

Mental Health First Aiders



Reach out. We're here to help.

Meet Your Mental Health First Aiders

As part of A.F. Blakemore's mental health and wellbeing programme, the company has trained up a number of colleagues as mental health first aiders.

A mental health first aider is someone you can reach out to for confidential support and guidance if you (or someone close) are experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress.

Initially, they may offer a one-to-one conversation to enable you to discuss and share your thoughts and feelings, or be able to signpost you to the appropriate support services available.

Mental health first aiders are not trained to be therapists or psychiatrists, but they can offer you impartial support through non-judgemental listening and guidance.

If you feel you could benefit from a conversation with an AFB mental health first aider, please reach out to one using the contact details below. It's okay not to be okay.



Olivia Millard
HR (Apex II)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider not only to become more aware of mental health, but to help and support others that may be suffering.

I am very passionate about this and want to make sure that awareness is raised about mental health in order for all staff to feel comfortable talking about it and the support they may require from their manager and the business.

Contact:

omillard@afblakemore.co.uk
07774 994792 during work hours



Ian Bailes
Retail (field)

I have, for a number of years, helped care for a family member with mental illness and have seen the devastating effects that the illness can have.

I am aware that mental illness can affect many people during the course of their life. I want to be part of a team that can support other staff that may be suffering from what is a complex and multifaceted illness.

Contact:

ibailes@afblakemore.co.uk
07768 702286



Claudette Robotham
Retail (Willenhall)

Having a family member go through a mental health crisis made me want to understand mental health better. Having worked with Childline through work, I wanted to understand more and broaden my knowledge.

I want to be part of a community that can help get rid of the stigma of mental health and encourage, support and identify anyone who needs our help.

Contact:

claudette.robotham@afblakemore.co.uk
07816 219385



Carl White
Retail (field)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider because I wanted to understand people who suffered from mental health issues and what role I could play in supporting them.

Becoming a first aider has definitely opened my eyes to a wide range of challenges that people suffering from poor mental health face, and the stigma that comes with it.

Contact:

carl.white@afblakemore.co.uk
07970 8289140 during work hours



Chloe Ball
Logistics (Willenhall)

Mental health is something that is extremely close to my heart. I have raised around £5,000 for mental health charities over the last five years to create more awareness of the issue, so I jumped at the opportunity to become a mental health first aider.

The more aware we can become of the problems staff are experiencing, the better equipped we can be to support our colleagues that experience poor mental health.

Contact:

cball@afblakemore.co.uk
07827 955196



Stuart McQuillan
Foodservice (Wakefield)

Despite mental health issues becoming more and more prevalent, there is still a taboo attitude around speaking about mental health.

By becoming a mental health first aider, I feel that it gives the people I work with on a daily basis an outlet to talk about these issues in a secure way.

Contact:

smcquillan@afblakemore.co.uk
07450 963601



Mandy Gasson
Retail (field)

I have been a volunteer counsellor for Childline for several years, and I thought becoming a mental health first aider would broaden my knowledge and experience. It may allow me to help someone who reaches out.

Having experienced a level of mental illness within my family, I can already see the benefits of a better understanding.

Contact:

mgasson@afblakemore.co.uk
07776 213175 during work hours



Kulwant Singh
Logistics (Willenhall)

When lockdown was enforced in the UK, all media outlets incessantly broadcast news about mental health issues. I wanted to help those who have been suffering from mental health issues and gain a better understanding of their view of the world.

To do so professionally, I decided to become a mental health first aider as this would arm me with the knowledge of mental health issues, cultural sensitivities and the support available.

Contact:

kully1219@gmail.com

01902 366066, extension 1896 during work hours



Kerry Webster
Foodservice (Darlaston)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider to support my colleagues and family and hopefully spread more awareness of mental health issues.

Contact:

kwebster@afblakemore.co.uk

07909 007535 during work hours



Dave Parry
Retail (field)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider because in the past I struggled to understand people who suffered from mental health problems.

I very much wanted to challenge my own attitude towards mental health by understanding more about it.

Contact:

dparry@afblakemore.co.uk

07971 401971



Marianne Lawrence
Trading (Apex II)

After seeing mental health issues on a daily basis, and already being a physical first aider, I thought that expanding my knowledge and skills would really help me know how to help people who are really in need.

Contact:

mlawrence@afblakemore.co.uk

07871 239755



Mark Bostock
Retail (field)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider because I have family members who have suffered from mental illness.

Having more knowledge will enable me to provide support to them and to my colleagues going forward.

Contact:

mbostock@afblakemore.co.uk

07780 225711



Terina Jones
Logistics (Talbot Green)

I think it is important to add mental health first aid to the physical first aid training I already undertake.

I've had an interest for a long period of time in learning about mental health (especially as I lost both my grandad and dad to Alzheimer's). I was keen to develop knowledge of all aspects of mental health in the hope that I can be of assistance to someone in need sometime.

Contact:
jonest@afblakemore.co.uk
01443 235293



Mark Collins
Trading (Apex II)

Mental health awareness is something that quite rightly is being discussed more and more within society. I decided this was a great opportunity to increase my knowledge of mental health challenges that people face.

More importantly, I want to use this knowledge and these skills to help and support others both inside and outside of our organisation at the time they need it.

Contact:
mcollins@afblakemore.co.uk
07789 549513 during work hours



Carolyne Barker
Retail (field)

Having experienced first-hand the impact that poor mental health can have on an individual and their family and friends, I wanted to broaden my knowledge on mental illness and how I can help support people more effectively.

Contact:
cbarker@afblakemore.co.uk
07970 828141



Chris Caddick
Logistics (Willenhall)

Mental health is extremely important, now so more than ever, so it is extremely important that we have as many people understand it and be educated in it to help as many people as possible.

Since completing the mental health course, I feel confident I can pass this knowledge over to those that are in need as well as to my team to help people also.

Contact:
ccaddick@afblakemore.co.uk
01902 364938 during work hours



Caroline Wills
Retail (Willenhall)

With the immense coverage of mental health in the media over the last few years, I was interested in finding out what being a mental health first aider involved.

I hoped that learning new skills and techniques would enable me to support and assist colleagues with these underlying conditions, which are only now being seen as important to prioritise.

Contact:
cwills@afblakemore.co.uk
07870 187656



Gerald Aldridge
Trading (Talbot Green)

I had very little knowledge of the various mental health issues that were affecting people and wanted to learn more so that I could recognise the signs and offer the appropriate help.

People are often reluctant to admit to others that they have an issue, but I believe my listening skills combined with my learnings from the Mental Health First Aider course could enable them to feel they could talk freely to me.

Contact:
galdridge@afblakemore.co.uk
07584 213008



Nikky Ball
Logistics (Willenhall)

With mental health issues very much an illness in today's society, I would like to gain the knowledge and tools to be able to provide support both within the workplace and away from the workplace.

Contact:
nball@afblakemore.co.uk
07826 947825



Colin Davies
Retail (field)

Having witnessed first-hand the devastating effects poor mental health can have on a person's wellbeing, I saw this as an opportunity to better understand what a sufferer of poor mental health may be going through and how better I can help.

I wanted to become a mental health first aider to better recognise when a colleague may be struggling, understand how to approach the subject and have the tools to help constructively.

Contact:
colin.davies@afblakemore.co.uk
07881 777576



Cheryl Norman
Trading (Apex II)

The importance of mental health has become more recognised, both inside and outside the workplace. The recent Covid-19 pandemic has left a lot more people isolated and sometimes suffering in silence.

I wanted to become a mental health first aider to learn how to recognise the signs of illness and have the tools and knowledge to be able to provide support and guidance to those who need it.

Contact:
cnorman@afblakemore.co.uk
07425 616285 during work hours



Malcolm Coates
Fresh Foods (Hilton Cross)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider because I think it helps people to talk with others they work with or don't always know.

I thought it would be good to help others.

Contact:
mcoates@afblakemore.co.uk
07775 020976



Bev Jones
Finance (Willenhall)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider to gain the skills and knowledge to be able to recognise and support anyone that requires assistance, both within and outside the workplace.

Contact:

bjones@afblakemore.co.uk
07557 183624 during work hours



Zak Aston
Logistics (Willenhall)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider because I wanted to have a better understanding of some of the issues that people face day to day.

I wanted to learn about early signs of these issues so that I can help those that need it get help for themselves sooner. I think mental health is becoming increasingly important and I wanted to be better informed.

Contact:

zakaston1993@gmail.com
01902 364938 during work hours



Hannah Dudley
Retail (Chipping Sodbury)

Mental health is close to my heart as a result of personal experience with family and friends. I wanted to learn more about it so that I have the tools to offer the appropriate advice.

It's about time mental health was not such a taboo subject and was spoken about openly without people feeling shamed. I wanted to learn and understand about mental health so I could encourage others to do the same. The more we know, the more we can help.

Contact:

hannah.dudley001@gmail.com
01454 312236



Chris Bryan
Logistics (Willenhall)

I wanted to become a mental health first aider to develop myself. I strive to ensure that I am fully equipped to support others that may be struggling from various mental health issues that could potentially be affecting them in the workplace.

I would also like to be one of the driving forces behind getting rid of the stigma attached to mental health issues.

Contact:

cbryan@afblakemore.co.uk



Karen Crutchley
Retail (field)

I wanted to be a representative for mental health within the business and be a point of contact to support and help others. I believe that mental health should be given the same level of attention as physical health.

I have personal experience of mental health, and often individuals suffer in silence for different reasons. This needs to change, and hopefully I can assist and champion excellence in this area.

Contact:

karen.crutchley@afblakemore.co.uk
07967 718465



Mandie Taylor
Payroll (Talbot Green)

The reason for my interest in mental health first aid is that my mother has suffered with her mental health. It was not nice. It can happen to any of us at any time.

There is no immediate cure, but just being there to listen can sometimes help a great deal.

Contact:

taylor@afblakemore.co.uk
01443 235246

Need further support?

Please email reachout@afblakemore.co.uk, making sure to include your name and contact number. We'll get back to you as soon as possible.

More health and wellbeing support and resources are also available from charity GroceryAid. Visit www.groceryaid.org.uk or call their free helpline on 08088 021 122. It's available 24/7, 365 days a year.

GroceryAid's services include:

- Financial help, including benefits and debt advice
- Emotional support and advice
- Health and wellbeing support
- Relationship support
- Work and career advice
- Legal advice
- Carers and disability support

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