a confused older person are published.

By mid-2015 a milestone is reached with more than one million MHFAiders trained worldwide since the MHFA Program began in 2000.

MHFA Australia receives three large donations – 1) The Black Dog Ride raises $145,583 to be used to fund delivery of Youth and teen MHFA Programs in disadvantaged high schools across Australia; 2) Lendlease donates $80,000 to develop films for the MHFA for the Older Person Program and 3) at the Christmas Traveleague function, 820 delegates raise more than $19,000 for MHFA Australia.

The Australian Government Department of Health extends its grant for training of select frontline workers in MHFA.

Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet provides funding to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Program.

A 3-year online accreditation program is launched for MHFAiders in Australia and over 4,000 people are accredited as MHFAiders by the end of the year.

In September 2015, the inaugural 2-day MHFA International Summit is held in Vancouver, hosted by the MHFA Canada Program within the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC). Eight overseas MHFA Programs are represented by 22 delegates from Australia, Bermuda, Canada, England, Finland, Ireland, Japan and the USA.

Malta and the Netherlands take on the MHFA program and Japan and Northern Ireland update their course materials to be consistent with 3rd edition MHFA Australia materials.

Six more people join the MHFA Australia team - Ailsa Krefft as Program Officer, Hanee Gem O’Keefe casual office support, Nicholas Lye as Drupal Developer, Emma Carey as PA to the CEO, Nathan Campbell as Consultant Trainer of Instructors for the AMHFA Program and Angus Clelland as Company Secretary to the Board.

By the end of 2015, over 2% of the Australian adult population have been trained in a MHFA course.
A year in reflection
2016

Over the year five new courses are launched: Blended MHFA for Tertiary Students, 4-hour MHFA for the Suicidal Person, eLearning for Australian Multinational Organisations, eLearning MHFA for the Australian Legal Industry Course, and eLearning MHFA for the International Legal Industry Course.

The ‘Principles for Working with People with Mental Health Problems and Financial Hardship’ are published, endorsed by RANZCP, RACGP, ACMHN, MHA, FCA, RFiGroup and the RFi Roundtable.

Guidelines for providing mental health first aid to co-workers, to a LGBTIQ person, to an Aboriginal young person experiencing suicidal thoughts and behaviours and non-suicidal self-injury and Aboriginal people experiencing gambling problems are published.

Victorian State Government Department of Health provides funding to deliver MHFA training in areas affected by the dairy crisis.

Work commences on the Edition 4 Standard and Youth MHFA Manuals and teaching materials.

Betty is awarded a University of NSW alumni award in May and is one of seven finalists out of 130 nominations for the inaugural Australian Mental Health Prize.

MHFA Australia launch a web portal to all MHFA Programs around the world: www.mhfainternational.org

The Ian Potter Foundation grants funding for a pilot evaluation of the teen 7-9 MHFA course. The 1st Edition teen MHFA manual for Years 7-9 and the 2nd Edition teen MHFA manual for Years 10-12 are also published.

A 5-year NHMRC Project Grant for the evaluation of teen MHFA Program is successful.

‘Cause we Can’ raise $18,000 at their annual Mind Matters Ball for MHFA Australia, which goes towards developing a new film for the Edition 4 Youth MHFA Course.

The World Federation for Mental Health set the theme for 2016 World Mental Health Day to be ‘Dignity in Mental Health: Psychological and Mental Health First Aid for All.’

MHFA Australia launch a campaign for Mental Health Week with the theme ‘Across Australia there is a Mental Health First Aid Course for everyone, everywhere’ with a video featuring Instructors across Australia.

The team continues to grow. Margi MacGregor commences as a Youth and Standard Consultant Trainer of Instructors, Denise Warmington as Youth and teen MHFA Instructor Coordinator, Fiona Blee as Adult Programs Manager, Maddison Watts as Program Coordinator, Rene Hostettler as a Drupal Developer, and Spencer Lai as Administrator and Customer Service Support.

The MHFA Australia voluntary Board of Directors comprises of Tony Jorm (Chair), Annette Weier (Vice-Chair), Betty Kitchener, Tony Natoli, Krystian Siebert, Felicity Dougherty and Ben Stretch, with Angus Clelland as Company Secretary.

By the end of 2016:

• the MHFA website www.mhfa.com.au is receiving on average 140,000 page views per month.

• there are more than 1,300 Accredited MHFA Instructors across Australia.

• over 500,000 Australians trained in MHFA (40,000 who have become accredited MHFAiders).

• worldwide the number of people trained in MHFA is approaching 2 million.

The future for Mental Health First Aid looks bright!
TONY, PM MALCOLM TURNBULL, BETTY AND ITA BUTTROSE AT INAUGURAL AUSTRALIAN MENTAL HEALTH PRIZE AWARDS, SYDNEY

BETTY, TONY & LUCKY AT CHRISTMAS PICNIC, DECEMBER

SOME OF THE MHFA TEAM AT MINDMATTERS CHEQUE PRESENTATION

AILSA SINGS CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT CHRISTMAS PICNIC, DECEMBER

TONY, PM MALCOLM TURNBULL, BETTY AND ITA BUTTROSE AT INAUGURAL AUSTRALIAN MENTAL HEALTH PRIZE AWARDS, SYDNEY

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID AUSTRALIA TEAM, DECEMBER
Recognition and Milestones

BETTY’S FIRST AWARD FOR HER MHFA WORK, 2004

TONY AND BETTY ON THE DAY SHE RECEIVED HER OAM, ON THE VERY SPOT WHERE THEY FIRST DISCUSSED MHFA IN COULTER DRIVE, WEETANGERA ACT, 2008

LEN AND BETTY WITH TheMHS AWARD, 2007

BETTY AND TONY WITH LIFE AWARD, 2007

US NATIONAL COUNCIL OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE AWARD, 2008

BETTY RECEIVING AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AWARD, 2010

VARIABLES PHOTOS ABOVE FROM 2015 SUMMIT, VANCOUVER, CANADA
BETTY AND TONY, MOONEE VALLEY LEADER, 2010

SEPTEMBER 21 | 2010

VICTORIAN SENIOR AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS, 2013

BETTY WEARING HER MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA MEDAL, 2016

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA ALUMNI AWARDS, 2016

MHFA TEAM AND POPULATION MENTAL HEALTH GROUP AT ONE MILLIONTH MHFAIDER CELEBRATION

VICTORIAN WOMANS HONOUR ROLL AWARDS CEREMONY, 2011

VICTORIAN SENIOR AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS, 2013

FIGHTING BACK RAISING AWARENESS OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

INCORPORATING www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au
Betty in Action

2nd Hong Kong MHFA Instructor Training by Betty, 2005

Betty Speaking at the 8th Annual Instructor Conference, 2013

Betty in Scotland, 2003

Betty Teaching Sometime Before 2005

Betty Presenting to Canadian Senators in Ottawa, 2013

Betty Mapping Where Courses Have Been Run at the 7th Annual Instructor Conference, 2012
BETTY OPENING THE INAUGURAL MHFA INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT, 2015

7TH ANNUAL MHFA INSTRUCTOR CONFERENCE, 2013

SOME OF THE TEAM AT FINANCIAL DELPHI WIP, 2013

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY WORKSHOP FOR TENANTS, 2014

FIRST BLENDED COURSE FOR THE WHITE COLLAR WORKPLACE, 2014
Photo shoots over the years!
Happy 1st Birthday ALGEE!