



Hundreds supported to provide mental health first aid in Dorset

One success story recently has been the mental health first aid training we have provided for council staff in partnership with [Mental Health First Aid England](#).

We decided to put on the training after being inspired by the [‘find Mike’ story](#), knowing that providing people with the confidence and means to act, could help someone who is in a desperate situation.

Council staff are perfect people to equip with these skills. They have access to people throughout the community. And there’s a good reason why we’re training council staff to support people in this way: poor mental health is the largest cause of disability in the UK, with at least one in four people experiencing some form of mental health problem at some point each year. It is also closely connected with other problems including physical health, relationships, education and work prospects. Public knowledge and awareness about mental illness still remains low when compared with other health conditions.

In the same way as we learn physical first aid, mental health first aid is an educational course that teaches people how to identify, understand and help a person who may be experiencing a mental health problem. Participants improve their understanding of issues surrounding mental health and better understand how and why positive and negative mental health affects life and business. They also learn to be able to work more effectively with people experiencing mental health problems.

And the [results](#) have been good, with almost 300 people attending training across the whole of Dorset. Eighty-three per cent of those trained said it helped in their workplace and 90% said they were now confident enough to respond to a mental health issue, 73% also said it had helped in their personal lives.

We’re continuing to hold mental health first aid training courses across Dorset and we’ve also worked to train people around the [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#).