

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING PROJECT

In 2019, Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) expanded its training and educational opportunities by offering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) to employees, community partners, and community members. MHFA is a national certification designed to train members of the community in skills to assist when someone faces a mental health crisis or challenge. Trainees learn risk factors, warning signs, and how to guide someone to helpful resources. CHA offers specialized modules for adults, youth, public safety and higher ed. This program is available in both virtual and in-person formats.

Our program reaches individuals and organizations who live, work, or study in **Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Revere, Somerville, and Winthrop and more!**



900+ community members from **8** cities

trained in

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

*including **19** youth summer mental health & wellness interns

WHO WE TRAIN

- CHA patients, employees, & volunteers
- Public safety personnel & community health workers
- Youth-serving agencies, housing advocates, & substance-abuse counselors
- Veterans & their family members
- Parents, teachers, college students, health departments

In 2019, CHA's Community Health Improvement Department launched the Youth Mental Health & Wellness Summer Internship, hiring a team of teens to learn about mental health, raise awareness and lead a mental health promotion project.

TRAINING IMPACT

Participants encouraged & referred

1,226

people to resources from 2019 through 2020

3 in 5



participants reported having used material from the training to assist someone in need of support

79%

of Adult and 69% of Youth training participants assisted someone to seek professional help/referred someone to services in their personal lives

89%

of Adult and 86% of Youth training participants found the course informative

96%

of Adult and 95% of Youth training participants recommend the course to others



93% agreed they could reach out to someone who may be dealing with a mental health challenge after being trained



96% agreed they recognized the signs that someone may be dealing with a mental health challenge or crisis after being trained



96% agreed they could actively and compassionately listen to someone in distress after being trained

Participants noted that MHFA provided them with **the confidence to initiate mental health discussions**, and the **resources** to competently help their **patients/clients as well as their family and friends.**



“I’m a registered nurse. This training gave me more resources and confidence to advocate/refer a patient to mental health when needed... I must say that so far this training has been a great asset, especially during this pandemic.”
-CHA Staff

“The training has had a big impact on my ability to identify, advocate for, and support others, while being empathetic to their experiences and needs.”
-Participant

This program is made possible through a grant from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to the Community Health Improvement Dept. at Cambridge Health Alliance.

Contact: Project Director
Jaime Lederer, MSW, MPH
jlederer@challiance.org, 617-806-8776

