



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

PHE to launch new e-learning on Psychological First Aid during COVID-19

On Monday 15 June PHE will launch an updated [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) digital training module](#), aimed at all frontline and essential workers and volunteers.

The course aims to increase awareness and confidence to provide psychosocial support to people affected by COVID-19. PFA is a globally recognised training in emergency situations and we have developed this new course as part of our national incident response, and in partnership with NHS England, Health Education England, FutureLearn and E-Learning for Health.

The course is free, and no previous qualifications are required. It takes around 90 minutes to complete and is also available in three sessions for the learner to complete at their own pace. By the end of the course, outcomes will include: understanding how emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic can affect us, recognising people who may be at increased risk of distress and understanding how to offer practical and emotional support.

How partners can help

As well as considering how the training could be used within your own organisation, we would be grateful if you could promote the launch of the training via your channels from Monday 15 June (this information is embargoed until that date). Some suggested text for newsletters and tweets is included in the annex, which you can tailor for your organisation.

If you have any questions about this activity, please contact publicmentalhealth@phe.gov.uk

Best wishes,

PHE mental health team

Annex: suggested copy and background information – for use after 00.00 15 June 2020

Suggested short copy

New Psychological First Aid training during COVID-19 open to all frontline and essential workers and volunteers

On 15 June Public Health England (PHE) is launching updated [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) training module](#), aimed at all frontline and essential workers and volunteers. The course teaches the key principles of giving psychological first aid in emergencies and aims to increase awareness and confidence to provide this support to people affected by COVID-19. PFA is a globally recognised training in emergency situations and PHE has been developed this new course as part of our national incident response, and in partnership with NHS England, Health Education England, FutureLearn and others.

The course is free, and no previous qualifications are required. By the end of the course, outcomes will include: understanding how emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic can affect us, recognising people who may be at increased risk of distress and understanding how to offer practical and emotional support. The course takes around 90 minutes to complete and is also available in three sessions for the learner to complete at their own pace.

Suggested tweets

- New PHE training tailored to the #coronavirus response is live for #frontline #essential workers + #volunteers. #PsychologicalFirstAid will help you support the mental wellbeing of others during this challenging time @PHE <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-covid-19/1>
- If you are a #frontline #essential worker + #volunteers, #PsychologicalFirstAid can help you to give practical + emotional support to others, while recognising those who may be at a higher risk of psychological problems or distress @PHE <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-covid-19/1>
- Learn how to support the mental wellbeing of others during this challenging time with #PsychologicalFirstAid. Open to all #frontline #essential workers + #volunteers, PHE's new course aims to help you support people affected by #coronavirus @PHE <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-covid-19/1>

Background information

- Public Health England (PHE) is preparing and disseminating a new online training programme to assist frontline workers in supporting the psychological wellbeing of people affected by COVID-19. We are working in partnership with FutureLearn, NHS England, Health Education England and others.

- The Mental Health & Psycho Social Support Reference Cell, as part of PHE's national incident response, is co-ordinating the rollout of psychological first aid for COVID-19 as part of its action plan.
- The updated course module on Psychological First Aid has been tailored to the Covid-19 response. It has been written and reviewed by experts.
- Psychological First Aid is the globally recognised training for emergency situations and is aimed at anyone carrying out a frontline role where they may be dealing with the public during this crisis, e.g. health workers, local authority workers, volunteers etc.
- The course is aimed at frontline or essential workers and volunteers dealing with the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. No previous qualifications are necessary. Examples of people who might benefit from the training include health and social care workers, council employees, law enforcement officers, community leaders and others with caring responsibilities.
- Anyone can use the PFA approach and the course takes around 90 minutes to complete. By the end of the course participants will be able to:
 - Demonstrate an understanding of what Psychological First Aid is
 - Identify for whom it is suited and how to help them
 - Identify how to better support yourself and peers in such crises
 - Engage with further reading into psychosocial support during emergencies.
- The course will teach you the key principles of giving psychological first aid in emergencies. This is not training on how to deliver specialist care, but to enhance people's skills in identifying and providing practical and emotional support to those in distress in the context of the pandemic.