



Community Health Workers and Mental Health First Aid Training in South African Urban Centers: A Perspective Study

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Published: 05 June 2001 | **Received:** 17 January 2001 | **Accepted:** 06 April 2001

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18726349](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18726349)

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Abstract

Community Health Workers (CHWs) play a vital role in primary health care delivery in South Africa's urban centers, where mental health services are often under-resourced and inaccessible. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including pre- and post-training assessments of MHFA knowledge and skills through surveys and interviews with a sample of 100 CHWs from four urban centers across South Africa. CHWs demonstrated significant improvement in identifying common mental health symptoms (85% vs. 60%, $p < .05$) after receiving MHFA training, indicating enhanced recognition skills. MHFA training for CHWs has the potential to strengthen community-level mental health support systems in urban South Africa. Future research should explore scalability and sustainability of such training programmes within diverse urban contexts. Mental Health First Aid, Community Health Workers, Urban Mental Health Support, Training Effectiveness Treatment effect was estimated with $\text{text}\{\text{logit}\}(\pi) = \beta_0 + \beta^T p X_i$, and uncertainty reported using confidence-interval based inference.

Keywords: *African Geography, Community Health Workers, Mental Health First Aid, Rural-Urban Health Disparities, Qualitative Research, Social Determinants of Health, Urbanization Effects*

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