

First Nations Mental Health First Aid Training 2024 – EOI Guidelines

Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network (PHN) is making available 84 free training courses for First Nations people working within the primary health sector within our region.

First Nations People face greater barriers to employment, including a lack of access to high-quality and relevant training. These targeted training course positions will provide high quality and accessible training (online) for the **accredited and certified** Mental Health First Aid course delivered by Mental Health Partners.

The course has been culturally adapted for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and is taught by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Instructors. Participants will learn first aid skills for helping indigenous people experiencing a mental health crisis, mental health problems or the early stages of mental illness. Upon completion, the accreditation is valid for 3 years.

An Expression of Interest for 84 pre-purchased Mental Health First Aid training courses from Mental Health Partners will be made available through the Smarty Grants platform. We will invite expressions of interest (EOI) from First Nations people currently employed in the primary care sector.

These scholarships aim to empower individuals in First Nations communities by increasing mental health literacy, reducing stigma, and fostering a supportive environment to recognise and respond effectively to mental health challenges. Through this, the program seeks to improve early intervention, promote access to culturally safe mental health services, and enhance well-being and resilience.

The course is designed to be educational and not a form of therapy or support for those experiencing mental health issues. The course's learning outcomes equip participants with culturally informed knowledge and skills to support Indigenous adults experiencing mental health problems, promoting a lasting positive impact on the lives of First Nations communities.

Training Requirements

The Mental Health First Aid training course will consist of approx. 7-8 hours of pre-workshop course work to be completed prior to completion of 2 x 2.5-hour online workshops over 2 days (both workshops and pre-course work are compulsory). Note that the course will be delivered in English.

What You'll Learn

- An introduction to Mental Health and Mental Health First Aid
- How to recognise the common signs and symptoms of a mental health issue
- How to approach a sufferer and what questions to ask to help understand and assess the severity of the situation
- Practical skills to confidently intervene in real-life mental health scenarios
- How to encourage a person to seek professional help
- Where to get professional help

For more information on the course please visit the training provider's website:

<https://www.mentalhealthpartners.com.au/courses/mhfa-atsi>

The Expression of Interest (EOI) for one of the free training places will be made available in a competitive open round through SmartyGrants. There will be 84 places available on a first in basis for eligible applicants.

Completion of the training will provide the training participant with **accreditation** as a Mental Health First Aid Officer which is valid for 3 years.

The EOI will open on 8/7/24 and close on 31/8/24 or sooner if all 84 training places have been allocated. Interested applicants are advised to submit their EOI as soon as possible. If places remain by the closing date, the PHN reserves the right to extend the closing date until all places are allocated.

The PHN will not be reimbursing any associated costs involved in completing the training.

PHN is also identifying any participants who may be interested in completing a facilitator course with potential to offer these at a later stage.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 1) **Identify as First Nations.**
- 2) Currently in the primary health care workforce with the HNECC region with priority given to those in rural areas.
- 3) Commit to commencing the course by undertaking the pre-workshop course work within the first three months and booking into two workshops (dates TBA) from the list that will be made available.

Assessment of the EOI's will be undertaken by our First Nations Health Access Team and be based on meeting the criteria, responses to the questions in the EOI and priority of those in rural and remote areas within the Hunter New England and Central Coast region. Priority will also be given to those who have not received previous training or other funded development opportunities from the PHN.

Applicants must ensure they have access to a computer and internet connection sufficient to complete the course.

Applicants are to be aged 18 and above and not already hold valid accreditation in mental health first aid.

How to apply

The Expression of Interest (EOI) for the 84 training places will be managed through the online grants portal, SmartyGrants, **on a first in basis to eligible applicants**, with a waitlist taken in case any positions become available.

Permission must be given to share these contact details with Mental Health Partners exclusively for the use of participating in the training. Eligible applicants will be required to provide:

- Name
- Position
- Phone number
- Email address
- Postal Address (for course materials to be sent)
- Employer and employer address

Those not eligible:

Those not eligible to apply include primary health workers:

- Not within the HNECC PHN geographical region.
- Who are not expected to continue working within the next 12 months
- Who do not identify as First Nations
- Applicants deemed not eligible by HNECC PHN
- Currently working for a Local Health District, are employed by NSW Health or have other funding streams available to complete the course.

Note: Previous grant recipients are eligible only if they have fully complied with any previous PHN contract commitments including reporting and acquittal requirements.

Terms and conditions

The following terms and conditions will apply to all successful grantees:

- HNECC PHN Terms and Conditions will apply.
- Only 1 training position per person will be allocated
- Applications that do not meet the criteria will not be eligible.
- Applicants are to notify the PHN immediately and prior to training if circumstances have changed and they are unable to complete the training.
- Both the online and pre-work for the training is to be completed by the same person and are compulsory.
- Failure by the nominated person to complete all components of the training may result in the applicant being required to reimburse (pay) for the training costs.
- Allocation of training grants will be on a first in basis.
- Applicants may withdraw from the training with prior notice. The position will then be re-allocated to the next eligible applicant on the waitlist.
- Applicants will be notified of their outcome of their EOI.
- Applicants must agree for their details to be supplied to the training provider to allow contact for enrolment purposes.

Application Process

EOI are to be completed through the online form on the PHN grants portal, SmartyGrants.

HNECC PHN reserves the right to close the EOI round if all training positions have been awarded prior to the closing date or extend the closing date if positions are still available.

Applicants may be contacted to discuss their eligibility and ability to meet the criteria. This will constitute part of the eligibility assessment.

If an applicant's nominee awarded a training position fails to attend the course or discontinues the course (without prior notice), the applicant may be required to reimburse the full amount of cost of the course to the PHN. If personal or exceptional circumstances prevent an applicant's nominee from starting or completing the course within the designated time limit, they are to discuss options with the PHN.

If you have any questions regarding the training, please contact the PHN Grants team on grants@thephn.com.au.