



POLICY ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

Mind in Croydon recognises that its most important resource is its employees and is committed to the training and development of its entire workforce so that they will gain the necessary skills to reach their full potential and meet the requirements of their job with confidence and competence. Mind also recognises that for the majority of its services training is essential if a service which is safe for users, volunteers and staff is to be delivered.

IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS

Individual

Individual training and development needs will be identified by employee's line managers in an ongoing process during supervision and appraisal. The needs identified will be prioritised in accordance with their importance for the employee's job performance. A training record will be maintained for each employee as part of the performance management process; it is the responsibility of the employee's line manager to keep this up to date in written supervision and appraisals. Training needs will have to be met within the appropriate budget for the year.

Corporate

Group, team or organisational training needs will be assessed by the senior management team or by project managers, after consultation with the relevant staff team. The Board may also draw attention to the need for particular training across the organisation or in a particular project. This may take account of requirements of funders or changes to statutory requirements.

TYPES OF TRAINING

i) Induction of new staff

All new staff or staff transferring into a new post are entitled to participate in an induction appropriate to that post. The line-manager for each new employee is responsible for arranging their induction. A written programme will be drawn up for each post which will include:

- information on Mind, its aims, history, structure, range of services, relationship with other agencies etc.
- information about the particular project in which the employee is to work and requirements of their post
- understanding of the Terms of Employment and of Mind policies within which staff are expected to work
- understanding of Mind in Croydon's Equal Opportunities policy
- visits to other Mind projects

ii) On the job training

This will include instruction by the project manager and other project staff, regular supervision and response to particular incidents at work. It will be an ongoing process, throughout the staff member's employment with Mind. All members of staff are expected to co-operate in training newcomers and in supporting colleagues in learning from experience.

iii) Non-job related personal and career development training

This could include obtaining A levels or a post-graduate qualification or a counselling course where this is not needed in the employee's work. While of no direct relevance to the employee's work such courses may improve job performance indirectly through encouraging

confidence and self-esteem. Mind will offer general support to employees undertaking such training but employees will be expected to fund this themselves and it will be done in the employee's own time.

iv) **Conferences**

Attendance at conferences may be a normal part of an individual's work but at times may also assist the development and training of the person concerned.

v) **Secondments**

Internal and external secondments can contribute to an individual's training and development.

vi) **Group training**

This could include team building for example

In-house or external training?

Some of this training can be provided either in-house such as training on suicide prevention given by one of our trainee counsellors or through external training courses.

Where there is a choice in-house training will be preferred provided it is considered to be of an adequate standard.

RESOURCES FOR TRAINING

Training Budget

Each project budget will include an annual amount for training. It must be recognised, however, that Mind in Croydon projects are very tightly funded and it therefore may not be possible for all identified and desirable training needs to be met. Every effort will be made to ensure that within the priority constraints referred to above, the limited resources available are shared fairly and that no employee benefits disproportionately to the detriment of others. As a guide only, £1,000 per annum for each senior staff member and £500 for other staff is considered a reasonable amount to include in the annual budget.

Cost to the employee

All internal training provided by Mind and all compulsory training will be free of charge to the employee. External training and professional qualifications may be fully or partly funded by the organisation depending on the nature of the training and the extent to which the training is considered beneficial for Mind's work.

Reimbursement of expenses

When necessary, examination fees, travel, subsistence and accommodation expenses for compulsory training will be reimbursed by Mind in Croydon. For other training, expenses will be reimbursed only by prior agreement with the employee's line manager.

Books and other Course Materials

Where a course has been funded by Mind in Croydon all books and course materials (other than those paid for by the employee) are the property of Mind and should be kept after the course for the benefit of other employees.

PROCEDURE

Information about Training

Information about training is available from a variety of sources such as the internet, from other members of staff who have taken part in training or heard about it through contacts, from our partner organisations such as the Croydon BME Forum and from the Mind office. Details of appropriate courses are usually circulated to project managers but it is also the responsibility of line managers and other staff either to seek out information about training themselves or to make the Human Resources Department aware of particular training needs. The Chief Executive is responsible for keeping trustees informed of training opportunities suitable for them.

Decisions about training

Once training needs have been identified it is generally for the project manager to decide, in consultation with the employee, what training is to be undertaken, whether it is to be provided internally or externally and when it is to take place. The project manager will also be responsible for arranging cover for the employee if necessary.

The Chief Executive should be consulted:

- when it is likely that the training budget will be exceeded
- when there are any contentious issues involved
- when proposed training will affect the work of the project and impose a strain on its staff
- when internal training is being organised which could also benefit other Mind staff
- when Mind funding is being sought for personal development training which is of uncertain relevance to the employee's work

The Finance, Risk and General Purposes Committee's approval must be sought for all training courses where Mind's contribution to funding exceeds £500 or where more than 10 days absence from work in any one financial year is involved.

Training and Study Leave

As a guide only, up to 10 days away from work for training in any one financial year is considered reasonable for senior management staff. The requirement for other staff will vary according to the specialist nature of the work undertaken and variety of tasks the employee is expected to perform. For Welfare Benefits staff, for example, essential specialist training may require more than 10 days annual training. Administrative staff are unlikely to need as much as 10 days.

Where courses involving examinations or assessment by written work are undertaken, staff should negotiate with their line manager how much study leave (in addition to annual leave) may be taken, before they begin the course. A maximum of five days is suggested. Where courses are taken for personal or career development reasons it is expected that employees will either take time for study from their annual leave entitlement or take unpaid leave with permission of their line manager.

Where courses essential for job performance are undertaken which involve evenings or weekends, time off in lieu may be taken in consultation with, and with the agreement of the Line Manager.

Longer-term courses

An employee wishing to undertake longer-term training must consult first their line manager and then the Chief Executive before committing themselves to the course (unless this is to be undertaken entirely in their own time). Approval from the Chief Executive and the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be needed if any funding is being sought from Mind or if the course involves more than 10 days absence from work in any one year.

Factors which will be taken into account in giving or withholding approval are as follows:

- the course should be work-related and of substantial benefit both to Mind and to the employee
- consideration will be given to the existing mix of skills and qualifications in the organisation and what is required by the organisation to achieve its aims in the future
- the employee has worked for Mind for at least 2 years
- the employee's absence will not cause serious difficulties for their project
- the individual has the necessary ability and application to complete the course

Funding over £500 will only be provided by Mind in exceptional circumstances and consideration will be given to providing this in the form of an interest-free loan which will be written off after three years, provided the employee has continued to work for Mind in Croydon for that period.

Advice and support for employees on longer-term courses

Employees seeking to embark on a longer-term work related course should enquire carefully into the quality and suitability of the course. Mind will do its best to put the employee in touch with expert advice.

Responsibilities of Employees

Employees are expected to participate in training which their line manager or the Chief Executive has instructed them to undertake. They are also expected to be courteous and co-operative towards trainers and fellow participants and to do their best to benefit from the training offered. Refusal to cooperate with training will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

An employee receiving funding or paid time off is expected to attend college on a regular basis. A report on attendance may be sought from the college and an unsatisfactory attendance record may result in a withdrawal of paid time off and disciplinary action, dependent on the circumstances.

Evaluation

As part of Mind's continued commitment to training and development, employees are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training and development they undertake. Where something particularly useful has been learned the employee should discuss with their line manager ways in which this can be passed on to other people within Mind which may be done via regular staff or project meetings. Line managers are also asked to report on the effectiveness of training as part of regular supervision and appraisal i.e., have the employee's skills and knowledge changed and improved as a result of the training?

Equal Opportunities

Mind in Croydon is striving to promote and achieve equal opportunities in employment and in the services it provides. In accordance with this policy no employee will receive less favourable treatment with regard to training on grounds such as ethnic origin, gender, age, disability or any criterion not relevant to the training needs of the individual or of Mind in Croydon services.

Special consideration will be given with the context of Mind's Equal Opportunities Policy to staff who require the development of particular skills to allow them to undertake their work effectively.

In recognition of out-of-work commitments and responsibilities of employees training courses will be non-residential and in working hours wherever possible.

All employees are required to participate in equal opportunities training as part of their induction.