Welcome to the fourth edition of the Mental Health First Aid International Newsletter. This edition was produced by Mental Health First Aid Australia. It features the latest news from MHFA organisations across the globe. We hope you enjoy reading about the progress and spread of MHFA across the world as much as we did!

In this newsletter - we have featured news from 18 of the 26 MHFA International organisations (23 of which are currently active in running MHFA Courses).

Thank you to all those who responded to our Q & A Survey.

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Our Vision is a community where everyone has the first aid skills to support people with mental health problems.

Our Mission is to provide high quality, evidenced based mental health first aid education to everyone.
Mental Health First Aid originated on a dog walk. While Betty Kitchener and her husband Professor Tony Jorm walked their King Charles Cavalier in the late 90s, they developed what would go on to form the basis of the Mental Health First Aid Program.

In 2001, Betty and Tony began writing the first edition Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Manual and accompanying course. Since then, the MHFA Program has been developed, evaluated and disseminated nationally and internationally.

As of April 2015, we have a total of 1,372 accredited MHFA Instructors who are actively delivering courses across Australia. We estimate that over 230,000 Australian people have completed a MHFA Course. Australia’s population is over 23 million, so we still have a way to go in achieving our vision of a community where everyone has the first aid skills to support people with mental health problems.

Course Development

In 2010, we developed the Second Edition Standard, Youth and Aboriginal MHFA Programs to include expert consensus guidelines in giving MHFA for various mental health problems and crises (See the Resources menu of our website www.mhfa.com.au). The Third Edition Standard and Youth MHFA Courses, launched in 2013, include updated terminology of DSM 5 and current information about treatments conforming to the latest clinical practice guidelines.

Currently, Mental Health First Aid Australia offers a diverse array of MHFA Courses. The Standard MHFA Course (Third Edition) has been tailored to suit the needs of specific groups, including medical students, nursing students and financial counsellors. These courses are offered both face-to-face and online, via our newly launched eLearning platform.

Our Standard MHFA Course has also been tailored for helping adults with intellectual disability, Chinese people living in Australia, and Vietnamese people living in Australia. We also offer a Youth MHFA Course (Third Edition), and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Course (Second Edition). More recently, we developed and launched the teen MHFA Course, which teaches adolescents who are approximately 15 to 18 years of age the first aid skills to help their peers. At present, we are rolling this out in schools across Australia, whilst concurrently delivering the Youth MHFA Course to school staff and parents.

Recent Developments

NEW MHFA App for iPhone and Android - This app provides key information about MHFA. This handy resource in your pocket is for members of the public and those who have already completed an MHFA course. It’s free to download:
- Download iPhone app: http://bit.ly/iPhoneMHFA

Web Instructor Management System (WIMS)

Over the last two years, we have substantially upgraded our online system to capture all data from MHFA Courses conducted across Australia.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program for MHFA Instructors

Previously, we held a MHFA Instructors Conference in Melbourne every year, and Instructors were required to attend at least once every three years to maintain their accreditation. As of 1st February 2014, we replaced this with a more varied CPD Program including state-based workshops each year, and ongoing webcasts. In order to retain their annual accreditation, our Instructors are required to attend a 1-day state-based workshop at least once every three years and acquire 2 MHFA CPD points each year. So far this new program has been running smoothly. MHFA Instructors now also pay a $100 annual membership fee.

NEW eLearning courses

We have developed three new eLearning courses, with blended versions of these courses currently in development. We are aiming to launch these later in 2015. For each of these courses, we have developed tailored case-studies, videos and resources.

eLearning MHFA for Pharmacy: teaching pharmacists and pharmacy staff how to assist a customer who is developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

eLearning MHFA for the White Collar Workplace: teaching managers, supervisors and individuals how to assist a person who is developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

eLearning MHFA for Tertiary Students: teaching tertiary students how to assist a peer who is developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

Skilled MHFA Workplaces Initiative

This month we launched the Mental Health First Aid Skilled Workplaces Initiative to recognise and reward the many workplaces across Australia that are doing a wonderful job in increasing mental health literacy by rolling out MHFA Courses for employees. Organisations are invited to apply for recognition under the initiative, which has three tiers:

- Gold: The organisation maintains a ratio of 20% of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff with a current MHFA certificate.
- Silver: The organisation maintains a ratio of 20% of FTE staff with a current MHFA certificate.
- Bronze: The organisation maintains a ratio of 5% of FTE staff with a current MHFA certificate.

Recognition of Betty and MHFA Program

Betty Kitchener received a prestigious Member of the Order of Australia (AM) Award on Australia Day 2015, in recognition of her work developing the MHFA Program.

Betty was also named one of Australia’s most influential women in the The Australian Financial Review and Westpac 100 Women of Influence Awards, which are dedicated to recognising and celebrating influential women across Australia.

The Youth MHFA Program received a Silver TheMHS Award, in recognition of best practice, excellence and innovation in the development and dissemination of the Youth MHFA Course across Australia.

More info about MHFA Australia’s awards on our website: www.mhfa.com.au/our-impact/awards

www.mhfa.com.au Approx 230,000 trained since 2001!
Mental Health First Aid Bermuda

Contributors:
Dr Cherita Rayner, Psychologist and MHFA Coordinator and
Dr Shawnee Basden, Psychologist and MHFA Coordinator

MHFA Bermuda was formed at the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute, the mental health arm of the Bermuda Hospitals Board. The program was launched in October 2012. We wanted to bring an education program to the island that was community oriented, that would provide accurate and practical information, and that would decrease mental health stigma. Since 2012, there has been enthusiasm for participation in MHFA training and widespread knowledge of the course in Bermuda.

Our program receives funding from participants purchasing the training materials and from the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute. We currently offer the Standard MHFA Course in English.

We have three accredited MHFA Instructors who have trained 150 individuals and held 15 courses since 2012. The participants have been from health agencies, child and and older adult welfare agencies, nursing homes, corrections, education providers, local religious and community groups.


Mental Health First Aid Canada

Contributor:
Louise Bradley, President and CEO, Mental Health Commission of Canada

The MHFA Program was launched in Canada in 2006. In addition to offering the Youth MHFA Course, we have also developed a tailored version for the Aboriginal peoples in Northern Canada (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit), called MHFA for Northern Peoples. We have also developed MHFA Basic, which is essentially the Standard MHFA Course adapted for the Canadian context.

MHFA has spread rapidly since its initial launch in Canada in 2006 and its adoption by the Mental Health Commission of Canada in 2010.

Almost 150,000 trained since 2006!

Mental Health First Aid Cambodia

Contributor:
Mr Vith Kimly, Training Manager, Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO), Cambodia

In 2009, we sought the MHFA Program for Cambodia given it is a developing country and there are very limited resources and experts in mental health. There is consensus amongst Cambodian people, including mental health professionals, that MHFA would greatly assist our community. Also, Dr Angelina Chan from MHFA Singapore, a friend of TPO Cambodia, introduced MHFA to TPO and initiated contact with MHFA Australia in order to get an agreement signed.

Unfortunately we have faced some barriers in setting up the MHFA program and have not yet begun delivering MHFA Courses. We have trained the Instructors, finalised our MHFA Manual and developed some training materials. We are in the process of developing our teaching notes for trainers, and some visual aids and are currently seeking funding to support this work.

In addition to sourcing funding for our teaching and training materials, our future plan is to set-up the complete structure for this program and deliver training to our community. We also plan to train more MHFA Instructors in Cambodia.
Contributor:
Malou Laursen, Project Manager, MHFA Denmark

Since adapting the MHFA Australia Program in July 2013, MHFA Denmark, coordinated by the Danish Mental Health Foundation, have educated 120 instructors and 1200 MHFAiders. Our instructors come from a variety of places: about 50% have their own private businesses, 25% work in a municipality, 10% in a private organisation, 20% work for an NGO and the rest we don’t know.

In the Danish Mental Health Foundation, we are busy getting our MHFA website and App developed. We hope to launch these by May 2015.

In the future, we are hoping to further develop and tailor the MHFA Program for certain groups of employees, including occupational health and safety officers and managers.

We look forward to sharing our future developments with the International MHFA community.

Mental Health First Aid England

www.mhfaengland.com

Contributor:
Bernice Cole, Finance & Operations Director, MHFA England CIC

Formed in 2006, MHFA England is a social-enterprise organisation based in London. Our team currently comprises 11 full-time and one part-time staff, as well as a rolling volunteer placement, a PR consultant, an HR consultant, 15 national trainers of Instructors and 53 MHFA Workplace Associates (contractors).

In addition to offering Standard and Youth MHFA Courses, we have developed several modified and tailored MHFA Courses including Standard Lite (an introductory course), MHFA Workplace (see one of the resources pictured above), MHFA for those with learning disabilities ‘Look After Your Mental Health’, and Armed Forces MHFA. Other developments include our National Open College Network - which is an external accredited version of the Standard and Youth MHFA courses. All of our courses are available in English, braille, large print, and British sign language. The Armed Forces MHFA Course is also available in Welsh.

Most of our income is generated through selling MHFA Manuals, delivering Instructor Training Courses, membership fees, professional development events and increasingly mental health consultancy under our Workplace Program. The exception is the Armed Forces MHFA Program - this has been government funded to train 180 Instructors and 6600 Armed Forces MHFAiders. In February 2014, we also began a business upscaling model to grow the organisation and develop a consultancy arm.

The progress of MHFA in England has been phenomenal since we adopted the program. To date, we have trained 1000 instructors who have trained over 75,000 MHFAiders across England.

We market our courses through our website, Twitter, Instructor and MHFAider monthly newsletters and some targeted media campaigns.

Our program has received quite a lot of media interest. For example, our marketing manager was interviewed on Armed Forces TV and our CEO was interviewed by BBC radio stations in the South West. Various articles and/or comments on mental health and MHFA England have been published in the Guardian, Times Online, HR Review, HR Magazine, One in Four, Mental Health Today and Veterans World.

In February 2014, MHFA England hosted the Third Annual MHFA Awards event at the House of Lords along with our patron Lord Kamlesh Patel of Bradford OBE. The event recognised the achievements of both Instructors and commissioners in mental health literacy. The event was very well received with award winners feeling proud that their achievements had been recognised.

We have designed and delivered over 13 Instructor professional development events attended by approximately 151 instructors. Some instructors have gone on to develop their own CPD events including 1/2 day on Substance Misuse.
Mental Health First Aid Hong Kong

www.mhfa.org.hk

Contributor:
Prudence Wong, Chief Officer of the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong

The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong started running MHFA in 2004, prompted by our mission to start promoting mental health. Our team consists of two staff members who are responsible for coordination, and one staff member responsible for logistical support. Our program is funded by self-financing and donations. We currently offer Chinese adaptations of the Third Edition Standard and Youth MHFA Courses.

The progress of MHFA Hong Kong has been stable. We have trained over 200 Instructors, with 170 currently accredited to deliver MHFA Courses. Most of our Instructors are social workers, student counsellors, clinical psychologists, and nurses. Eighty percent of our Instructors work for the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong. So far, our Instructors have trained approximately 25,000 people in Hong Kong!

We typically run the 5-day MHFA Instructor Training Courses twice a year. For the first two days, we run the Standard MHFA course, and on the third and fourth day we deliver speciality talks on psychosis, affective disorders, psychological treatments, community resources and substance abuse. On the last day, trainee Instructors are assessed. We also offer a 3.5 day Youth MHFA Instructor Training Course. The first two days we deliver the Youth MHFA Course and host speciality talks over 1.5 days.

Future developments include cooperating with Hong Kong Institute of Education to deliver Youth MHFA Courses to every teaching student. We are also planning on undertaking an evaluation study of the effectiveness of the Youth MHFA Course.

Mental Health First Aid Ireland (Republic)

Contributor:
Dolores Keating, Project Manager for MHFA Ireland
Head of Pharmacy, Saint John of God Hospital, Stillorgan, Co Dublin

My interest in the MHFA Program began when I was researching mental health training for pharmacy students and discovered MHFA. Lisa Shanahan, who had undertaken research on the MHFA Course in the Irish setting, suggested our organisation roll the program out in Ireland. When we looked into the course it was clear that it was something that would be extremely valuable in Ireland and Saint John of God Hospital did not hesitate in applying for the license with MHFA Australia.

We are still in the process of setting up our MHFA Program, and have been in consultation with our colleagues in Northern Ireland during this process. The adaptation of the materials is in progress and we are running pilot courses in March 2015. Our start-up costs are being covered by Saint John of God Hospital and we hope to apply for research grants and government funds in the future. We plan to make the program widely available throughout Ireland and look forward to updating you on our progress.

www.mhfa.com.au
Mental Health First Aid Japan

Contributor: Yuriko Suzuki MD, MPH, PhD
National Institute of Mental Health, NCNP Department of Adult Mental Health Section chief of disaster mental health

MHFA Japan launched in Tokyo in 2006. We sought MHFA for our country as there were no standardised programs on how to offer first aid to a person who may have a mental health problem. Currently, our program is funded by a research grant.

In addition to offering the Standard MHFA Course in Japanese, we have developed a sole depression and suicide component and nationally disseminated this as a suicide prevention program run by the Cabinet Office (Government of Japan).

Our team created the depression and suicide component to meet national needs of the suicide prevention strategy. Later, a public mental health center used the full MHFA program to train health professionals who work with community. Now the team is planning to hold a MHFA training program at the National Institute of Mental Health for wider dissemination of the program.

Since 2006, we have trained over 150 MHFAiders and 35 Instructors. We currently have 10 accredited MHFA Instructors.

Mental Health First Aid Malta

Contributor: Betty Kitchener AM, CEO MHFA Australia

In early 2015, I travelled over to the island of Malta to work with mental health clinical staff at Richmond Foundation Malta to adopt and adapt the MHFA Australia Standard program for Malta (pictured right). This was made possible in part with project funding from an European Economic Area (EEA) and Norway Grant: www.eeagrants.org

The Foundation will now adapt the resources to the Maltese context, whereupon Richmond Foundation will be formally accredited by MHFA Australia, and the trained MHFA instructors will provide MHFA certification training in Malta. In the coming months, Maltese non-government organisations (NGOs) will be publicly invited to nominate representatives to be trained and certified as mental health first aidsers.

The training will be provided free of charge as part of the project, and will include free copies of the MHFA Manual and resources.
Mental Health First Aid Nepal

Contributor:
Prabhat Kiran Pradhan
Founder and Executive Member-
Maryknoll Nepal, and Founder
National Coordinator-SAF
Nepal

MHFA Nepal was formed in Kathmandu in 2010. It was initiated in Nepal by Dr. Arun Jha from UK, jointly with my interest as a Psychiatric Social Worker by profession. At present, I am the only staff member taking care of MHFA Nepal, as organisations are being very passive. I am recently retired, but would like to devote my whole life to the promotion of MHFA in my own capacity.

MHFA Nepal’s start-up has been very challenging due to a lack of funding. However, we were fortunate enough to receive the support of Rotary in Australia. We ran a MHFA Course together when they visited Nepal. We currently offer the Standard MHFA Course in Nepali and adapted for the Nepalese context. We have our own MHFA Manual. MHFA Australia has given me permission to translate the teen MHFA Manual into our language. I have recently developed a MHFA refresher course which we delivered in November 2014 with the help of an Australian team from a Rotary Club in Orange (NSW).

So far we have trained 326 Nepalese volunteers in MHFA, 155 men and 171 women. We have conducted MHFA Courses to 22 medical doctors. We also conducted the MHFA refresher training course to 37 previous volunteers.

I believe that MHFA Nepal has contributed towards raising public awareness about mental health and its importance, and helped to decrease level of social stigma associated with mental health.

Mental Health First Aid New Zealand

www.koawatea.co.nz/mhfa

Contributor:
Kerri Butler, Project Manager
Mental Health First Aid
Aotearoa/New Zealand

We approached MHFA Australia about adopting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA Australia Program in late 2008. Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB) in New Zealand adapted this programme and began delivering a MHFA for Whaanau version which incorporated tikanga and whaanau ora principles. This included revising the ALGEE mnemonic to MAURI.

In 2012 we recognized the need to increase MH literacy in the Counties community so we again approached MHFA Australia about adapting the standard version to suit our Aoteaoroa/New Zealand audiences. We began delivery to the Counties Manukau population in October 2014. We are currently adapting this version for delivery to our Pacific and Asian communities in Counties Manukau Health.

We currently have 14 staff members and two trainers of Instructors. Since 2008, we have trained approximately 30 Instructors (12 of whom are currently accredited), who have gone on to deliver MHFA to approximately 200 people in New Zealand.

Contemporary Understanding of Whaanau:
“Whaanau is often translated as ‘family’, but its meaning is more complex. It includes physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions and is based on whakapapa. Whaanau can be multi-layered, flexible and dynamic. Whaanau is based on a Maori and a tribal world view. It is through the Whaanau that values, histories and traditions from the ancestors are adapted for the contemporary world.”

Source: www.teara.govt.nz
Mental Health First Aid Northern Ireland

Contributor:
Helen Gibson, Regional Training Co-ordinator for Mental Emotional Wellbeing & Suicide Prevention Public Health Agency Northern Ireland

MHFA Northern Ireland is a Government funded organisation that was launched in 2006. An interest in cross-border mental health issues founded the basis of research training to help those living in these areas of Northern Ireland and Ireland. Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) researched MHFA Scotland and it is from here that MHFA Northern Ireland began its journey.

We are currently in the process of updating to our Second Edition Standard MHFA Course, which is based on MHFA Australia’s Third Edition. We are also looking at introducing Youth MHFA within the next financial year.

MHFA is growing within Northern Ireland. I am receiving requests from different sectors that hadn’t considered MHFA courses for staff before. This includes the Universities and Northern Ireland’s Civil Service Human Resources Departments.

Uptake by these sectors could see the introduction to an additional 26,000 public workers in Northern Ireland.

Since 2006, we have trained 69 MHFA Instructors. Currently, we have 50 accredited MHFA Instructors, and 4 active trainers of Instructors.

On average, we would train approximately 800-1000 members of the public per year in Standard MHFA. Working on this average, we estimate that approximately 8500-9000 people having attended a Standard MHFA Course in Northern Ireland since 2006.

We host a MHFA regional trainers forum each year to bring all MHFA Instructors together to discuss MHFA. This is an opportunity for Instructors to discuss developments, and any issues faced when delivering the course. We also aim to motivate and encourage trainers at the forum to continue to deliver the courses, and to foster a team culture.

Approx 8,500 trained since 2006!

Mental Health First Aid Pakistan

Contributor:
Maryam Ahmad Kazmi, Program Officer, MASHAL - The Aman Foundation

I am pleased to let you know that, with a panel of 11 accredited MHFA instructors, we have conducted the Standard MHFA course for 200 plus participants thus far.

An evaluation study was also conducted using pre- and post-test questionnaires in these sessions. The results were positive, indicating that the MHFA program is effective in the context of Pakistan.

MHFA Pakistan’s coordinating body, MASHAL, has also launched its website recently, much of which is dedicated to MHFA Pakistan: www.amanmashal.org

MASHAL is a community mental health project delivered in an area comprising of a population of over 100,000 individuals from low-income families. This area is under-serviced in healthcare, including mental health.

We are currently in process of publishing an MHFA Pakistan Manual that would be more appropriate for Pakistan.
Mental Health First Aid

Saudi Arabia

Contributor: Dr Abdulhameed Alhabeeb, Director General of Mental and Social Health Ministry of Health KSA and Haifa saad Aleshawi, MHFA Program Director

We were interested in adopting the MHFA Program in recognition that it plays an important role in building community awareness and a culture of well being. Where Saudi Arabia is a young generation it’s important to ensure the good health of community.

In September 2012, Betty Kitchener travelled to Riyadh, capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), to begin work on adapting the MHFA Program for the KSA. We are currently still in the implementation stage of MHFA Saudi Arabia, and are planning to create partnerships with government agencies here so that we can begin rolling out MHFA Courses. We are hoping to provide MHFA Courses for free.

Mental Health First Aid

Scotland

In 2003, Betty Kitchener brought the MHFA Course over to Scotland and trained a number of instructors who then piloted the course throughout Scotland. Such was the enthusiastic response to the Australian course that the formerly named Scottish Executive funded the development of a Scottish course based on MHFA principles.

In 2004, Scottish materials were developed and the National Training Team was commissioned to begin training instructors from all over Scotland. In 2005 – 2008, the National Training team took the course to England (external link) and Wales (external link) and helped train each country’s National Training team. They were also involved in training for a cross border pilot initiative using MHFA in Northern Ireland and Eire.

In 2007, after a very successful independent evaluation, the process of updating the original materials was begun to reflect feedback in the evaluation and changes in mental health knowledge. In March 2009 the new materials were launched and all current instructors went through a refresher course on the use of the new materials. Currently there are over 300 SMHFA instructors in Scotland and more than 40,000 people have attended the training.

Mental Health First Aid

Singapore

Contributors: Dr Angelina Chan, Chairman, MHFA Singapore Senior Consultant Psychiatrist & HOD, Trauma Recovery & Corporate Solutions, Changi General Hospital

MHFA Singapore commenced in 2006. We currently offer the Standard MHFA Course in English and Mandarin. We also offer Youth MHFA and Older Persons MHFA, both in English only.

In the next one to two years, we are hoping to develop web-based eLearning for Standard MHFA so that course can be reduced from two days face-to-face to one day face-to-face.

Since 2006, we have conducted more than 400 training courses, reaching out mainly to healthcare and education industries and community-based services. We have trained approximately 5000 people in MHFA.

Staff of Trauma Recovery and Corporate Solutions (TRaCS) provide admin support and training as well as oversee the MHFA Singapore trainers. We have set up a MHFA Singapore executive committee which consists of experienced volunteer trainers who oversee the accreditation and quality regulation of Instructors, and review teaching materials. MHFA Singapore mainly receives funding from Changi General Hospital.

Over 40,000 trained since 2003!
Mental Health First Aid USA - National Council

www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

Contributors:
Bryan Gibb, Director of Public Education, National Council for Behavioral Health and MHFA
Instructor, Trainer, Program Management and Curriculum Design

In 2009, the MHFA Program was adopted in the USA by a consortium of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Missouri Department of Mental Hygiene and the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare. Our current operating model is an executive committee made up of partners from these three coordinating bodies.

The MHFA Team at the National Council includes eight full-time staff in Washington DC, and 32 contracted National Trainers who conduct train the trainer (Instructor Training) courses around the country. We have 4500 instructors working in all 50 States, Washington DC, Puerto Rico and Guam. In total, we have trained approximately 350,000 people, and this rate is growing daily by approximately 400-500 people.

We currently offer Standard and Youth MHFA Courses, both in English and Spanish. We also have supplements that build on the Standard Course for Police and Corrections, Veterans and Higher Education.

We are working on the development of a workplace product, and are currently in the piloting phase. We will soon be piloting this product through a major Employee Assistant Program (EAP) serving 20 million people nationwide.

Some of our biggest milestones are the endorsement of the Youth MHFA Program by President Obama and funding for the program by Congress. First Lady Michelle Obama also showed her support for MHFA in a recent speech in Washington (see below).

USA First Lady Michelle Obama Praises MHFA

First Lady Michelle Obama supports MHFA training

At the Campaign to Change Direction in Washington on the 4th March 2015, Michelle Obama shared her experience of being trained in MHFA:

“I went through some of this [MHFA] training a few weeks ago ... and I saw just how useful it is. It really gives you the skills you need to identify and ultimately help someone in need. Because you never know when these kinds of skills might be useful.”

www.mhfa.com.au

Mental Health First Aid Wales

www.mhfa-wales.org.uk

Contributors:
Claire Foster, Project Manager
MHFA Wales, Mind Cymru

MHFA Wales is a Welsh Government project and is part of the Suicide Prevention for Wales. The Welsh Government, in collaboration with Mind Cymru, launched MHFA Wales in April 2008. Our MHFA team is currently made up of two part-time staff (project managers), and one part-time project officer. We receive funding from Public Health Wales. Previously, we received funding from Welsh Government to support staff roles.

We currently offer the Standard and Youth MHFA Courses in English and Welsh. Recently we have been working with MHFA England to help them roll out MHFA Armed forces in Wales.

To date, approximately 13,500 people have trained in MHFA in Wales. When we reached 10,000 people trained in Wales we received significant media interest in Welsh and English via BBC. See more here:

Approx 350,000 trained since 2009!

Approx 13,500 trained since 2008!
Mental Health First Aid
Zimbabwe

Contributor:
Mazvita Machinga - Mental Health First Aid Coordinator in Zimbabwe

We started delivering MHFA training in 2012. We became interested in MHFA when a counselor attended MHFA training in California and felt that the course was needed and would be helpful in Zimbabwe. MHFA Australia then gave me permission. Currently, we only have one Instructor of MHFA Courses. In the future, we hope to develop an Instructor Training Course to assist the spread of MHFA in Zimbabwe. We do not receive any ongoing funding, but we partner with local organisations who sponsor MHFA Courses that we run.

Despite our limited funding and Instructors, progress since 2012 has been great, with close to 200 individuals having completed the MHFA Standard Course. These people have been from varying backgrounds, including staff in government departments, churches and civic organisations, police officers, prison officers, teachers, and university students. MHFA is well needed in Zimbabwe and all the participants trained agreed with this.

We offer the Standard MHFA Program. We have added information on HIV AIDS and grief as these issues relate to mental health problems in our country. We desperately need the Youth MHFA Program and an Instructor Training Course. We also hope that with funding in the future we can adapt the MHFA Program to the Zimbabwe context.

A Message from Co-Founders Betty Kitchener and Professor Tony Jorm

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate these overseas MHFA Programs for successfully rolling out the MHFA Program in their countries. We estimate that due to the combined efforts of International MHFA organisations and all of those involved in this process, the one millionth MHFAider will be trained somewhere in the world in 2015 – a cause for celebration!

Given our vision is for a community where everyone has the first aid skills to support people with mental health problems, we encourage you to keep lobbying with your respective Governments to embed Mental Health First Aid in National Policies. We hope that one-day, Mental Health First Aid is a requirement for certain occupations as physical first aid is.

There is growing evidence for the benefits of MHFA training.

We were delighted that our Swedish colleagues carried out a systematic review and meta-analysis of MHFA trials conducted so far across the world and concluded that MHFA training “increases participants’ knowledge regarding mental health, decreases their negative attitudes and increases supportive behaviours towards individual with mental health problems. The MHFA programme appears recommendable for public health action”:


The next research frontier is to examine the effects of MHFA actions on the recipient. We are currently doing a MHFA trial in Australia of parents of teenagers to examine the effects on the teenagers' mental health. We hope that other countries will do similar studies.

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