



# Introduction to Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

**Dates:** 04/06/2026

**Locations:** Lisson Grove Centre

Please note, this course is only open to residents living within Westminster City Council or the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. This Introduction to Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course is offered by WAES Community Learning and provides a clear, practical introduction to understanding mental health and supporting others in times of distress. Delivered face to face over two half day sessions, the programme helps adults recognise early signs of mental health difficulties and respond in a calm, informed and compassionate way. Led by a highly qualified and experienced mental health practitioner, the course blends current knowledge, real world practice and sensitive guidance. Participants explore the foundations of mental health, learn how to offer effective first line support and build the confidence needed to guide someone towards appropriate help when required. The training is delivered in a safe and supportive environment where questions and concerns can be explored openly.

## Entry Requirements

This is an introductory course and does not require any previous qualifications or prior knowledge. It is designed for adults aged 19 and over who wish to improve their understanding of mental health, whether for personal reasons, professional development or in order to support others in their community or workplace. All concepts are explained clearly, and the trainer ensures that participants feel comfortable, respected and able to engage at their own pace.

## What topics does the course cover?

The first session focuses on developing a strong understanding of mental health and the importance of early intervention. The trainer explores what mental health means, how stigma and discrimination can affect people, and the early warning signs of common conditions such as anxiety, depression and stress. Participants are introduced to the core principles of Mental Health First Aid, and are encouraged to reflect on how to approach supportive conversations with confidence and sensitivity. The second session builds on this knowledge by focusing on practical skills and how to respond in situations where someone may be experiencing a mental health crisis. Through role play, case studies and guided discussion, participants learn how to respond safely and appropriately to issues such as panic attacks or suicidal thoughts. The importance of self care for Mental Health First Aiders is emphasised, ensuring participants understand how to maintain their own wellbeing while supporting others. The session also provides information on relevant local and national support services and how to guide individuals towards the help they need.

## How will I be taught and assessed?

Teaching takes place through interactive, face to face sessions led by an experienced mental health professional. The sessions involve discussion, guided reflection, scenario based activities and practical demonstrations designed to build confidence and real world skills. There is no formal assessment. Instead, the emphasis is on developing understanding, practising supportive communication and applying Mental Health First Aid techniques in a safe and supportive environment.

## Are there any other costs or equipment I need to get?

There are no additional costs associated with this course. All necessary training materials are provided. Participants may bring a notebook if they wish to record personal reflections or key learning points, but no specific equipment is required.

## By the end of the course what should I be able to do?

By the end of the course, participants should feel confident in recognising early signs of mental distress and in initiating supportive, non judgemental conversations. They will be able to apply the principles of Mental Health First Aid, including the ALGEE action plan, and understand how to offer initial help to someone experiencing a mental health problem. The training aims to build the practical skills required to respond to crisis situations, guide individuals towards appropriate professional support and maintain personal resilience and wellbeing.

## What are the progression opportunities following this course?

After completing the course, participants may choose to pursue further learning in mental health. This can include accredited qualifications such as Level 2 Mental Health First Aid or Level 2 Mental Health Advocacy in the Workplace. Depending on personal goals, there are also opportunities to progress into broader health, wellbeing or community focused courses offered by WAES. The training provides a strong foundation for anyone wishing to develop their skills further or support mental health more confidently within their community or workplace.