



**FDAMH**  
TRAINING ACADEMY

# SCOTLAND'S MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (SMHFA)

12 HOUR COURSE



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# THE SMHFA PROGRAMME

The SMHFA course takes 12 hours to complete. It can be presented in a range of formats to suit different groups and must be presented by a qualified SMHFA instructor and quality is continuously monitored by Public Health Scotland.

The following is a brief outline of what is covered on the course:

- Guidance on being a Mental Health First Aider
- Attitudes to mental health issues
- Equalities
- The recovery message
- The impact of alcohol and drugs on mental health
- Introduction to suicide intervention
- Listening skills
- Understanding depression
- How to offer first aid to someone experiencing depression
- Understanding anxiety
- How to offer first aid to someone experiencing anxiety
- Understanding psychosis
- How to offer first aid to someone experiencing a psychotic episode

The course will give you the skills, in your role as a mental health first aider, to effectively support others experiencing reduced mental health. The knowledge presented and understanding developed in the course helps to remove stigma and to give you confidence in approaching a person in distress.

Mental Health First Aid is an initial response to distress and all participants on the course understand that this help is given only until other suitable or professional help can be found.

# WHY TAKE THE COURSE?

The course is diverse, interactive and stimulating and, though challenging at times, participants feel enlightened on completion of the course.

Most people don't know what to do in a mental health crisis. Take the course and you will be one of the few who knows what to do and is confident about putting that knowledge into action.

## Five good reasons to attend SMHFA:

- 1** You will learn how to recognise when a person might need help and the best way to approach them
- 2** You could save a life by learning basic suicide intervention skills
- 3** You will learn what protects your own and other people's mental health
- 4** You will learn new skills that are useful in every part of your life
- 5** Mental Health problems are not as frightening as most people think

When a person has a mental health problem what they need most is someone who can:

- listen calmly to their feelings and fears
- provide initial support and ask appropriate questions
- have the confidence to recognise when someone needs immediate help and who to alert

This course is for everyone and participants use the skills they learn in all settings.



## WHAT WILL I LEARN ON THE COURSE?

- How to apply the 5 steps of SMHFA
- How to respond if you believe someone is at risk of suicide.
- How to give immediate help until professional help is available.
- What to say and do in a crisis
- The importance of good listening skills
- Practice listening and responding
- Understanding recovery from mental health problems
- Understanding the connection between mental health problems and alcohol and drugs
- Understanding the connection between mental health problems and discrimination
- Some basic information about common mental health problems
- Self help information



## WHAT HAPPENS ON A SMHFA COURSE?

*The course takes 12 hours and is usually run on two separate days which can be done over 2 weeks.*

*It is an interesting course that includes different activities, films, discussions and even some fun and laughter.*

*You will get a certificate of attendance and an interesting manual to take away with you at the end so that you can remind yourself of what you've learned.*

### **The aims of SMHFA are:**

- To preserve life.
- To provide help to prevent the mental health problem or crisis developing into a more serious state.
- To promote the recovery of good mental health.
- To provide comfort to a person experiencing distress.
- To promote understanding of mental health issues.
- The course will give you the knowledge to apply these aims in a real life situation.





**To enquire about booking our SMHFA course  
please contact our Administration Coordinator,  
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