

# **Mental Health and Wellness**

## Recommendations Implementation Progress Update

Elizabeth Kristjansson  
October 2021-September 2022





# Report from the President's Advisory Committee

and its 12 recommendations (December 2020)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12 recommendations to mobilize us and create an environment that enhances, includes and supports MHW on campus
- 3 additional recommendations included last year further to consultation and work with the community (actions to support 3 psychological risk factors for professors and support staff, financial support for students, evaluation of new interventions)
  - Oversight and consultation by the Mental Health and Wellness Steering and Advisory committees

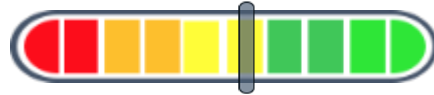


# Recommendation 1

Sign the Okanagan Charter and implement the Workplace and Student Standards

## OKANAGAN CHARTER – LEAD: OKANAGAN CHARTER WORKING GROUP

Where we were



Where we are



uOttawa 4 commitments approved by the CA in June 2022

### CULTURE

We will develop, promote and integrate a culture of wellness throughout our campus focusing on care and compassion for ourselves, for others, and for the community through our operations, business practices, and academic and research mandates

### INCLUSION

We will nurture an inclusive campus culture that considers a diversity of perspectives and the equitable treatment of all members of our community

### SUSTAINABILITY

We will design, implement and foster sustainable practices for our campus, community, and our planet in all our domains of activity to ensure that we support, create, and maintain positive change

### LEADERSHIP

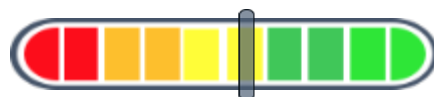
We will leverage our institutional strengths to fuel all members of the University community's growth to be leaders in health and wellness promotion

# Recommendation 1

Sign the Okanagan Charter and implement the Workplace and Student Standards

## NATIONAL STANDARD OF CANADA FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS – LEAD: STUDENTS STANDARD WORKING GROUP

Where we were



Where we are



### ANALYSIS

Gap analysis exercise to identify priority areas within uOttawa's context finished

### PRIORITIES

Priorities set and actions developed

### DATA

Campus Mental Health Action Tracker Tool: data sharing pilot with Social Research and Demonstration Corporation and the Mental Health Commission of Canada

### COLLABORATION

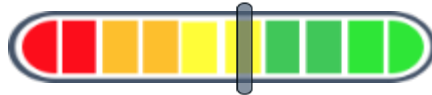
Cross-institutional collaboration by participating in the National Standards Community of Practice

# Recommendation 1

Sign the Okanagan Charter and implement the Workplace and Student Standards

## NATIONAL STANDARD OF CANADA FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE – LEAD: HUMAN RESOURCES

Where we were



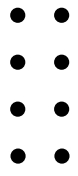
Where we are



Implementing recommended actions on the psychological risk factors of work life balance, recognition, and workload, as identified further to the **Stay Healthy and Connected Listening Tour**:

- Working with faculties and services to support **conversation** and implement **concrete** actions to better balance work-life
- A [four-step guide](#) to lead collaborative conversation about workload challenges for both managers and employees
- A [Disconnecting From Work policy](#) implemented in May 2022
- [Telework Guidelines](#) implemented in January 2022
- New uOttawa [President's Awards](#) launched in December 2021, including a Healthy Workplace (team and individual)
- New [LifeWorks Recognition Program](#) launched in May 2022 to encourage informal recognition throughout the organization
- **Virtual Telemedicine Services** launched in May 2022
- **Continual improvement process** for workplace mental health, engage teams in identifying **innovative** solutions, and **educate** our community

Continuing **analysis** of strength and opportunities through the Excellence Canada's Mental Health at Work Framework for Gold Level Certification and implementing key opportunities.

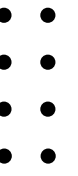


# Recommendation 1

Steps forward



uOttawa



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Activities to engage and bring the community together around the Charter and the 2 Standards



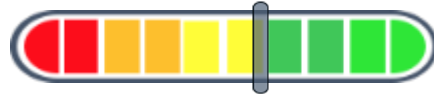
## KEY PARTNERSHIPS

Building internal and external key partnerships on campus to help support implementation

# Recommendation 2

Implement a coordinated approach to mental health and wellness

Where we were



Where we are



## TEAMWORK

Ongoing productive work with the Mental Health and Wellness Steering and Advisory **committees** and **working groups**, as well as key stakeholders, focusing on breaking silos and finding synergies

## FRAMEWORK

uOttawa long-term mental health and wellness **strategic framework** being developed based on leading practices for a **caring and compassionate** university community

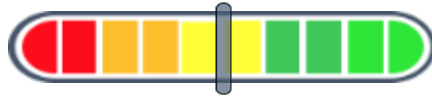
## OTHER WORK

University Advisor on Mental Health and Wellness **website** and annual reporting

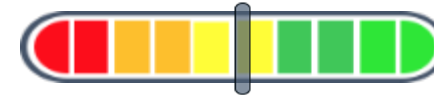
# Recommendation 3

Develop a transparent mental health and wellness communications strategy and revisit protocols

Where we were



Where we are



- Mental health communication protocols and postvention responses to crisis being finalised
- Developed easily accessible 24/7 support options and crisis hotlines, including an [emergency button](#) (“Immediate Wellness Support”) on platforms that include Brightspace and the Health and Wellness Website
- Mental Health and Wellness scrolling banners and referral buttons included in Brightspace home page
- Health literacy campaign launched by Student Affairs to increase awareness and understanding of peer and professional support services and programs offered by uOttawa
- Revitalising the MHW communications working group to address ongoing barriers





# Recommendation 4

Strengthen and increase the profile of the Wellness Hub and implement a virtual Health and Wellness Hub

Where we were



Where we are



- New Health and Wellness Website platform
  - Phase one of persona-based website launched
  - Information and resources targeting specific user groups
  - A new Wellness continuum assessment tool that directs to specific resources based on needs is being completed
- Marketing and promotion campaign to direct members of the uOttawa community to the Health and Wellness Website



# Recommendation 5

Respond to student concerns regarding staffing of student support services and access

Where we were



Integration of mental health services into the Student health and Wellness Centre in the Minto Sports Complex in May 2022:

- Total appointments from May to September (first 5 months): 10,072 (3280 mental health, 6777 physical health and 15 Personalized Health Education Program)
- Initial Student Satisfaction Survey:
  - 90% said they were extremely satisfied or very satisfied
  - 89% said our services met their needs
  - 99% said they were served in the language of their choice
  - 67% were satisfied with the availability of appointments

Addition of **two psychologists** and a **psychiatrist** to support student mental health

Where we are



Student Support Program (Case management)

- 584 new referrals received between November 1, 2021 and September 30th, 2022
- Primary presenting issue:
  - Mental health: 58.9%
  - Academic challenges: 23.1%
  - Life circumstances: 18.0%
  - More than one presenting issue: 39.5%
- Initial Student Satisfaction Survey:
  - 73% reported overall satisfaction
  - 83% felt accepted and respected by the case manager
  - 77% considered that the service met their needs
  - 82% would return to the service if they needed help in the future

# Recommendation 5 (cont'd)

Respond to student concerns regarding staffing of student support services and access

Where we were



Peer Residence Safety Ambassadors Pilot launched in September 2022 offering intervention, prevention and de-escalation to ensure resident safety and wellbeing

- More than 25 Residence Safety Ambassadors doing rounds in all 11 residences every night from 8 P.M. to 4 A.M.

Where we are



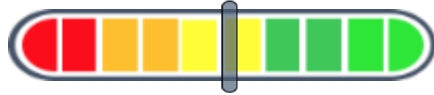
Wellness lounge visits close to pre-pandemic levels (up to 7,000 visits by early November)

The Peer wellness chat operating evening and weekends

# Recommendation 6

Strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations and hospitals

Where we were



Where we are



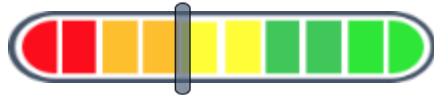
- Increased the number of telepsychiatry consultations with the Royal from 6 to 9 consultations per month
- “In This Together” - World Mental Health Day conference on October 6, 2022 planning together with the Royal



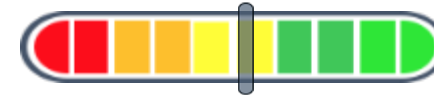
# Recommendation 7

Expand training for professors and staff

Where we were



Where we are

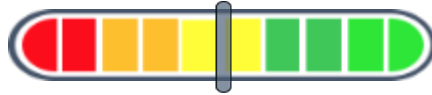


- The **Caring University Community Guide** and the **Caring University Community Poster** deployed in October 2022 to support our faculty in recognizing and responding to people who are in distress and refer them to the appropriate campus and community resources
- Revisiting the **new professors and new academic leaders training** to include mental health and wellness resources for students and staff, guidance on a caring classroom and references to the *More Feet on the Ground* training
- Under the leadership of Academic Affairs, working on a **handbook** for new professors to include mental health and wellness resources and guidance on a caring classroom
- *More Feet on the Ground* training: **over 20 new trainers** available

# Recommendation 8

Provide both University-wide and community-specific support

Where we were



Inclusive Admissions and Transition Project successfully implemented - over 200 students admitted for Fall and Winter 2021–2022 via the Inclusive Admission Program

Compass Program for residence students extended to all first-year students

- Including 3 workshops relating to the Wellness seminars series given by a clinical psychologist
- Parent’s workshop given by clinical psychologist
- Student Satisfaction Survey:
  - 97% of respondents said Compass was useful for preparing the student for campus life
  - 97% would recommend Compass to new students and their families
  - 95% were satisfied/very satisfied with the parent keynote
  - 85% were satisfied/very satisfied with the wellness skills seminar
  - 97% of students made a new connection and are likely to connect with them in the fall

Where we are



Planning to expand Compass program and bursaries next year with the objective of reaching additional students and parents

Anti-racist and anti-oppressive mental health training to be given to staff of the Student Wellness Centre

# Recommendation 10

Expand support within faculties

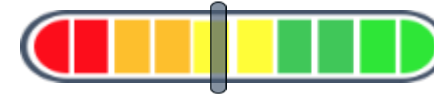
Where we were



## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Environmental scan of mental health, wellness, and support services within faculties for students completed

Where we are



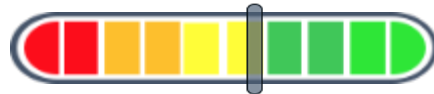
## SURVEY

Survey with key stakeholders to better understand areas for improvement to **strengthen student support and workflow** between faculty-based, student-facing academic services (BEPCs, BESs, secretariats) and Student Affairs to be launched

# Recommendation 11

Include mental health and wellness in syllabi and develop and offer mental health curricula

Where we were



Where we are



## SKILL BUILDING WELLNESS SEMINARS

- One hour wellness training on Brightspace offered to all first-year students
  - Winter skill building wellness seminars series (series of 7) to support student mental health and wellness

## MICRO-PROGRAM

- Advancing the development of a **mental health and wellness micro-program**, integrating existing wellness courses in different faculties and the skill building course of the Faculty of Social Sciences, as well as using the CIHR funding to adapt Queen's University's mental health and wellness course

## CARING CLASSROOM

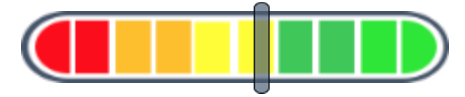
- Including the concept of a “**caring classroom**” in **course evaluation** and in **training**: encouraging professors to take a more active role, and be evaluated for, building a caring and compassionate classroom
- Introduced in presentation for new professors

## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Shared interests with the Strategic Committee on teaching and evaluation
  - Progress toward a **community of practice** to provide support to professors who wish to connect with like-minded peers

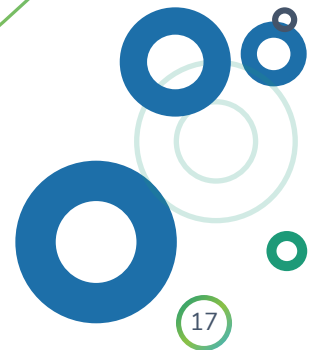


# Beyond the original 12 recommendations



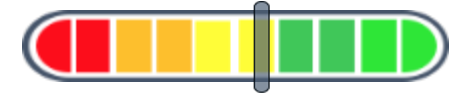
## COORDINATE SUPPORT TO STUDENTS IN FINANCIAL NEED

- 9 students in financial need accessed a \$400 subsidy to cover their expenses to attend Compass
  - Working on expanding this bursary to more students in need and streamlining procedures
- Student support (Case management) team supported 44 students dealing with financial/housing insecurity



# Beyond the original 12 recommendations

## IMPLEMENT CONTINUOUS MEASUREMENT, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION



- The U-Flourish Student Well-Being and Academic Success Survey Study
  - Longitudinal survey of randomly selected first-year students given at beginning and end of year 1 and then bi-annually in subsequent year
  - Guiding the development and enhancement of programs and services to improve student mental health
  - Uottawa Pilot in mid-October to early November. 1170 first-year students completed the questionnaire
- TLSS surveys of faculty, students, and teaching assistants on their experiences and perceptions of transition to **online** teaching and learning, as well as **bimodal** teaching and learning
- The Canadian Campus Well-Being Survey postponed to 2024
- Ongoing evaluation of mental health and wellness initiatives

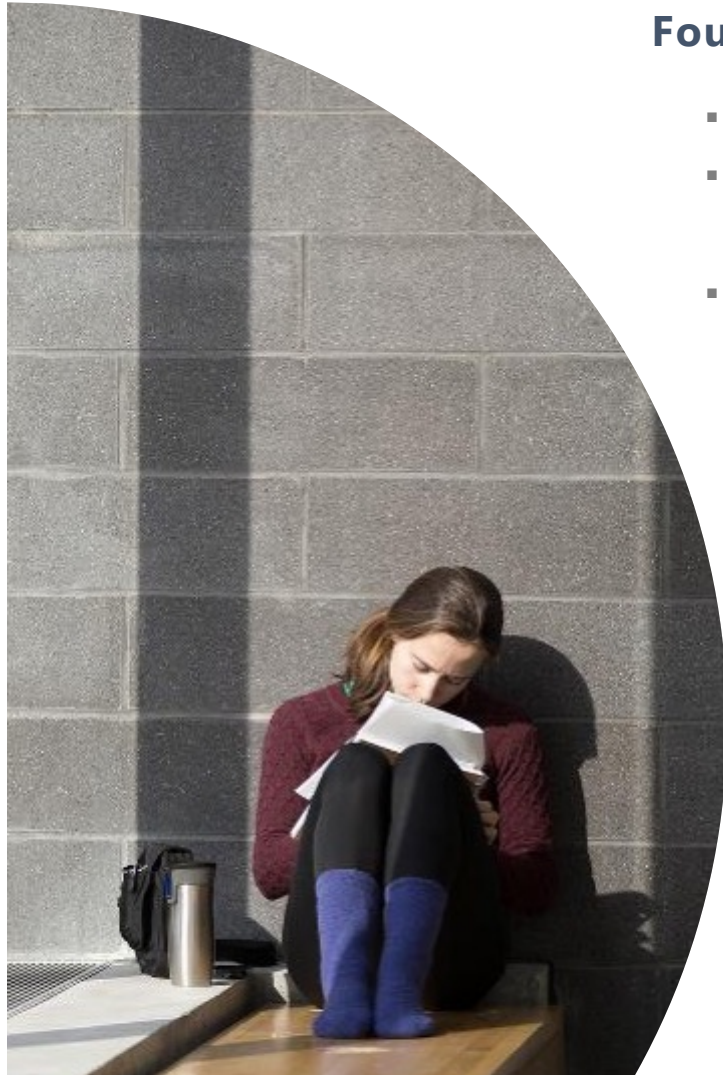


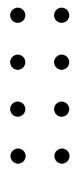
# Beyond the original 12 recommendations

## ADVANCING PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

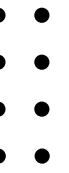
### Four-year Canadian Institutes of Health Research Grant

- Led by Queen's University with Oxford, Uottawa and UCalgary
- Administered by a multidisciplinary, collaborative team of researchers, wellness professionals, and students
- Covering three initiatives:
  - Using the U-Flourish Student Well-Being and Academic Success Survey with linkage to academic databases to:
    - Estimate mental health burden and student well-being and service knowledge
    - Examine mental health trajectories
    - Look at the link between psychosocial factors, mental health and academic success
  - Adapting and translating an online Mental Health literacy credit-bearing course (undergrad - 100 level – to be part of the planned micro-program)
  - Launching a **digitally enhanced care pathway** (iSpero) for students seeking help; with access to effective digital well-being support resources





# Challenges



- Accountability frameworks
- Communication and promotion
- Ownership and implementation of new mental health and wellness initiatives and tools
- Awareness and mental health and wellness training for leaders, faculty and support staff



**THANK YOU**

