



Project Title: Is Mental Health First Aid en route to becoming a pre-requisite for health practitioners?		Code: SPS7
Host School / Institute: Sydney Pharmacy School		Address: Building A15, School of Pharmacy, Camperdown Campus
Certificates & Clearances required: No		
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Co-Supervisor/team: - /Prof Rebekah Moles : Associate Professor at the School of Pharmacy - Dr Claire O'Reilly : Senior Lecturer at the School of Pharmacy		
Project Type: Survey; Qualitative Analysis; Design		
Project Category: Mental Health; Education		
Skills / Attributes of a successful student: The successful student should have a strong interest in mental health and education research. Given the nature of data collection, an ideal candidate will demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication skills.		
Project Keywords: Mental Health First Aid; Curriculum; Education; Assessment		
<p>Project Description: Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training teaches participants how to appropriately assess for and support people experiencing mental health problems and crises, including suicide (B. A. Kitchener, Jorm, & Kelly, 2017). Suicide is the second leading cause of death among people aged 15-29, globally (World Health Organisation, 2019). Our team recently published a systematic review highlighting the need for further mental health training and education for health care professionals (Boukouvalas, El-Den, Murphy, Salvador-Carulla, & O'Reilly, 2019). MHFA has been integrated into health curricula, including some pharmacy curricula, and is also offered on a volunteer basis in other disciplines, including nursing and medicine. Funding from the Australian Government for health, allied health and human services tertiary students to complete Tertiary-MHFA training has run out prematurely due to the demand for the training, nationally (Mental Health First Aid Australia, 2019). There have also been increasing citations in the literature regarding making MHFA a pre-requisite in work places, including health care, similar to physical first aid (Australian Journal of Pharmacy, 2016; B.A. Kitchener & Jorm, 2008; Terry, 2011). It is already mandatory for various professionals, such as, the frontline staff in the Northern Ireland Prison Service (Byrne, McGowan, & Cousins, 2015).</p> <p>Our team includes two MHFA instructors, and three academics from the School of Pharmacy, where MHFA is a compulsory component of the curriculum. Our research aims to collect data from every pharmacy, nursing and medical programme across Australia to quantify the number of curricula that have integrated MHFA. We will also want to collect data on the type of MHFA training (online, face-to-face) being delivered, the nature of training (compulsory/optional), the number of students certified each year, the tertiary level (year 1, 2, postgrad, etc) of students and the type of assessment and evaluation post-training. The Summer project will involve the first phase of this research which may involve the development and testing of a survey instrument and data collection. It is likely that data collection will involve structured, audio-recorded telephone interviews with stakeholders from pharmacy, nursing and medical curricula Australia-wide. The research team is currently working on cross-country comparisons of MHFA implementation and evaluation and there is an opportunity to expand the project. The student may also contribute to journal and conference publications resulting from the project.</p> <p>References on request.</p>		