

# Mental Health First Aid 2016 Update

## Allegheny HealthChoices, Inc. Summary of Activity



Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a public education program that started in the United States in 2008. This evidence-based program teaches people to identify and address the most common mental health issues. The course provides participants with increased knowledge about mental illness and reduces stigma. This allows people to help someone in distress, potentially resulting in early identification of concerns, early referral to treatment, and diversion of suicidal thoughts/attempts. Early detection and intervention of mental illness have been linked to improved outcomes and reduced socioeconomic impact.

Allegheny County and AHCI have been early and active adopters of the MHFA program, beginning local trainings in 2009, implementing the Southwestern Pennsylvania Collaborative of Trainers in 2009, and supporting train the trainer sessions since 2012. This report provides an update about MHFA activities in Allegheny County.

### Southwestern Pennsylvania Collaborative of Trainers: Building Capacity



AHCI supports a collaborative of trainers with oversight, coordination of trainings and materials, an annual meeting, and outreach. AHCI and Allegheny County have also supported three train the trainer sessions in the last five years. In 2013, there were 45 adult MHFA trainers. This group has expanded to 90 trainers with the specializations shown below. About half of these trainers are active with the collaborative. The other half train privately or inside other systems (i.e. within colleges or the jail).

**45 MHFA Trainers in Allegheny County in 2013** —————> **90 by the end of 2016**

#### MHFA Trainers in Allegheny County by Specialty Curriculum

(46 trainers were also added in Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, and Westmoreland)



### Outreach Efforts: Strengthening Community Ties

Local trainers reach out to people with whom they have connections and often plan their own trainings. AHCI supports these efforts with broader outreach through media, conferences, and community meetings.

*AHCI's outreach efforts since 2013 include:*

**2013** Public Service Announcement, Conference: Older Adults

**2014** Conferences: People Serving Veterans, Faith-Based Leaders, Statewide Schools, Older Adults

**2015** Health Literacy Coalition Meeting, Substance Use Provider Meeting, Conferences: Human Resources Association, Statewide Community of Practice: Schools, Allegheny County Port Authority, Allegheny County Jail, Jefferson Regional Foundation Annual Forum

**2016** SW PA Women's Group Meeting, Veterans Hospital Meeting, Jefferson Regional Foundation and Annual Forum

## Trainings: Educating Allegheny County and the Region

**528** MHFA trainings delivered between 2013 and 2016

**8,302** people educated through MHFA trainings in Allegheny County and the region

### Number of MHFA Trainings by Type, 2013-2016

		2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
Allegheny Co.*	Adult 	68	66	55	75	264
	Youth 	5	29	33	25	92
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>356</b>
Other Counties**	Adult 	15	35	42	25	117
	Youth 	5	10	14	26	55
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>172</b>

Spotlight on 2016:  
Of the 100 trainings held in Allegheny County, 11 included new specialized curricula.



**1 Public Safety**



**1 Veterans**



**2 Older Adults**



**7 Higher Ed.**

\*AHCI supported 72 trainings (72%) in 2016, Jefferson Foundation supported 5 trainings (5%), and the remaining 23 trainings (23%) were privately and/or grant funded.

\*\*Beaver, Butler, Cumberland, Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland

### Jefferson Regional Foundation

The Jefferson Regional Foundation (JRF) is committed to improving the health of their community. They have identified MHFA as a tool for increasing community knowledge and reducing stigma about mental health and substance use disorders.

JRF has supported the implementation of MHFA in the Jefferson Hospital corridor, south of Pittsburgh, since July 2016. Over the course of a three year grant with AHCI, JRF will add 16 trainers and provide over 50 MHFA trainings.

In the first six months of the grant, JRF added 10 adult trainers and delivered 5 trainings to faith-based and community organizations that are committed to improving knowledge, reducing stigma, and facilitating improved knowledge of community resources in their region.

### MHFA: Next Steps

Because of increased demand for the youth curriculum from schools and child-serving organizations, a youth train the trainer session will be held in Allegheny County in 2017. Within the adult curriculum, we anticipate increasing demand for the higher education, older adult, and public safety specialties. We continue to build and diversify the trainer workforce through train the trainer sessions and support of the SW PA Collaborative of Trainers.

We will promote partnerships between organizations with trainers and those who want training to broaden the program's reach and strengthen its sustainability.

AHCI will continue to support MHFA work and expand the community-wide partnership that will embed this program throughout the general population, providing a basic understanding of mental illness and how to help a person in need.