

Building the Business Case for Mental Health First Aid in your Workplace



**MENTAL HEALTH
FIRST AID®**

For Anyone. For Everyone.™

Mental health is a complex issue that impacts individuals, families, communities and workplaces, of all industry types, locations and sizes. In any one year, it is estimated that 1 in 5 Australian adults will experience a mental illness.¹ With over 13 million people working in Australia,² this equates to over two and a half million workers.

Mental illness has become the leading cause of sickness and long-term work incapacity in Australia

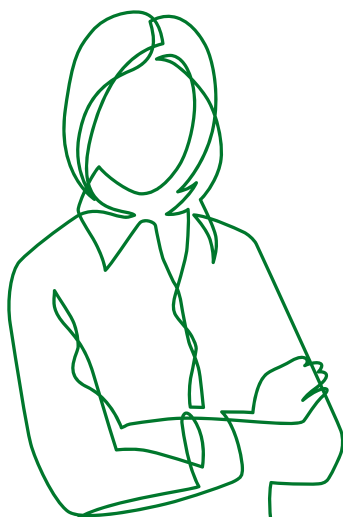
For workplaces this can present challenges for staff safety, morale and productivity, and it can have financial impacts on the business. Today, more and more workplaces are realising the importance of managing mental health at work and recognising the benefits of creating **mentally healthy workplaces**.

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.

Mental Health First Aid skills-based training increases knowledge, promotes self-care and helps reduce stigma by generating positive conversations that safely address topics that may otherwise be challenging to discuss.



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 Training?

Mental Health First Aid is the leading provider of mental health first aid training. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA™) early-intervention education programs are internationally renowned and trusted by workplaces all over Australia and internationally with **4,000,000 people trained worldwide**.



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 twenty years of experience.



Reach

2,100 accredited instructors available to delivery 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.

The Evidence for MHFA Training

MHFA training stands apart from other programs in its breadth and depth. Rigorously evaluated by institutions around the world, MHFA Australia training consistently shows positive behaviour changes for course participants, including:⁴

- Improved knowledge of mental illnesses, their treatments and appropriate first aid strategies
- Increased confidence in providing mental health first aid to individuals
- Reduced stigmatising attitudes that can prevent people from seeking help early
- Increased supportive behaviours towards someone experiencing mental health problem.



Increasing mental health literacy through targeted training, helps organisational and employee resilience, and it also has far-reaching benefits for individuals and communities more broadly.

Here's what workplaces are saying about MHFA training:

"MHFA 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."

Health Reimagined

"Since rolling out MHFA training as one of our flagship initiatives, we have seen an increase in our Wellbeing Index. This would not have been possible without the hard work and commitment of our MHFA Officers."

QBE Insurance

"We've found that [the training] has increased people's skills and confidence in identifying the signs that a colleague may be struggling and understanding how they can guide them to seek support. It's also raised the level of mental health knowledge and awareness across the firm."

Clayton Utz





The Positive Impact of MHFA Training

Taking steps to implement MHFA training in your workplace is an important strategic decision and there are many compelling reasons to support the introduction of MHFA training, including:

- **Staff are supported** to be more mentally healthy and connected.
- Improved **mental health literacy and communication** across the workforce.
- Contribution to broader **well-being and safety in the workplace**.
- **Reduced risks** to productivity, engagement and operations posed by unsupported mental health problems.
- Increase ability for an employee to support a co-worker experiencing a mental health problem.
- **Positive messages** and actions around mental health for staff and stakeholders.
- Enhanced skills and knowledge development for **staff growth and capacity building**.
- Contribution to a **broader community-response** to mental ill health and suicide, as crisis issues impacting our community.
- Engagement with a **highly professional, evidence-based program** that will work with your workplace to get the best results.

The Business Case for Mental Health First Aid in your Workplace

Financial Case⁵

- For every \$1 invested in mental health initiatives there is an average \$2.30 return on investment.
- An employee with a mental health related claim has an average of 16.2 weeks away from work – 3 times higher than for other claims.
- Mental illness is the leading cause of sickness absence and long-term work incapacity equating to \$17 billion lost to Australian businesses each year.
- By creating mentally healthy workplaces, workforce participation rates can improve by 30%.

Risk Reduction Case⁶

- Every Australian business has a legal responsibility to provide safe and healthy workplace environments.
- Providing reasonable adjustments and support for people experiencing mental illness can reduce incidences of discrimination.

Well-being Case^{5,7}

- Mental disorders account for 12% of Australia's total burden of disease and injury.
- Only 22% of full-time workers with signs of common mental illness receive treatment for their mental health problems.
- MHFA training has been identified as a key action that supports a mentally healthy workplace and positively impacts on the mental health of employees in the workplace.

Culture Case⁸

- Workplace culture is important to maintaining productive, engaged and healthy staff.
- Workplaces that engage with MHFA report improvements in staff conversations and connection over mental health topics.
- Reducing stigma and increasing awareness can improve interpersonal and team relationships and communication.

“Implementing MHFA training made common sense to us...our workers [are] talking more openly to their peers and staff members. [They are] able to share honest conversations because of the mental health first aid training and the skills learnt.”

OBE Organics



Building the Business Case for your Workplace

Any businesses of any size can commit to and take proactive steps to create and support a mentally healthy workplace. Businesses that invest in employee health and well-being, and provide flexibility in working conditions that consider the health status of employees are among the most successful over time.

To support your business case consider gathering available data to identify and support the need for MHFA training.

This may include defining the purpose and how it aligns with your workplace strategic plan, and outlining the benefits and impact for your organisation.

Creating a strong business case will help gain leadership support and advocacy for a successful implementation of the training program.

We're here to help

Building the business case and securing leadership support for MHFA training is a very important step.

Once you have achieved this milestone, you can start planning, promoting and implementing the training in your workplace.

Our dedicated Workplace Engagement Team is here to help with every step of your Mental Health First Aid journey.

workplaces@mhfa.com.au



References:

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics. National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results, 2007. 4326.0. Canberra; 2008
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Labour Force, Australia. Canberra; 2021
3. Allianz. Awareness into Action: A Holistic Approach to Cultivating Mentally healthy Workplaces in Australia. Sydney; 2019
4. Morgan AJ, Ross A, Reavley NJ. Systematic review and meta-analysis of mental health first aid training: Effects on knowledge, stigma, and helping behaviour. PLoS One. 2018;13(5)
5. pwc. Creating a mentally healthy workplace: Return on investment analysis. Sydney; 2014
6. Heads Up. Legal Rights and Responsibilities [Internet]. Available from: headsup.org.au/healthy-workplaces/legal-rights-and-responsibilities
7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. The burden of disease and injury in Australia, 2015. Canberra; 2019
8. Seppälä E, Cameron K. Proof that positive work cultures are more productive. Harv Bus Rev. 2015



Here's what workplaces are saying about MHFA training:

"Incredibly valuable, relevant and worthwhile course to do. It has raised awareness and confidence in the staff to be able to have the right conversations at the right time."

Western Australian
Symphony Orchestra

"John Holland's experience with MHFA has been really positive. It has been a great tool in promoting mental health in our workplace and encouraging our people to look out for one another, both in the workplace and out in the community."

John Holland

"Since introducing the program 12 months ago, our MHFA course participants across RAA have had more than 500 mental health first aid conversations at work and at home. Our MHFA [training] is an important part of our early intervention strategy, as well as supporting a culture where mental health is taken as seriously as physical health."

Royal Automobile Association
(RAA) of South Australia

Mental Health First Aid, MHFAider and ALGEE are registered trademarks of Mental Health First Aid International. MHFA, Mental Health First Aider and For Anyone. For Everyone. are trademarks of Mental Health First Aid International.