

“Consistently great scoring” was how instructor Fionuala Bonnar summarised the results of some unusual pilot training commissioned for Chelsea, Everton, Portsmouth and Lincoln football clubs, by the Football Foundation from KSL. She wasn’t referring to physical goals; rather to the results from the two-day Mental Health First Aid Training (MHFA) evaluation forms returned by 23 people, mostly Inside Right football coaches, along with a few welfare officers. These showed a massive 103% increase in their personal knowledge and confidence about mental health, and included praise for the learning experience and materials, for example. “Highly enjoyable and informative”, said one, “it flowed so well and was not a stereotypical course!”

MHFA is an internationally recognised programme, originating in Australia, that has been licensed and adapted for use in England for all people who have a responsibility for others, not just in the NHS and caring sectors but in public, private, voluntary and community organisations. It teaches knowledge and skills in dealing initially with mental health problems and in finding the right help. KSL is a national social enterprise whose mental health instructors are all approved by MHFA England. The Royal Society for Public Health has endorsed their instructor training and ALGEE methodology (see below). KSL uses the most experienced instructors and ensures that all those people who successfully participate in its MHFA courses complete formal course evaluations, take away standard manuals and receive official certification.



The conclusion of the Football Foundation’s Inside Right programme manager, Lucy Mann, is that this was a winning combination of expert trainer, proven course and planned tailoring of the training style, to meet the unique needs of the course participants. “I thought it took us beyond labels and challenged many limiting beliefs: A first class course that has been taken up by organisations supporting referral into the Inside Right programme and added real value”. Inside Right is a pilot mental health and wellbeing programme working to engage ex-servicemen and women through the hook of football. Funded by The Football Foundation, The Royal British Legion, Comic Relief, ABF The Soldiers Charity, RAF Benevolent Fund, the Ministry of Defence (The Veterans Challenge Fund), working with the Mental Health Foundation and Combat Stress.