



# **MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT & SUICIDE PREVENTION**

**Training Guide | 2025/26**



**Belfast Health and  
Social Care Trust**

**caring supporting improving together**

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# INTRODUCTION

This guide provides information on the wide range of training programmes available on the topics of mental health, emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention.

- ⇒ Some of these programmes are designed to help us understand mental health and how to look after our own mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- ⇒ Other programmes train us to identify others who may be in need of support and give us skills to help them.

This guide includes both types of training and provides an overview of each programme to clarify the aims of the training.

The training is split into 4 Tiers or levels as shown below. This will help you decide which training is right for you and also provide guidance on how to build your knowledge and skills by working through training from Tier 1 onwards.

## **Tier 1** **Information Sharing** **Suitable for Everyone**

Topics include:

- Information on services available to support emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention
- Breaking stigma and other barriers related to mental health and suicide
- Information on the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing

## **Tier 2** **Awareness & Understanding** **Suitable for Everyone**

Topics include:

- Understanding factors that impact emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide
- Awareness of how these factors can affect people
- Basic awareness of prevention and coping strategies

## **Tier 3** **Knowledge & Skills** **Suitable for people delivering services and managers**

Topics include:

- Identifying signs and symptoms of poor mental health and / or suicide risk
- How to approach, help and support someone to access services
- Knowledge of mental health and suicide prevention services at local and regional level

## **Tier 4** **Specialised Skills** **Suitable for those working with people at risk of mental health problems or suicide**

Topics include:

- Identifying signs and symptoms of poor mental health and / or suicide risk
- How to intervene in a crisis
- How to approach, help and support someone to access services
- In depth knowledge of mental health and suicide prevention services at local and regional level

# Top Tips for Looking After Yourself

We all experience challenges in life, difficult times, disappointments, loss and change. While these are normal parts of life, they can cause sadness, anxiety and stress. When someone is in good emotional health they have an ability to bounce back during these difficult times. This ability is called resilience.

The Top Tips for Looking After Yourself programme has been developed to facilitate, enable and empower individuals and communities to build on this resilience. It particularly looks at stress and suggests strategies we can use to manage stress in our everyday lives.

The programme is suitable for adults in the Belfast area who wish to find out more about ways to improve their emotional wellbeing and build resilience. It is not a programme which addresses mental illness, however, it may support those experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues, or those in recovery from mental health issues, to implement strategies to improve their overall wellbeing.

## Training Aims

- Increase participants' ability to become more aware of their own stress levels and emotional wellbeing.
- Develop confidence, skills and self-help strategies to promote and protect their own emotional wellbeing and promote good mental health.
- Increase awareness and knowledge of support organisations available to individuals within the community.

## Delivery Method

Either online or in person

## Duration:

2.5 hours if online or 3.5 hours if in person

## Who's it for?

Adults age 18+ in Belfast

## To find out more and book places contact:

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Health Improvement Team

Tel : 02895 046 714

Email: [health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



# Stress Control

Stress Control is a 6 session Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) class for the most common mental health problems: anxiety, depression, panic, poor sleep and poor wellbeing. It is not group therapy and you will not be asked to share your personal experiences. The classes are currently delivered online with free access for anyone in NI.

Classes run regularly online and you can either “attend” the class when it’s broadcast live on YouTube or watch within 48 hours at a time to suit you. All you need to successfully complete this class is to watch each of the six sessions, read the booklets and try out the relaxation and mindfulness exercises (available free on the website).

6 week courses scheduled to commence in May, June, September & November 2023 and January & March 2024. Registration for these is not necessary, just turn up. Details of classes can be found on the website listed below.

## Training Aims

- Stress Control teaches people to ‘become their own therapist’ by following the Stress Control motto of ‘face your fears, be more active, boost your well-being’.
- The 6 sessions focus on the following topics: What is stress?, Control Your Body, Control Your Thoughts, Control Your Actions, Control Panicky Feelings, Get a Good Night’s Sleep, Boost Your Wellbeing and Controlling Your Future

## Delivery Method

Online.

## Duration:

Attendance at 6 x 1.5 hour sessions plus personal study time.

## Who’s it for?

Adults age 18+

To find out more and access the course visit the website:

[www.ni.stresscontrol.org](http://www.ni.stresscontrol.org)

Email: [info@stresscontrol.org](mailto:info@stresscontrol.org)



**stresscontrol**<sup>TM</sup>  
Face your fears; be more active; boost your wellbeing

# Mood Matters

This short mental health awareness programme gives participants knowledge and skills which can be used to maintain or regain good mental health and build resilience to deal with life's challenges. "Mood Matters for Adults" is suitable for adults over 18 including those experiencing low mood, stress and mild to moderate depression.

"Mood Matters for Young People" is a version of the programme available for young people aged 14-18 and "Mood Matters for Parent and Baby" is the version for new parents.

The programme is based on cognitive behavioural concepts and introduces the 'Five Areas Approach' which participants use to challenge and change unhelpful thinking and behaviour in order to make a positive difference to their lives. It also features the 'Take5 for Your Emotional Wellbeing' which focuses on the five most evidenced ways of looking after our mental health (Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give) and teaches us how we can build these into our everyday lives.

## Training Aims

- To increase participants' knowledge of mental health
- To understand what mental ill health is, including signs and symptoms of stress and depression
- Information on how to look after your mental health and where to go for help and support

## Delivery Method

Delivered either online or in the community

## Duration:

2.5 hours

## Who's it for?

Mood Matters for Adults is for those aged 18+

Mood Matters for Young People is for those aged 14-18

Mood Matters for Parent and Baby is for parents expecting or with babies under 3 years of age

To find out more and access the course visit the website:

[www.aware-ni.org/be-aware](http://www.aware-ni.org/be-aware)

Email: [training@aware-ni.org](mailto:training@aware-ni.org)



# Psychological First Aid

Psychological first aid is a humane, simple, yet powerful way of helping someone in distress during and after a crisis like the COVID 19 pandemic. This free, online training is open to all with no booking required. You can complete the training in your own time and at your own pace.

Psychological First Aid involves paying attention to the person's reactions, active listening and if relevant, practical assistance to help address immediate problems and basic needs. Learning psychological first aid skills and understanding reactions to crises empowers participants to help others and apply the same skills to their own lives.

The course resources were developed to support anyone working or volunteering with members of the public during the pandemic. They are aimed at individuals with varying levels of skill and experience. For those who have extensive experience of working with people in emotional distress, some elements of the training will already be familiar.

## Training Aims

- Learn to address basic needs and concerns by providing practical support
- Connecting people in need to information, services and social supports
- Offer someone in need comfort, helping them to feel calm
- Reducing distress and fostering adaptive coping in people in need
- Protecting people in need of support from further harm

## Delivery Method

Online e-learning course taken on your own at any time.

## Duration:

About 1 hour

## Who's it for?

The training is recommended for any adults who are working or volunteering in a role which involves providing support, information or advice.

To find out more and access the course visit the website:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-covid-19>



# Living Life to the Full

This programme is for people experiencing low mood, stress and/or mild to moderate depression. It can help you manage your feelings when you are stressed, worried or depressed and learn simple practical skills to help you cope with life's challenges.

This is a six-session programme using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) concepts. It introduces participants to the 'Five Areas Approach' which illustrates that events and situations in our lives affect how we think, how we feel, how we behave and also affect us physically.

## Training Aims

- Understanding why we feel as we do
- Practical problem solving skills
- Noticing and changing unhelpful thoughts
- Healthy living - sleep, diet and exercise

## Delivery Method

Sessions delivered either online or in the community in a group setting.

## Duration:

6 Sessions — each session is 2 hours long

## Who's it for?

The course is particularly helpful for people experiencing low mood, stress and/or mild to moderate depression, however it is suitable for all adults (18+) as it teaches skills which can be used in every day life. This programme is not suitable for you at this time if you are currently affected by severe depression or if you have experienced a recent major life event, e.g. bereavement, trauma, relationship breakdown etc, which might affect your ability to participate fully.

**To find out more and access the course visit the website:**

[www.aware-ni.org/be-aware](http://www.aware-ni.org/be-aware)

Email: [training@aware-ni.org](mailto:training@aware-ni.org)





# Towards Zero Suicide

This e-learning course on suicide awareness takes only 20 minutes to complete and has been completed by almost 2 million people worldwide. You can complete the course online at any time, in your own time. The course uses an interactive website incorporating videos and BSL support is available for participants who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This training provides participants with basic skills and confidence to help someone who may be considering suicide and is a good starting point for anyone wishing to develop suicide prevention knowledge and skills. Interactive role plays guide the participant through what it would be like to apply the training in a range of circumstances—at work, at home or in the community.

## Training Aims

- To provide key information and facts on suicide
- To learn how to spot suicide warning signs
- To learn how to have a conversation with someone you're worried about
- To provide information on where to signpost to for further support

## Delivery Method

Online e-learning course taken on your own at any time

## Duration:

Minimum 20 minutes

## Who's it for?

The training is recommended for anyone aged 16 and over.

To find out more and access the course visit the website:

[www.zerosuicidealliance.com/suicide-awareness-training](http://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/suicide-awareness-training)

# MANifest: Connecting Men With Mind Fitness

This course is targeted at practitioners and service providers who work with men in any setting and has been developed in partnership with Men's Health Forum in Ireland and Men's Action Network. It explores the key issues that impact on men and their mental wellbeing. It also considers what works in order to be able to effectively engage with men and signpost them to a range of services.

MANifest seeks to condense some of the key learning about working with men into a one-day workshop, and to re-interpret the world through the eyes of men.

During the workshop participants are introduced to examples of effective practice, practical tips and approaches to working with men on the topics of health and emotional wellbeing. The key underpinning value of this workshop is that men are not a problem to be solved, but are an asset to their families, friends, communities and workplaces.

## Training Aims:

- Explore why we need to work with men as a specific group.
- Understand the broad determinants of men's mental wellbeing.
- Identify the barriers that men experience when accessing health and social care services, and how to create opportunities to engage with them.
- Increase the confidence of participants in relation to working with men.

## Delivery Method

Sessions delivered either online or in the community in a group setting.

## Duration:

Workshops are either a full day or 2 half days

## Who's it for?

The training is recommended for adults working with men in any setting across Belfast.

## To find out more and book places contact:

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Health Improvement Team

Tel : 02895 046 714

Email: [health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



# Connections Link Life Suicide Awareness

This half day training programme has been developed by local social enterprise Fresh Minds Education to introduce adults to basic suicide awareness and prevention skills. The programme is interactive and features personal stories from local people affected by suicide.

By the end of the training, participants will have gained the skills to use the Connect 4-Way Model to help someone who may be at risk of suicide. Participants are provided with a range of information on the sources of support and help in the local area. The programme also helps participants to cultivate resilience through positive emotional health practices and self-care.

The programme is suitable for anyone seeking a greater understanding of suicide and the confidence to intervene and support people experiencing emotional distress.

## Training Aims

- Understanding the contributing factors that lead to poor mental health, emotional distress & suicide
- Learn the Connect 4-Way Model for helping someone experiencing emotional distress or at risk of suicide
- Learn tools & resources for support in your community
- Understand the role of self-care and wellbeing in fortifying mental health and preventing suicide.

## Delivery Method

Sessions can be delivered either online or in the community in a group setting.

## Duration:

3.5 hours

## Who's it for?

Adults aged 18+ who live or work in Northern Ireland.

Suicide prevention training can be challenging and triggering. To help you decide if this training is suitable for you please [read the information here.](#)

## To find out more contact:

Fresh Minds Education

Email: [hello@freshmindseducation.com](mailto:hello@freshmindseducation.com)



# SafeTALK - Suicide Alertness for Everyone

Most people with thoughts of suicide don't truly want to die, but are struggling with the pain in their lives. SafeTALK is a half day training programme that prepares anyone over the age of 15 to identify someone with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Most people with thoughts of suicide will, at some point, invite someone to help them stay safe. Alert helpers know how to use these opportunities to support that desire for safety.

This programme is only delivered face-to-face.

The programme is suitable for anyone seeking a greater understanding of suicide and the confidence to intervene and support people experiencing emotional distress.

## Training Aims

- Identify people who have thoughts of suicide
- Move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or avoid talking about suicide
- Apply the TALK steps (Tell, Ask, Listen and KeepSafe) to connect a person with suicidal thoughts to suicide first aid and intervention caregivers.

## Delivery Method

Sessions are delivered in a group setting in local venues.

Not available as online training.

## Duration:

3.5 hours

## Who's it for?

Anyone aged 15+ who lives or works in Northern Ireland.

You may find it helpful to complete Towards Zero Suicide (page 9) before taking part in this training.

Suicide prevention training can be challenging and triggering. If you are unsure whether this training is suitable for you, please contact us using the email below.

## To find out more contact:

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Health Improvement Team

Email: [health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



# MHFA—Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is based on the same principal as physical First Aid but focusses on the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or who is in a mental health crisis. Mental Health First Aid can be given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves.

The course gives participants an understanding of what is meant by mental health and mental ill health including conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, psychosis and substance use disorders. It teaches the signs and symptoms to look out for as well as a model for applying mental health first aid and understanding how to get someone to appropriate support.

The course is suitable for anyone who is likely to come into contact with people experiencing mental health issues such as health staff, community workers, emergency service workers and counsellors. Attendance at the full two days is essential.

## Training Aims

- Learn how to deal with crisis situations such as suicidal behaviour, self-harm, panic attacks and acute psychotic behaviour
- Understand where and how to get help for someone in need
- Learn self-help strategies related to mental health

## Delivery Method

Sessions can be delivered either online or in the community in a group setting.

## Duration:

Face-to-face delivery consists of 2 x 6-hour sessions (you must attend all sessions)

Online delivery via Zoom consists of 3 x 4-hour or 4 x 3-hour sessions (you must attend all sessions)

## Who's it for?

Participants must be aged 18 years and over.

Due to the material covered within this course it is usually not suitable for anyone who has recently experienced a suicide or mental health crisis.

## To find out more contact:

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Health Improvement Team

Email: [health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



## ASIST - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Most people considering suicide share their distress and their intent—this training can help us see and respond to these invitations to help to keep the person safe. It aims to give participants the confidence to ask about suicide if you are concerned about someone's safety and provides tools to help prevent the immediate risk of suicide.

ASIST is suitable for anyone who is likely to come into contact with people at risk of suicide in the course of their work or voluntary roles such as health staff, community workers, emergency service workers and counsellors.

It's recommended that you complete SafeTALK training (see page 11) in the first instance and then decide if you feel that you'd like to progress to learn the more in depth intervention skills taught at ASIST training.

Working mostly in small groups of one trainer to no more than 15 participants, ASIST uses many different teaching processes to create a practice-oriented and interactive learning experience. Attendance at the full two days is essential.

### Training Aims

- Learn to recognise invitations for help and reach out to offer support
- Be able to review the risk of suicide and apply a suicide intervention model to keep the person safe
- Learn to link people with community resources.

### Delivery Method

Sessions are delivered in a group setting local venues.

Not available as online training.

### Duration:

2 full consecutive days — you must attend both days

### Who's it for?

Participants must be aged 18+

Due to the material covered within this course it is usually not suitable for anyone who has been bereaved by suicide within the last 12 months or anyone who has recently experienced a suicidal crisis.

### To find out more contact:

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Health Improvement Team

Email: [health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



# BELFAST RECOVERY COLLEGE

The Belfast Recovery College welcomes everyone aged 16+ in the community to enrol for free wellbeing and mental health education courses.

All courses are co-produced and co-facilitated by Peer Educators who have lived experience of the subject. They work alongside mental health practitioners to develop and deliver courses. Creating and delivering courses together using the combined expertise of mental health professionals and peer trainers with real life experience, breaks down traditional barriers and allows people to learn together to inspire hope, opportunity and control in an individual's personal recovery journey.

Those who take part in courses include a real diversity of people from the community including people with lived experience of mental health, members of staff from Belfast Trust and many other organisations, carers, family, professionals, front-line workers and those with an interest in mental health and young people.

The Recovery College regularly produces a prospectus listing the a range of courses available. Some are delivered online but the college also hopes to resume face to face workshops during 2022.

Examples of courses which regularly run include:

- WRAP (the Wellness Recovery Action Plan)
- Living with Depression
- Living with Anxiety
- Living with Bipolar
- Living with Self Harm
- Building Resilience
- Bring Me Back to Work with Care
- Getting a Good Night's Sleep
- Compassionate Journaling
- Creative Writing for Personal Development
- Building Self Esteem
- Five Ways to Connect - Understanding Loneliness
- Menopause & Mental Health
- Understanding medications
- And many more!



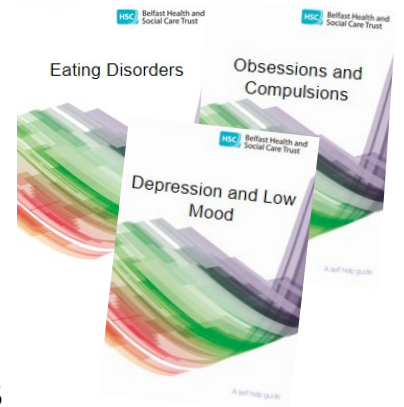
You can find out more and access the latest prospectus at [www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/belfast-recovery-college](http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/belfast-recovery-college).

For more information or if you would like to attend a course, contact [RecoveryCollege@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:RecoveryCollege@belfasttrust.hscni.net) or phone 028 9504 3059.

# SELF HELP RESOURCES & INFORMATION

We can all take steps to improve our mental health and emotional wellbeing. Below are a list of helpful resources relevant to the Belfast area:

- **Self Help Guides** on topics related to mental health including anxiety, bereavement, sleep problems and many more can be downloaded [here](#).
- A **Directory of Services for Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing** in the Belfast area can be downloaded [here](#)
- **Self Help resources and information** related to mental health & emotional wellbeing can be found at the [Community Wellbeing NI](#) website , including information on the pandemic and mental health.
- The [Minding your Head website](#) includes lots of information and resources on mental health and emotional wellbeing including “Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing” and local services across the region.
- The **Steps to Deal with Stress Booklet** includes useful tips to help you manage stress and look after your wellbeing. Download it [here](#).
- **Advice and information related to alcohol**, including lists of services in each Trust area, can be found [here](#).
- Download the “[Here2Help](#)” app for instant access to information on mental health and crisis support including contact details for local services across the region. Here2Help is available in the Google Play Store and the Apple iOS App Store.
- For information regarding **Infant Mental Health and Solihull Approach** training please contact the Child Development Interventions Coordinator [health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



## If you require urgent support call Lifeline

No matter what your age or where you live in Northern Ireland, if you or someone you know is in distress or despair, Lifeline is here to help.

**Lifeline is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year on 0808 808 8000.**

**Calls are free.**

Deaf and hard of hearing Textphone users can call Lifeline on 18001 0808 808 8000.





# SELF HELP RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Do you tend to overthink things and see the bad before the good?

As a parent, do meltdowns from your children exhaust you?

Do you over criticise yourself with mistakes and put yourself down?

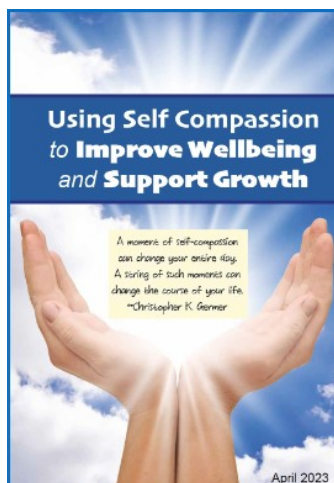
Sound familiar? Then the resources below may be helpful for you . Getting support at an early stage is always a good idea.

ASCERT, the South Eastern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts have been working together to bring support to people at a much earlier stage. They have created 3 on- line self-help resources to help people work on these common things that we all have at times.

## Free Self Help Workbooks

Workbooks that can be downloaded along with and visual clips that guide the viewer through the workbooks at their own pace They are all free. All we ask is if you make use of them use the evaluation link on each on to tell us in they have been helpful.

- [Self Compassion to Improve Wellbeing and Support Growth](#)
- [Bend Don't Break](#): Low intensity CBT based self-help to support resilience
- [Building our Children's Developing Brain](#): for parents to help build their children's emotional regulation



# TRAINING FOR TRAINERS

Each year there may be opportunities for individuals in the Belfast area to take part in Training for Trainers programmes for some of the courses in this booklet. Training to be a trainer means you are then qualified to deliver programmes yourself.

Training to deliver a programme is a big commitment and applications to take part can be very competitive.

You'll usually have to commit several days to taking part in a train the trainer course and may also have to complete independent study. Usually, trainers will also be asked to commit to delivering an agreed number of programmes every year once they are trained. Trainers are often also required to report on any courses they deliver and take part in mentoring or networking meetings to ensure best practice and quality assurance.

If you are interested in becoming a trainer to deliver programmes on mental health and suicide prevention, here are a few things to consider:

- Can you commit the time required, not just to complete the Train the Trainer course but also to deliver programmes regularly once you are qualified?
- Do you have relevant experience of delivering presentations or workshops to groups of people? Usually this is a requirement for Train the Trainer programmes.
- Will you be able to organise training programmes in your community or workplace? Do you have contacts who can help you advertise these and recruit participants?
- Can you commit to participating in mentoring or networking meetings after you are trained? This may be a requirement for your ongoing certification as a trainer.
- Can you adhere to any reporting required as part of training delivery and do you have policies to ensure data protection, health and safety and other standards are met when you deliver training?
- Are you likely to be available to deliver training beyond the short term? If you will be moving job / volunteer role, retiring or will not be able to commit to delivering training in the future, please consider this before you apply.
- Organisations delivering this type of training should sign up to the [PHA Quality Standards for Services Promoting Mental and Emotional Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention](#).



**We plan to publicise Train the Trainer opportunities as these become available during the course of the year. To be added to the mailing list for Train the Trainer opportunities please contact:**

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Health Improvement Team

Email: [health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

For further information contact:

[health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

Tel: 02895 046 714

Health Improvement Team  
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust  
2nd Floor  
Graham House  
Knockbracken Healthcare Park  
Saintfield Road  
Belfast BT8 8BH



Belfast Health and  
Social Care Trust

caring supporting improving together