

Governance arrangements for delivering Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) in Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Please note that this advisory statement is required for SPFT staff working in the Psychological Professions Directorate. However, they set out good practice guidelines for teaching MBCT/MBSR and are therefore recommended for SPFT staff working in other directorates.

Within the Trust, MBCT and MBSR are considered formal psychological therapies. In order to offer MBCT or MBSR of an appropriate standard within the Trust, it is expected that (unless working as a trainee in MBCT or MBSR under appropriate supervision) Practitioner Psychologists and Psychological Therapists facilitating MBCT or MBSR groups should meet the national *Good Practice Guidelines for Teaching Mindfulness-Based Courses*, produced by the British Association of Mindfulness-Based Approaches (BAMBA), which are available at <https://bamba.org.uk/good-practice-guidelines/>. These include requirements for personal practice, retreat attendance, CPD, supervision and training. Although these BAMBA guidelines should be met, registration with BAMBA, while encouraged, is not required. [An exception to this is MBCT being offered within Talking Therapies, formerly called IAPT, services. NHS England requires that psychological professionals offering MBCT in these services are registered with BAMBA. Please see the notes at end of this guidance for further details.]

Alongside meeting the BAMBA guidelines, Practitioner Psychologists and Psychological Therapists facilitating MBCT or MBSR within the Trust should meet the following criteria:

- 1) They should have a professional mental health training as a Practitioner Psychologist or Psychological Therapist, unless teaching outside of a clinical setting (e.g. NHS staff courses), in which case other qualifications (e.g. teaching qualifications) or equivalent life experience (e.g. extensive mindfulness retreat experience over many years) may substitute for mental health training.
- 2) They should have attended at least one 8-week MBCT or MBSR course as a participant.
- 3) If possible, they should co-run at least their first two groups of the respective curriculum (i.e. MBCT or MBSR) with a more experienced MBCT/MBSR therapist/teacher before running MBCT or MBSR groups with a peer of similar experience or alone (note that this number is inclusive of any MBCT/MBSR groups co-taught during MBCT/SR teacher training). If this is not practically possible then one or both of these first two groups could be co-run with a peer of similar experience, provided that (1) the mindfulness-based supervisor (who meets the BAMBA requirements for mindfulness supervision) agrees this is safe and appropriate, and (2) each course is closely supervised, by having at least five supervisions per course and by reviewing recordings of the MBCT/MBSR sessions in supervision.
- 4) After the teacher has completed running their first two MBCT/MBSR groups, it

is recommended that a further two groups are co-run with either a more experienced teacher or a peer of similar experience (i.e. four groups in total), before solo or lead running MBCT or MBSR groups or close variants. Where this is not possible, teachers can solo or lead run their third and fourth MBCT/MBSR courses, so long as (1) the mindfulness-based supervisor (who meets the BAMBA requirements for mindfulness supervision) agrees this is safe and appropriate, and (2) each course is closely supervised, by having at least three supervisions per course and by reviewing recordings of the MBCT/MBSR sessions in supervision.

- 5) Regardless of their stage of training or level of experience, mindfulness teachers should have a named mindfulness supervisor who meets the BAMBA requirements for mindfulness supervision and who agrees that they are ready to run MBCT or MBSR groups. If the supervisor does not think the psychological professional is ready, clear indications must be given by the supervisor regarding what experience and training are needed.
- 6) Save where specified differently above, newly qualified mindfulness teachers should access a minimum of 3 hours of individual or group supervision per MBCT or MBSR group with a named mindfulness supervisor who meets the BAMBA requirements for mindfulness supervision. Peer supervision may supplement supervision with a named supervisor but should not replace it. Experienced mindfulness teachers (who have taught at least four MBCT/MBSR courses or close variants) should have mindfulness-based supervision at least monthly, during periods when they are teaching MBSR/MBCT or close variants.

Please note that these criteria are a minimum standard only and greater experience and training in mindfulness than that listed above may be necessary for people to lead MBCT or MBSR groups confidently.

An audit will be conducted every two years amongst SPFT MBCT and MBSR therapists/teachers. Information will be requested 3 times and if there is no response and it is not possible to draw up a plan with therapist/teacher concerned about how the criteria will be met over a specific timescale, then Trust approved MBCT or MBSR therapist/teacher status will be removed until such a plan is drawn up and met.

Practitioner Psychologists and Psychological Therapists wishing to deliver MBCT or MBSR after a break from running these courses should have maintained the mindfulness CPD, personal practice and retreat requirements set out in the national Good Practice Guidelines, and if they have not delivered MBCT or MBSR for 3 years or more, should start by co-teaching MBCT/MBSR and accessing additional supervision.

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Mindfulness-Based Interventions Practice Network