

Mental Health First Aid for Veterans

Testimonials

“I have taken Mental Health First Aid and offered the curriculum to other veteran service providers (community stakeholders), service members, veterans, and their families (SMVF). All were interested in taking the course specifically designed for veterans and families. I served in the Army with the 782nd Airborne as a Motor Transport Operator in Afghanistan 2007...Our mission with the Military Veteran Peer Network Program is to educate, promote, network, and provide peer support and referrals to SMVF in the rural communities of Texas. When you educate society on the challenges that many SMVF face with multiple deployments, transition in returning home, PTSD, MST, TBI, depression, and often times drug and alcohol abuse issues, then the community at large can assist them back at home, which is where every returning soldier wants to get back to. I look forward to implementing the new Mental Health First Aid curriculum in our area.”

*Tousha Barnes, Volunteer Coordinator, Military Veteran Peer Network,
Texas Panhandle Centers and Central Plains Centers*

“As contractor to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for training and certification of veteran peer support staff in VA medical centers - part of a major expansion of peer support services within VA facilities - DBSA has been proud to offer Mental Health First Aid training as a key part of the training curriculum for these new peer employees. All 500 Veterans trained to date under the contract are now trained in Mental Health First Aid as part of their employment-related certification. To say that it's been a powerful experience is a true understatement: these veteran peer employees now have practical skills to respond in an appropriate fashion to veterans in crisis or developing mental health problems and are well-positioned to speak knowledgeably about mental health conditions from their unique perspective as part of VA treatment teams.”

*Lisa Goodale, MSW, LSW, Vice President, Peer Support Services
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance*

“During all of the Mental Health First Aid for Veterans courses, the participants were very engaged. A lot of the interest was not necessarily related only to their fellow service members, but was also focused on their families (kids, siblings, parents, etc.) or themselves. Shortly after one Mental Health First Aid training, a leader noticed a significant change in behavior in a service member and addressed it. He said that the unit leader's response was directly linked to the training and they were able to get the service member needed help...This is a population who is pretty stoic and for them to come to me to tell me stories is significant. In my estimation, that shows significant engagement and the ability to see value in Mental Health First Aid interventions. I like to believe there are many we do not hear about since encounters like these are a pretty intimate thing to share.”

*Kristin Musch, Consultant and Mental Health First Aid Instructor
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Mental Health Program*

“We are very excited to see a module being developed specifically for the military population. [We have] been conducting MHFA trainings to the military and veteran population—under the original curriculum—since 2011. We have had a great response in both knowledge gained and interest in future trainings. We have trained 180 participants thus far that includes active military, National Guardsmen, Veterans, Family Members, Caregivers, Volunteers and Service Providers working with the military and veteran population.”

*Jessica (McNurlen) Fuchs, MA, CRC, Project Director, Serving Together,
Mental Health Association of Montgomery County*

PILOT STUDY FEEDBACK

Participants in the pilot trainings with the Kansas National Guard also shared their thoughts on the training. Selected feedback includes:

“I feel it was good material that should be more widely distributed to military service members.”

“This course was very helpful in my work as I help service members search for jobs.”

“Very informative and applicable to [the] Kansas City Army National Guard.”

“Very good, I recommend that more leaders of every level attend.”

“Very helpful in recognizing and dealing with mental issues.”

“It made me feel more confident to react to a situation in which there was someone with a mental health issue”

“[The course] taught me a lot of new things I can implement”

“Very informative. I like that it pertained to the military”

“Thought it was very informational. There should be more training of this sort.”

“The material was very clear and relevant to military personnel.”

“I think course should be given to all members of the guard.”

“A very informative and well needed course, especially to individuals who deployed or individuals who are not too supportive”

“It was a good course. I actually got a lot of knowledge from it.”

“Excellent course! Covered a wide range of mental illnesses”

“Great course and very valuable information for personal and professional use.”

“Beneficial as potential first responder at NG armory.”

“First aid for mental health is a better concept than just trying to prevent suicide.”

“I feel very confident in what I learned during this session”

“This course was informative, clearly explained, and detail orientated”

“Very well prepared and appreciated the way it was suited for the military”