



# Updating the Mental Health First Aid guidelines for substance use problems

## **Purpose**

Mental Health First Aid International (MHFA International) and the University of Melbourne are conducting research to update the MHFA guidelines for substance use problems. Previous guidelines for problem drug use and problem alcohol use can be found at the [MHFA website](#). The research question is:

"What information and skills does a member of the public need in order to provide mental health first aid to a person who is experiencing problem alcohol or other drug use?"

## **Participants**

The guidelines will be updated using the Delphi research method which draws on the consensus of experts. These expert participants will be people with a lived experience of problem alcohol or other drug use (consumers and carers) and mental health professionals and researchers.

## **Recruitment**

Recruitment has begun and will continue into the last quarter of 2021. Participants will be recruited from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Recruiting internationally will mean participants have a range of knowledge, experiences and perspectives, and ensure the guidelines are informed by the consensus of the world's experts in the field.

## **Project outcomes**

The project will produce updated MHFA International guidelines for substance use problems. This update will ensure these guidelines reflect current best practice and inform future updates of MHFA courses. Previous MHFA guideline redevelopment studies have produced more comprehensive guidelines and often better represent the complexities of experiencing mental health problems.

## **Benefits to International Licensed Providers**

This research will be of benefit to the MHFA International (MHFAI) community because it will ensure MHFA courses are based on global, up-to-date research. We value the experience of the MHFAI community and the people they train as MHFAiders, and this is a way for these groups to directly contribute to improving our courses. The guidelines produced in this study will be available on the MHFA International website.

## **Further information:**

Please contact Kathryn Chalmers at the University of Melbourne - [kchalmers1@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:kchalmers1@unimelb.edu.au)