

Title	Describe and apply psychological first aid in a health or wellbeing setting		
Level	4	Credits	5

Purpose	<p>People credited with this unit standard are able to, in a health or wellbeing setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the warning signs of mental health issues; • describe psychological first aid components and principles; • describe the potential impacts of providing psychological first aid on self, and strategies to manage them; • apply psychological first aid strategies to support a person in distress; • evaluate a psychological first aid strategy used to support a person in distress.
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Classification	Health, Disability, and Aged Support > Health and Disability Principles in Practice
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Available grade	Achieved
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Guidance Information

1 Assessment conditions

Evidence for the practical components of this unit standard must be generated in a health or wellbeing setting. It can include a person receiving care or another staff member.

People awarded credit for this unit standard must work under the guidance and delegation of a health professional in accordance with own role and responsibilities, and organisational policies and procedures.

Confidentiality issues must be defined through negotiation and informed consent, and criteria established by organisational policies and procedures.

2 Assessment notes

Evidence generated for assessment against this standard must reflect workplace requirements specified in:

- documented organisational policies, procedures, and methodologies;
- applicable health and safety plans, contract work programmes, and quality assurance programmes.

Evidence generated for assessment against this standard must reflect the values, processes, and protocols required to work with Māori, Pasifika, and people from diverse cultures.

Evidence generated for assessment against this standard must reflect the best practice guidelines and principles specified in:

- NZS 8134.0:2008 *Health and disability services (general) Standard*;
- NZS 8134.1:2008 *Health and disability services (core) Standards*;
- NZS 8158:2012 *Home and community support sector Standard*;
available at <http://www.standards.co.nz/>.

3 Definitions

Crisis event refers to a situation that causes physical, social and emotional consequences for a person. Crisis events can affect the whole community – e.g. civil war, terrorist attacks and disease epidemics. At an individual level, crisis events can include assault, accident and robbery.

Health or wellbeing setting may include but is not limited to the aged care, acute care, community support, disability, mental health, rehabilitation, social service and youth development sectors.

Organisational policies and procedures are the policies, procedures, and methodologies used in an organisation. They include legislative and regulatory requirements which may apply across an organisation, a specific site, or a workplace. Requirements are documented in organisational health and safety plans, contract work programmes, quality assurance programmes, policies, and procedural documents such as job descriptors and employment contracts.

Person is the individual accessing services. Other terms used for the person may include client, consumer, customer, patient, individual, resident, or service user.

Support should aim to maintain, improve, or restore a person's independence by utilising existing strengths and appropriate resources; but may include providing assistance to enable a person's health and wellbeing needs to be met.

4 References

American Psychiatric Association. (2018). *Warning Signs of Mental Illness*. Retrieved December 10, 2020 from <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/warning-signs-of-mental-illness>.

Hobfoll. S.E. et al. (2007). *Five essential elements of immediate and mid-term mass trauma intervention: empirical evidence*, *Psychiatry*, 70(4): 283-315. Retrieved December 10, 2020 from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18181708/>.

Outcomes and performance criteria

Outcome 1

Describe the warning signs of mental health issues.

Performance criteria

- 1.1 Warning signs are described according to the American Psychiatric Association's *Warning Signs of Mental Illness*.

Outcome 2

Describe psychological first aid components and principles.

Performance criteria

- 2.1 The five components for promoting psychological first aid are described according to Hobfoll et al's Five essential elements.
- Range offering a sense of safety, calming a person, promoting a sense of self and group efficacy, promoting connectedness, creating hope.
- 2.2 Psychological first aid action principles are described in the context of a person experiencing a crisis event.
- Range prepare, look, listen, link.

Outcome 3

Describe the potential impacts of providing psychological first aid on self, and strategies to manage them.

Performance criteria

- 3.1 The potential impacts of providing psychological first aid on self are described.
- Range may include but is not limited to – managing own fear and anxiety, exhaustion and burn out, loss and grief, mental stress, de-personalisation, maintaining professional attitudes and boundaries.
- 3.2 Strategies used to manage the impacts of providing psychological first aid on self are described.
- Range may include but is not limited to – maintaining personal safety, seeking professional help, mental and physical self-care, peer-support networks, recognising stressors and triggers.

Outcome 4

Apply psychological first aid strategies to support a person in distress.

Performance criteria

- 4.1 Strategies are applied to support a person in distress in accordance with psychological first aid action principles.
- Range prepare, look, listen, link.

Outcome 5

Evaluate a psychological first aid strategy used to support a person in distress.

Performance criteria

- 5.1 The psychological first aid strategy is evaluated against organisational policies and procedures and its success in supporting the person.

Range areas of success, areas for improvement.

Planned review date	31 December 2026
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Status information and last date for assessment for superseded versions

Process	Version	Date	Last Date for Assessment
Registration	1	27 May 2021	N/A

Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) reference	0024
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This CMR can be accessed at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/search/index.do>.

Comments on this unit standard

Please contact Careerforce info@careerforce.org.nz if you wish to suggest changes to the content of this unit standard.