

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Mental Health First Aid

D&S IFCA provide mental health training for staff

Mental health concerns within the workplace have been a growing concern for a number of years throughout the UK within all sizes of business.



The Department of Health: National Institute of Mental Health in England (NIMHE) introduced a two-day training program called Mental Health first Aid (MHFA) in 2007 which was adopted from the already developed course created in Australia which was first introduced in the year 2000.

During the two-day MHFA course, candidates learn how to identify someone who is suffering with their Mental Health and how to approach the topic sensitively. MHFA courses do not qualify a person to be a counsellor, however active listening skills are taught in addition to correct sign posting.

- **Approach the person, assess and assist with any crisis**
- **Listen and communicate non-judgementally**
- **Give support and information**
- **Encourage the person to get appropriate professional help**
- **Encourage other supports**

D&S IFCA has recognised risks to staff wellbeing, associated with different work pressures and have also recognised the potential benefits for staff that can be achieved with mental health training.

IFCO Dan Cresswell attended the MHFA training course in January 2020 as it was a natural progression from the four-year therapeutic counselling course, he undertook which qualifies him to be a counsellor.

Although Dan is unable to be a counsellor to the current members of staff due to ethical and boundary issues, he can employ and teach therapeutic techniques to staff who may need or want help.