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Guidelines for running Mental Health First Aid training at your organisation

Thank you for choosing to run a Mental Health First Aid course with Luminate. We're confident that you've taken a positive step to support the mental health and wellbeing of the employees within your organisation.

1. Mental Health First Aid training can be a key component of any wellbeing strategy, but we are always keen to stress that in order for it to be effective and have a sustainable impact, the training needs to be implemented as part of a strategic, whole organisation approach to wellbeing. Mental Health First Aid helps put a framework in place to help support an individual when they are in crisis or experiencing a mental health issue, so this is mainly a reactive solution. We highly recommend a wellbeing strategy that incorporates proactive and preventative activity to help your employees maintain positive mental health.

2. When selecting the individuals who will become your Mental Health First Aiders it is important to ensure, as much as possible, that the individuals feel stable and well enough to take on this role and to attend this training. Some of the subjects covered in the training such as suicide, self-harm and depression can be triggering for some people, particularly if they have a history of mental illness or if someone close to them has. We will provide you with guidelines to give to the individuals thinking about attending the course, which encourages self-reflection in this area, but we would also recommend having a conversation with each individual to check they feel ready and able to take on this role and attend the training.

3. The course will be divided into two or more sessions (depending on the mode of delivery). Attendees must attend all sessions to qualify as a Mental Health First Aider. Please make sure your attendees can attend the scheduled dates for all live sessions before registering for the course. Unfortunately, if an attendee is not in attendance for all sessions, we cannot qualify them as a Mental Health First Aider.

4. Unfortunately, we are not able to record the live sessions from the training, when the training is delivered virtually. This is due to protecting the intellectual property of MHFA England.

5. We recommend putting in place a nominated support role for your Mental Health First Aiders. This is a person who is overseeing the initiative and the person who your first aiders can contact with any concerns around the role or in the eventuality they would like to step down from the role.

6. We recommend equipping your Mental Health First Aiders with information on the support and benefits offered by your organisation and

perhaps some leaflets or web links they can share, for easy signposting. This could be an EAP system, on-site counselling or any external organisations you partner with who can offer further support.

7. It may be useful, after the training to hold regular meet ups for your Mental Health First Aiders, where they can share their experiences and ask any questions to the group about applying the training effectively and safely. This could be led by the nominated support role and will also help you gauge as an organisation what the uptake of this support is within the company.

8. Although there is no official requirement for this, we recommend refresher training for your Mental Health First Aiders every three years.

9. We recommend providing them with information about the boundaries of their role (this is included in our guidelines for Mental Health First Aiders document, which should have been provided to you, alongside this document. Please get in touch if you haven't received this).

10. We recommend sending an adaptation of the following (or something similar) to the employees of your company. Please feel free to use any variation of this wording:

We're very excited to be training a group of mental health first aiders in the company.

We are very keen, as an organisation to create an open and supportive environment when it comes to mental health and we want to stress that there is absolutely no shame in speaking up about any mental health issues you may be experiencing. We hope to get to the point where we can all view this in the same light as we do physical health.

We wanted to outline the kind of support that can be offered by our mental health first aiders but we also wanted to highlight the limitations of the training and what they are not qualified to do.

Mental Health First Aiders:

- Understand the important factors affecting mental ill health
- Identify the signs and symptoms for a range of mental health conditions
- Use a five-step action plan to provide MHFA to someone experiencing a mental health issue or crisis
- Listen non-judgementally and hold supportive conversations using the MHFA action plan
- Signpost people to professional help, recognising that their role as a Mental Health First Aider does not replace the need for ongoing support

Please remember the mental health first aiders are not trained counsellors or doctors so there are limitations to the support they can offer you. For the most part they can lend a supportive ear to anything you may be going through and signpost where you can go to receive professional help or further support, so please do reach out to them for this. They cannot offer you a diagnosis or help

resolve any mental health illnesses you may be experiencing. They are also not able to provide ongoing, regular support for any problems or mental health illnesses you may be experiencing. Their training doesn't equip them for this and we must also consider the wellbeing of our first aiders.

Our Mental Health First Aiders are:
Insert names of first aiders being trained here

Thanks for helping *insert company name* to become a supportive, open and healthy place to work. This is a team effort and we appreciate everybody's input here.

For any further support or information on this training, please contact Luminate on hello@weareluminate.co and we would be happy to help.