

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

FOR GANNAWARRA AGENCY STAFF

BACKGROUND

GLAM Agencies identified a need to strengthen mental wellbeing and mental health literacy amongst agency staff and community members. Gannawarra Shire, through the Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee funded NDCH to run Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) in Kerang.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The projects aims were to

- provide a timely, FREE MHFA local training opportunity.
- up-skill local workforce in relation to MHFA to help communities to be more prepared to respond to a mental health crisis in the future.



MHFA KERANG

WHAT DID THE PROJECT DELIVER?

1 MHFA TRAINING SESSION

16 PROFESSIONALS

3 GANNAWARRA LOCAL AGENCIES



WHAT DID THE PROJECT ACHIEVE?

- A fully funded Mental Health First Aid Course was delivered by NDCH facilitator Claire Gillen on Wednesday 23rd and 30th of April 2025.
- 16 local champions from Cohuna District Hospital, Gannawarra Shire Council and Northern District Community Health were trained in Mental Health First Aid.
- All Participants reported increased knowledge.
- All Participants who completed feedback now feel competent to approach someone in a mental health crisis, confident to ask about suicidal thoughts, confident to interact without judgment, confident to offer support and information, encourage help seeking and confident to encourage access to support/ local and other.
- 100% of Participants would recommend this course to others!



“ RUNNING THIS COURSE I CAN SEE AND HEAR CURRENT KNOWLEDGE IS EXPANDING, STIGMA IS BEING REDUCED AND PARTICIPANTS ARE FEELING MORE CONFIDENT TO HELP SOMEONE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM.

- FACILITATOR C GILLEN

FEEDBACK

Other training of interest:

- 2 participants suggested **YMHA Youth Mental Health First Aid**.

Strengths of this course:

- Frank, open language and explanation of the types of mental health conditions and how to talk about them. Removing the uncertainty.
- Evidence base. Facilitator's practical examples and local knowledge.
- The clear concise information, the supply of the book which was utilized and then able to be brought home.
- Knowledge, Knowledge is strength, and this information can help someone.

Weakness of the course:

- The length of the course was challenging. It is heavy content, and I wonder if shorter sessions would be an option to consider.
- Possibly need to break off into groups and practice a bit more on how you would ask the questions in scenarios.

“ AFTER YEARS OF CASCADING DISASTERS – FLOODS, DROUGHT, AND TRAGEDY – OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS MORE THAN RECOVERY; IT NEEDS RESILIENCE. OFFERING FULLY FUNDED MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING ENSURES OUR LOCAL HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE STAFF ARE EQUIPPED NOT ONLY TO SUPPORT OTHERS, BUT TO CARE FOR THEMSELVES. THIS INVESTMENT IN SKILLS IS AN INVESTMENT IN THE STRENGTH OF OUR REGION.

“ GREAT COURSE. VERY ACCESSIBLE THAT IT WAS FREE.

-MHFA PARTICIPANT

“ ..SO GLAD I FINALLY MANAGED TO DO THIS COURSE MENTAL HEALTH SURROUNDS US ALL AND HAVING THE INFORMATION TO HELP OTHERS WILL MAKE A LOT OF DIFFERENCE.

-MHFA PARTICIPANT

“ THE EARLIER WE CAN HELP SOMEONE THEN THE BETTER RECOVERY THAT PERSON CAN HAVE TO LIVE THEIR LIFE TO THE BEST.

-FACILITATOR C GILLEN

“ THE MHFA COURSE WAS WELL STRUCTURED AND PROVIDED INFORMATION SUITABLE FOR EVERYONE ATTENDING. LEARNING ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID RESPONSE WAS CLEAR AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND, I BELIEVE THIS COURSE WOULD BENEFIT EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY.

- MHFA PARTICIPANT

