



**MENTAL HEALTH
FIRST AID®**

For Anyone. For Everyone.™

A Guide to Implementing Mental Health First Aid Training in your Workplace

More workplaces are realising the importance of managing mental health at work and recognising the benefits of creating mentally healthy workplaces.

Workplaces are seeing the benefits of promoting education and adopting policies and practices that create a 'culture of care' where employees are encouraged to talk openly about mental health.

This is where Mental Health First Aid® can help

Mental Health First Aid offers early-intervention education courses for adults in the workplace that equip people with the practical skills and confidence needed to approach and respond to a co-worker, or another adult, experiencing a mental health problem. Our skills-based training improves organisational and employee resilience and helps reduce stigma by generating positive conversations that safely address topics that may otherwise be challenging to discuss.

Whether you have already started delivering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA™) training within your workplace, or are still considering it, this Implementation Guide will help you to plan, deliver and evaluate your own workplace MHFA training strategy.

Building a Mentally Healthy Workplace

In the framework to promote mentally health workplaces, there are 5 strategies that should be addressed:

- 1 Designing work to minimise harm
- 2 Building organisational resilience
- 3 Enhancing individual resilience
- 4 Promoting and facilitating early help-seeking
- 5 Supporting recovery and return to work

MHFA training falls under the fourth strategy with courses designed to promote and facilitate early help-seeking, by providing individuals with the skills and confidence to recognise and respond to the early sign of mental health problems in their co-workers, managers or clients.

Mental health first aid is the initial help offered to someone who is experiencing a mental health problem or a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.



Why Choose Mental Health First Aid

Strengths of MHFA Training



Evidence-Based

Developed with the consensus of people with lived experience and mental health experts, utilising rigorous scientific research methods.



Internationally Renowned

World-leading and award-winning Australian program adopted by 25 countries world-wide.



Trusted

Over 20 years of experience.



Reach

Over 2,400 accredited instructors available to deliver training to any workplace nationally.



Flexible Delivery

3 course delivery modes available to suit the needs of your workplace: face-to-face, blended face-to-face or fully online.



Workplace Culture

MHFA training can form the basis of a workplace well-being program or complement existing programs that help create a culture of care.

Successful Planning of MHFA Training in your Workplace

Consider the following suggestions when planning your MHFA training program.



Build a business case for your workplace: Clearly define your objectives, the benefits of the training and how to integrate it within your workplace's strategic plan.



Identify your core team and designate a coordinator: Identify dedicated team members who will assist in implementing the program, including a coordinator who is responsible for leading the program. The team's responsibilities include promoting the program, planning activities, communicating with management and employees, and evaluating the program. It is a good idea to have staff representatives from all levels and departments within your organisation.



Gain strong leadership support and commitment: A successful workplace wellness program is dependent upon support from all levels of leadership. Gain support and commitment from leadership and encourage their advocacy and participation in the program.



Recruit champions: Having champions for the program from all levels of your organisation, is important to its success, as they will be able to promote the training to other employees.



Communicate the bigger picture: Promote the plan for MHFA training within your organisation and communicate how the training will be useful for all employees.



When planning MHFA training in your workplace, it is important to consider that every workplace is different. Good program planning is key to successful implementation.



Delivering the Training

The Standard MHFA course teaches adults how to support other adults who may be experiencing a mental health problem or mental health crisis, until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

Ideal for the workplace setting, the 12-hour training course can be delivered in 1 of 3 ways:



Face-to-Face: A 2-day course with an accredited MHFA Instructor



Blended Face-to-Face: Self-paced eLearning component (typically 5–7 hours) followed by a 4-hour face-to-face session led by an accredited MHFA Instructor



Blended Online: Self-paced eLearning component (typically 5–7 hours) followed by 2 x 2.5-hour video conferencing sessions led by an accredited MHFA Instructor

Flexible Delivery Options



There are 3 ways to deliver training across your workplace:

1

Find an Instructor to deliver training to your workplace:

Mental Health First Aid Australia has a network of over 2,400 trained and accredited MHFA Instructors with local and place-based knowledge. Our Instructor model lets you choose an Instructor that best reflects the needs of your industry, location and workforce.

Learn more: mhfa.com.au/instructors

2

Attend a public training course:

Instructors also deliver MHFA training courses through public sessions; available for anyone to attend.

Learn more: mhfa.com.au/courses/public

3

Accredit an employee to become an MHFA Instructor:

Many workplaces are choosing to nominate employees to become accredited MHFA Instructors. Our unique instructor training model is a cost-effective and sustainable way to embed MHFA training within your workplace.

Learn more: mhfa.com.au/be-an-instructor

“Mental health first aid is an important life skill. It has provided our staff with the tools and knowledge to breakdown stigma and support mental health conditions in the workplace.”

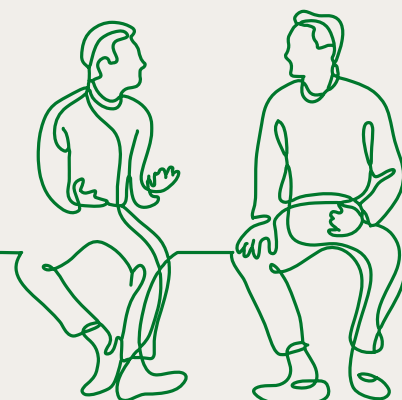
Department of Industry,
Innovation & Science

“In the next two to five years, I'd like to see that it is normal at any workplace that there is on the notice board the name of the first aid officer and next to that, the number of the mental health first aid officer...”

WA Mental Health Commissioner,
Tim Marney

“Since implementing MHFA training, our employees can see the value of a mentally healthy workplace. As a result, there has been significant attitudinal and behavioural benefits.”

Health Reimagined



Mental Health First Aid Accreditation

Employees who complete an MHFA training course can take an online assessment to become an Accredited Mental Health First Aider™ (MHFAider®).

They become part of a supportive MHFAider community, with access to updates, resources and opportunities to practice their skills.

MHFAider Accreditation is valid for three years, with the option to extend for a further three years by completing an MHFA Refresher Course.

Promote MHFA Training within your Workplace

Promote the program to your employees and talk about what's involved. Communicate the benefits of the training and share stories of success. Promote training via posters in high traffic areas, staff emails, bulletin boards, meetings, and other internal communication channels.

Embed the Training Program within your Existing Health and Wellbeing Strategy

MHFA training can form the basis of your organisation's mental health strategy or complement existing programs and strategies. To successfully embed the training consider:

- ✓ A mental health first aid policy for your workplace
- ✓ An annual plan for delivery of mental health first aid training
- ✓ Make mental health first aid training part of your workplace induction process
- ✓ Deliver mental health first aid training to a broad reach of staff and teams across the workplace

Learn how other workplaces have implemented and embedded MHFA training: workplace.mhfa.com.au/case-studies/

Build a Supportive Network within your Workplace

MHFA Officers

In addition to actively supporting staff to complete an MHFA Australia course and become an Accredited MHFAider, many workplaces are also appointing MHFA Officers and establishing a network and resources to support the role.

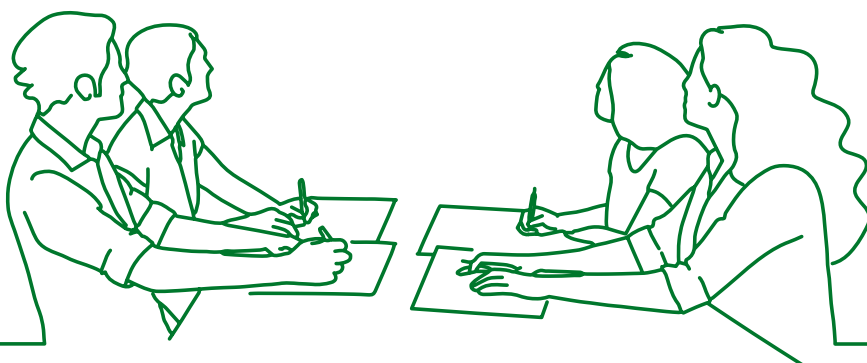
An MHFA Officer has completed their MHFA Australia training and accreditation and have been designated as the person to offer initial mental health support to other employees. Being an MHFA Officer is the ideal role for people who are passionate about mental health, the well-being of others and developing their skills in the workplace.

The MHFA Officer role complements formal support services like Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), but sits outside of Human Resources and Health and Safety functions.

Learn more about the role of the **MHFA Officer**.

MHFAider Network

Make the most of the skills acquired during the MHFA training course by actively encouraging and supporting employees to make the most of the MHFAider network resources and participate in events and upskilling opportunities offered by the MHFAider Network team.



Monitor and Evaluate your MHFA Training Program

It's important to monitor and evaluate the progress and success of MHFA Australia training in your workplace, to help assess the impact the training is having, and identify opportunities for program improvement and extension.

Some tips for evaluating your MHFA training program include:

Consider how you will collect information

- Seek feedback from course participants, Instructors, MHFA Officers and the senior leadership team.
- Use appropriate methods to gather information, such as attendance, staff satisfaction and pulse surveys and interviews.
- Decide how you will keep records.

Assess the implementation of the program

- Was the training rolled out as expected?
- Look to assess training participation rates, the appointment of MHFA Officers, the development of policies and protocols, and identify any barriers that were encountered.

Measure the impact of the program on your workplace

- Benchmark analysis, based on a comparison of before and after the program was implemented.
- Were there changes in staff knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours?
- Were there changes in compensation claims or sick leave?
- How many mental health first aid conversations take place and what are the outcomes of the conversations? (This information should be collected in a deidentified way.)

Remember to celebrate your successes and share the insights you gain; providing feedback to staff and stakeholders.

Be Recognised for your Achievements

Our Workplace Recognition Program recognises and celebrates the organisations who invest in the development of employee mental health first aid skills and who engage in initiatives that embed the program into their organisational culture.

There are over 150 organisations of varying sizes and from a range of different industries now recognised as an Mental Health First Aid Australia Workplace Recognition Program. For many of those organisations, the program is a great way to demonstrate their commitment to creating a mentally healthy workplace that values employee well-being. Learn more about our Workplace Recognition Program mhfa.com.au/workplacerecognition

Make Improvements

Once you have completed your evaluation, use the results to improve the program, making it current and relevant for your employees and workplace needs. The benefits of the training and its impact on employees, will increase the longer the effort is maintained.

We're here to help!

Our dedicated Workplace Engagement Team is here to help! Reach out for assistance with implementing and embedding MHFA training in your workplace: workplaces@mhfa.com.au

