

Safety Sound-off

VIDC Occupational Health & Safety Committee Newsletter

Mental Health First Aid

Inside this issue:

Everyone is familiar with First Aid and the life saving skills gained through the program, but what about mental health first aid?

The principle behind mental health first aid (MHFA) is that those trained can help provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

The philosophy behind MHFA is that a mental health crisis, such as suicidal and self-harming actions, may be avoided through early intervention. If a crisis does arise, an MHFA trained person in the workplace can take action that may reduce the harm that could result. Just as physical first aid is administered to an injured person before medical treatment can be obtained, MHFA is given until appropriate treatment is found or until the crisis is resolved.

Mental Health First Aid was developed in Australia by Betty Kitchener and Anthony Jorm in 2001. Since 2001, Mental Health First Aid has spread to 23 additional countries.

MHFA in Canada

2006: MHFA is brought to Canada by the Alberta Mental Health Board. The courses are adapted to the Canadian context and the MHFA BASIC and MHFA Adults who Interact with Youth courses are offered across the province of Alberta.

In **2010**, MHFA goes national as it becomes a program of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The course is updated and offered in every province and territory.

MHFA Continues to Grow in Canada

2013: The MHFA Northern Peoples version of the course is developed and made available to Canadians living in the northern territories.

2013: MHFA Canada trains its 1,000th instructor.

2014: MHFA Canada trains its 100,000th participant, Her Excellency Sharon Johnston, C.C.

2015: MHFA First Nations version is completed and first instructors are trained.

2015: Over one million people have been trained in Mental Health First Aid worldwide

2016: MHFA Canada trains its 200,000th participant.

2016: MHFA Canada launches MHFA Seniors.

2016: MHFA Canada launches MHFA Inuit.

2016: MHFA Veterans Community adaptation launched and instructors delivering courses.

2018: MHFA Canada trains its 300,000th participant, Dragons' Den denizen W. Brett Wilson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tx7BcsNH-08>

2018 and beyond: MHFA Canada continues to grow, exploring innovative

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Health & Safety

Dates to Remember

- ◆ **Feb. 27, 2019:** Stop Bullying Day
- ◆ **Apr. 28, 2019:** Day of Mourning
- ◆ **Jun. 21-23, 2019:** Miner's Memorial

ways to deliver the course in urban and rural areas.

Next for MHFA Canada

Our Mission: To make meaningful contributions to the wellness of Canadians through world-class mental health courses.

Our Vision: Every Canadian is within reach of effective mental health first aid.

Why take an MHFA course?

Stigma: There is stigma associated with mental health problems. Evidence shows that taking an MHFA courses reduces social distance between the participant and someone experiencing a mental health problem.



Welcome to our VIDC Health and Safety Newsletter.

Our Committee members are:
Sarah Fairbrass, Chair;
Martha Higgins; Wayne Smiley; Sherrene Ross.

www.vidc.cupe.ca

Accommodating Mental Illness in the Workplace

Awareness: One person in five will experience a mental health problem this year. Evidence shows that MHFA course participants increase their awareness of signs and symptoms of the most common mental health problems.

Confidence: The most difficult part of intervening is knowing what to say. Evidence shows that taking an MHFA course increases the confidence participants have in engaging someone experiencing a mental health problem or crisis.

To look for a course in your area please check here -> <https://www.mhfa.ca/>



Build an inclusive workplace culture that values diversity and embraces open communication and worker engagement.

Develop standards and guidelines for proper communication that foster workplace civility.

Attend to workplace physical and social environments, and ensure they allow for adequate flexibility to meet the needs of people living with a mental health problem or illness.

Offer and strengthen supports and benefits (such as sick days) available to all workers.

Build in flexibility where possible – in terms of how, where and when people work.

Encourage work teams and groups to connect, support and recognize each other, both formally and informally.

Document informal accommodation arrangements in writing, whenever possible.

https://www.iwh.on.ca/newsletters/at-work/93/benefits-outweigh-costs-for-workplaces-that-accommodate-people-with-mental-illness?utm_source=iwhnews&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=iwhnews-2019-01

WORD SEARCH

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|---------------|-------------|
| Mental Health | Inclusive |
| Stigma | Communicate |
| Awareness | Encourage |
| Confidence | Team |
| Symptoms | Culture |
| Wellness | Values |
| Mhfa | Diversity |
| Illness | Crisis |
| Depression | Trauma |
| Flexibility | |

Submit your completed word search to vpcupe374@gmail.com for a chance to win a prize!

Last Issue Winners: Krista Watton!!

