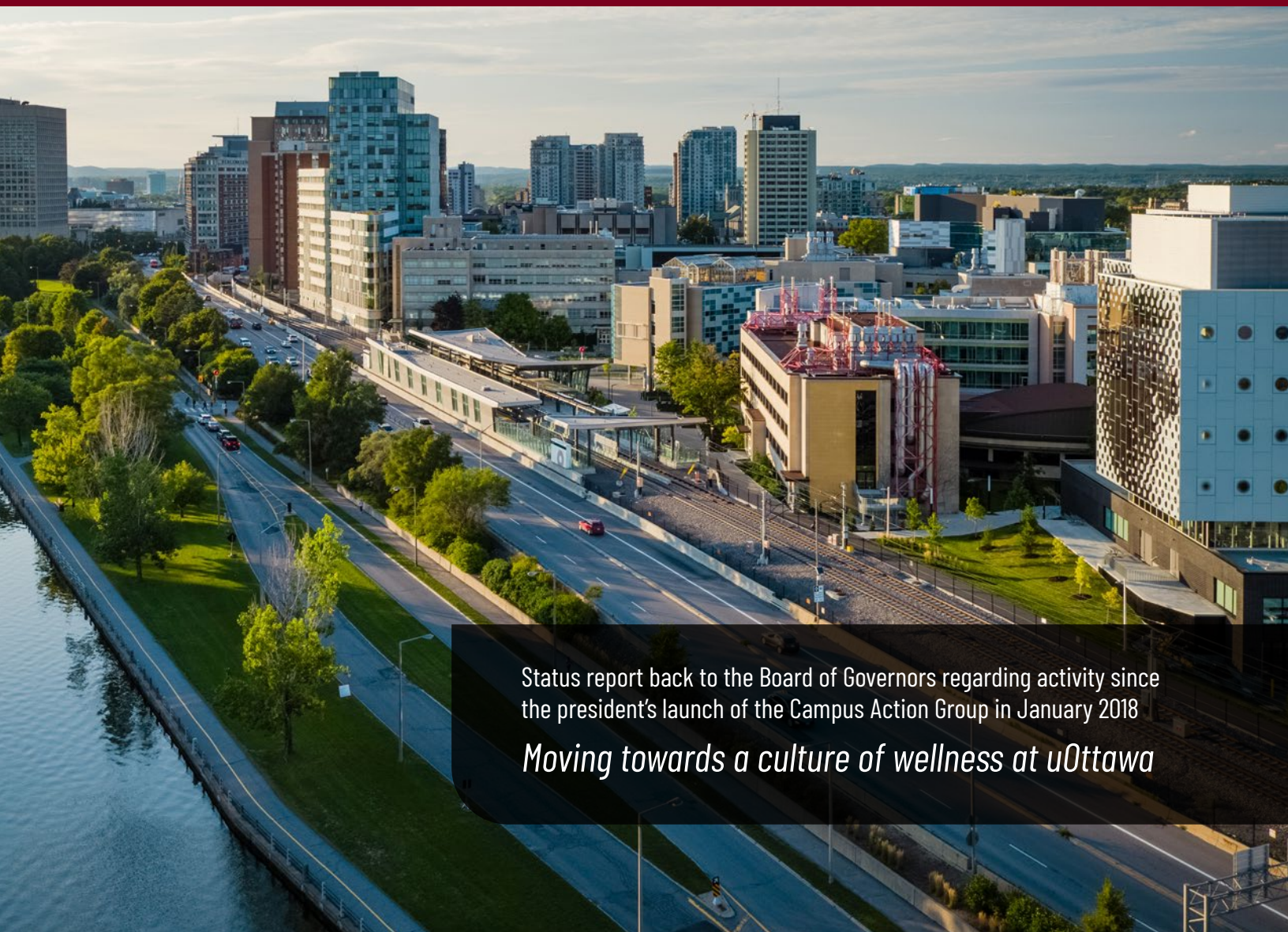




uOttawa

# Roadmap to Wellness at uOttawa

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS REPORT 2020



Status report back to the Board of Governors regarding activity since the president's launch of the Campus Action Group in January 2018

*Moving towards a culture of wellness at uOttawa*



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# PREAMBLE

The University of Ottawa recognizes the important role that mental health and wellness play in its community's ability to thrive. On January 22, 2018, at the launch of the annual Wellness Week, President Jacques Frémont announced the creation of a Campus Action Group (CAG) to promote, coordinate and optimize mental health and wellbeing activities on campus. In that announcement, the University acknowledged the need for greater awareness and better access to resources and services for its community members in order to improve campus culture around mental health and wellness.

In addition to the creation of the CAG, President Frémont also announced, in January 2019, a further focus on changing the campus culture towards a culture of wellness. Based on work and input from the uOttawa community as well as sector best practice, the President emphasised that, going forward, *everyone has a role to play* in wellness, and we can achieve this by taking care of *ourselves, of each other* and of *our community*. His words

formed a baseline for the work going forward, recognising the diversity, complexity and richness of the uOttawa community. Multiple stakeholders, activities and viewpoints need to collaborate to grow a culture of wellness at uOttawa.

Since the CAG's inception, a number of activities have occurred or been implemented, either as a result of initiatives put forward by the CAG or since individuals and groups on campus have recognized the a need to shift us towards better mental health and wellness. This report summarizes the current status of mental health and wellness at uOttawa, highlights the key projects and initiatives developed by the uOttawa community, and proposes key actions as well as recommendations going forward. It builds on the February 2019 Mental Health and Wellness Action Plan – Status Report (see Appendix I) and speaks to the necessary commitment of the entire community to effect a change in culture.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA WITHIN THE CANADIAN CONTEXT

The University of Ottawa has over 42,000 students, over 5,000 employees and community members contributing to campus, which makes us a community of around 50,000 souls – bigger than the cities of Cornwall, Timmins or the entire territory of Nunavut. Consider our community in context that in any given year, 1 in 5 people in Canada will personally experience a mental health issue or illness<sup>1</sup> with up to 1 in 3 people experiencing a mental health issue in their lifetime<sup>2</sup>. Evidence also informs us that 15 to 24-year-olds are one of the demographic groups of Canadians at high risk for mental concerns<sup>3</sup>. Mental health is thus likely to have an impact on a uOttawa community member, whether they are experiencing it via a peer, a colleague, a student in their classroom, as a manager, teaching assistant or for themselves. To move forwards and to foster a culture of wellness in its population, uOttawa needs to provide its community members with the tools, resources and services necessary to support their well-being.

### DID YOU KNOW

A full **70% of adults** with mental health problems experienced their **first symptoms by age 18**<sup>4</sup>

In Canada, **suicide accounts for 24% of all deaths** among 15-24 years old<sup>5</sup>

**Only 36% of employees** would discuss their mental health needs with their supervisor<sup>6</sup>

"About **30% of short- and long-term disability claims** in Canada are attributed to mental health problems and illnesses"<sup>7</sup>

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS: A PRIORITY IN OTHER POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Other post-secondary institutions in Canada have recognized mental health and wellness as a key priority and have launched various cross-university strategies to address the needs of their community<sup>8</sup>. Some examples include:

- **University of Toronto** launched their [Student Mental Health Strategy and Framework in 2014](#) (with a recent update in [2016](#) and 2019);
- **Carleton University** launched their first framework to [support students in distress in 2009](#) and, in the same year, they launched their Healthy Workplace Plan (HWP) that promotes an ongoing culture of health and wellness to all faculty and staff;
- **University of Saskatchewan** launched a campus wide [Wellness strategy for the entire community in one plan](#), called *Be Well*.
- **The University of Calgary**<sup>9</sup> launched their Campus Mental Health Strategy in 2015<sup>10</sup>, with a cross-university advisory committee to support implementation of the recommendations.

These full cross-campus strategies have given other institutions a clear, cohesive strategy and vision for all their community members to understand their mental health and wellness goals; establishing a baseline of data for evaluation and measurement of progress and a visible commitment by the senior administration to address mental health and wellness.

Twenty institutions and five organisations have also signed the [Okanagan Charter, An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges](#)<sup>11</sup>, developed by several hundred international delegates, including members of the uOttawa community<sup>12</sup>. This charter calls on post-secondary schools to embed health into all aspects of campus culture and to lead health promotion action and collaboration. It is an aspiration for a culture of wellness and is becoming part of best practice amongst more and more universities.



## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS AT uOTTAWA

Since January 2018, many services have implemented a number of additional opportunities in order to better service our community regarding mental health and wellness, including:

- The Student Academic Success Service (SASS) launched the [Stepped Care Model](#) and preventative wellness practices to offer greater breadth of services to students;
- The [Therapy Assisted Online](#) (TAO) platform was added to the services available to the uOttawa community, for both staff and students.
- Due to additional partnerships and promotion, there has been significantly increased uptake by the community of the multiple wellness-related events taking place on campus each year<sup>13</sup>.
- We have increased the focus on leveraging data in our planning for the well-being of our community. For example, the University of Ottawa participated for the first time in the well-recognized National College Health Assessment survey in 2019<sup>14</sup>, with results from this survey enabling the University to tailor programming and services more directly to our students' needs.
- The University's mental health and wellness website (launched in 2016), has been expanded and more pointedly promoted as the "one stop shop" point for information at uOttawa. The website acts as an online hub of best wellness practices and redirects people to key services available on campus.
- Human Resources developed their HR priorities for upcoming implementation. Key principles within these priorities include a significant focus on employee wellness.

These initiatives, along with many others to be outlined in this report, help uOttawa move in the direction of improving its mental health and wellness services. However, these activities frequently happen in isolation and our community members are often unaware of the breadth and depth of services and programming available to them. This affects not only the students or employees who want to access the services, but also the community's ability to help others navigate the system.

A strategic, concerted effort around mental health would greatly improve the student and employee experience and help the university's recruitment and retention efforts, ultimately leading to a stronger alumni community and healthier employees. More support for our students while they are on campus can lead to a better experience upon graduation, which will in turn help uOttawa reach its goals in regards to the new Strategic Management Agreement implemented by the province.

As our employees are key drivers at uOttawa for success in attaining our strategic objectives, Human Resources has identified strategic priorities that will play a pivotal role in the cultural shift that is needed to promote health and wellness at uOttawa. The healthier employees become, the more productive and engaged they are, and the more able they become to provide the excellence of service needed for the best student experience. As an employer, the University of Ottawa should also aim

to see reduced sick leave utilisation and invest in its employee's well-being to better support the community. This report will elaborate on Human Resources priorities and will demonstrate how each of these priorities intertwine and how they will spring-board our goal of building health and wellness into everyday operations.

- Build a culture of health and well-being at the University of Ottawa
- Improve communications and ensure management and employee involvement in the development of initiatives
- Consolidate leadership and management competencies

uOttawa is recognizing that belonging to a community that makes us feel connected, valued and accepted is essential to good health. That is why diversity and inclusion are key to assist the university in moving towards a culture of wellness, ensuring greater resilience through cultural awareness, understanding and acceptance.

Finally, our community has asked for support and an increased focus on mental health and wellness, both implicitly via the increased requests for assistance and usage of services and explicitly from direct feedback. For instance, in a recent consultation for strategic planning that saw over 200 employees participate and provided multiple inputs, the need to focus on wellness and caring was a key theme from the employees' voices<sup>15</sup>.

## STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS AT A GLANCE

Through the local implementation of the National College Health Assessment survey at the University of Ottawa (March 2019)<sup>16</sup>, the CAG has been able to gather data pertaining to the current well-being status of uOttawa students. Overall, uOttawa students do not differ greatly from the Canadian representative sample in their results.

Some concerning statistics regarding the levels of stress in our student population include:

- **81.7% of uOttawa students reported good, very good or excellent health** vs. 77.2% in the Canadian reference sample; however, uOttawa students report overall higher rates of anxiety, with **38.1% of students reporting anxiety** affected their students as opposed to 34.6% nationally
- **9.1% of uOttawa students seriously considered suicide within the last 12 months** vs. 10.1% in the Canadian sample; with local graduate student surveys reporting higher rates of up to 12%<sup>17</sup>
- **66.8% have found academics traumatic or very difficult to handle within the last 12 months** vs. 59.5% Canadian sample
- Within the last 12 months, **48% of uOttawa students reported stress affected their individual academic performance**, vs. 41.9% of the Canadian sample.

On a positive note, uOttawa students do report some stronger health-related behaviours than the national average, such as being more likely to have received their required vaccinations (from 2-10% higher on multiple vaccinations from hepatitis B, cervical HPV and measles, mumps and rubella)<sup>18,19</sup>, and reporting eating more fruits and vegetables (36.1% vs. 29.6% eat 3-4 servings per day).

# MOVING TOWARDS A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

This report centres around four key pillars that were deemed important to help us create a culture of wellness.

## AWARENESS

*of the entire community*

## MOBILISATION

*to better coordinate initiatives across campus*

## TRAINING

*to better understand how to support oneself, each other and the community*

## STRENGTHENING

*our supports and services*

An analysis of ongoing activities as well as consultations of the community took place in order to produce this report. For each pillar, CAG looked at current initiatives and produced recommendations based on the existent strengths, programming and gaps, which will enable the University to move towards its intended path to wellness.

In order to create this report, the CAG utilised:

- input from focus groups, uOttawa community stakeholders, the community, and committees
- service utilisation rates and demand for more on campus services
- events, activities and programming information

- post-secondary sector reports, evidence and analysis
- recommendations and scans from industry best practice
- internal programming, processes, and protocols
- evidence and information from data sets such as surveys and reports
- guidance from objectives set by senior administration

As this report will demonstrate, not only are there specific needs to address to move our community towards a culture of wellness, the University would greatly benefit from a cross-campus mental health and wellness strategy to better align their efforts, which many Canadian post-secondary institutions have launched (see Appendix 5 for a list of examples).

# AWARENESS (OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY)

Mental health and wellness literacy of our community members is a key step towards a culture of wellness. Knowing what services are available and how to navigate them, promoting existing initiatives and reducing the stigma around mental health<sup>20</sup> empowers the members of the community to support themselves and each other. The awareness pillar focuses on equipping our community members with the information they need to succeed.

## WHY IS AWARENESS IMPORTANT?

- Community members state they have difficulty navigating the system both on and off campus; were not aware of the multiple services and stakeholders involved in mental health and wellness supports<sup>21</sup>; and still felt stigma accessing supports.
- Differing and unequal understanding about mental health and wellness literacy exists among our population. Unsurprisingly, those who report receiving less information about health topics or services report correspondingly in the various data sets<sup>22</sup> higher indicators of stress and distress.
- Specific student groups (i.e. student transitioning from high school to undergraduate studies and international students) have specific information needs throughout their academic journey.
- Faculty and staff having differing needs and requirements for information depending on their role, status and client group at the university, which requires multiple engagement strategies to reach all targeted audiences.

Part-time students report receiving between 10-20% less information on health-related topics (i.e. depression, anxiety, sexual violence prevention) from the university than full-time students<sup>23</sup>.

However, students living in residence report much higher receipt of health-related information from the university, between 5-20% higher than those living off-campus, demonstrating that the more intensive programming offered to students in residence is effective.

Despite their exposure to mental health knowledge via their studies, graduate students in the School of Psychology reported feeling stigma seeking counselling on campus<sup>24</sup> due to the high likelihood they would have personal or professional knowledge of the counsellors or the services on campus. In this case, promoting the availability of off-campus or more confidential options are key to supporting this sub-group of students.

## FEATURED INITIATIVES

Initiative	Description
Development and implementation of mental health branding and communications plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Creating a long-term visual identity that is approachable, memorable and adaptable over the years</li><li>Directing people to the online hub that is mental health and wellness website as a “one stop shop”</li><li>Reiterating and confirming the key messages that everyone has a role to play in wellness and we can achieve this by taking care of ourselves, of each other and of our community</li><li>Launching the cross-campus visual identity, including elevator wraps, screens, online and social media versions</li></ul>
Improvement of overall communications channels including mental health and wellness to employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increasing the visibility of the commitment to mental health and wellness</li><li>Promoting our goal to build health and wellness into everyday operations</li></ul>

## ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES

- Prioritisation and ongoing updating of [Mental Health and Wellness website](#) to maintain its use as the central resource for information
- Use of the seven pillars of wellness to increase health and wellness literacy
- Organization of an annual cross-university Wellness Week
- Promotion of services and training opportunities at orientation for new professors
- Development and promotion of the Recognize, Respond and Refer rapid referral poster
- Launch of the Spiritual Services resources page
- Launch of the Stepped Care model communications plan
- Ongoing Health Promotion Peer Educators activities and event kiosks
- Mysterious Barricades – annual national World Suicide Prevention Week Concert (Faculty of Music)
- Addition of wall art quotes from alumni related to well-being at CRX
- Development of a Wellness Lounge in residence
- Wellness Wednesdays social media campaign<sup>25</sup>
- Integration of wellness into the annual Founders’ Breakfast
- Recognition of Employee Service Programme
- Initiation of Support Options over the Holidays campaign starting December 2018
- Involvement One in Five mental health podcast series by CHUO 89.1 FM and the Fulcrum<sup>26</sup>
- Peer stories web video series to reduce stigma via personal alumni, student and staff stories

DISTRIBUTION OF  
**689 mental health Wellness Kits<sup>27</sup>**

LAUNCH OF  
**5 Wellness Cafes per year<sup>28</sup> with 702 students attending** in 2018-2019

WELLNESS FAIRS AND FACULTY PRESENTATIONS  
**reached 1783 students** in 2018-2019<sup>29</sup>

**1737 staff and students** ATTENDED WELLNESS WEEK IN 2019

THE WELLNESS WALL INITIATIVE KICKED OFF  
**497 mental health inquiries** in 2018-2019<sup>30</sup>



# RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

## 1. Embed mental health and wellness at all levels into the daily business practices of the university

Much work and progress has been undertaken at all levels of the University which is not visible to the broader community. We need to be more explicit and transparent about the work that is being undertaken and that it reflects the institution's core values. If the community does not know it exists, then they effectively believe nothing is happening, which is what has been communicated through multiple feedback channels. Unfortunately, this has the unintentional message that mental health and wellness is to be hidden and reinforces stigmatisation.

This recommendation thus serves two purposes:

- 1. To incorporate mental health and wellness into the routine of all University community members;
- 2. To demonstrate to the community the commitment to mental health and wellness by the University and senior administration.

To implement the first part of the recommendation, different tools will need to be leveraged. Progress has already been made at a high strategic level with the incorporation of the development of a campus mental health plan in the University's strategic plan, Transformation 2030<sup>31</sup>, as well as the inclusion of the principle of well-being. However, not everyone in our community will read the in-depth plan or know how to apply it to their role at the University. Embedding mental health and wellness into daily business practices can help create more awareness, for example:

- Using management tools such as employees' performance plans to incorporate mental health and wellness activities into their work.
- Expanding the new orientation model for incoming students to demonstrate the importance of embedding proactive mental health and wellness practices into their daily life, especially as it relates to dealing with the stressors of university life. The new model encourages students to plan ahead so that they are aware of the tools and resources available to them once they arrive on campus.

An example of the second aspect of this recommendation is the launch of the annual Wellness Week by President Jacques Frémont, a highly visible event which speaks to the senior administration's commitment. Nevertheless, we need to go further with more frequent, highly visible awareness and anti-stigma strategies in order to reach the entire community. Senior administrators and community leaders will need to "walk the walk" by participating and attending mental health and wellness events; supporting their own community members to engage in wellness activities; and highlighting how they manage mental health and wellness in their roles.

## 2. Implement targeted awareness communications to sub-groups with specific needs

Targeted additional promotional strategies and resources are needed to reach sub-groups who have specific needs. For example, there are currently programs and activities in place to support those who are newly arrived to the uOttawa community, such as international students, first year students, and new faculty members<sup>32</sup>. However, the data, surveys and community feedback outline that there needs to be continued focus on not only these groups, but also on groups more recently identified in surveys, such as part-time students and students who have high employment hours, or sub-groups of employees such as part-time staff. New communication and programming strategies should be put in place with the identified groups.



## 3. Increase universal mental health and wellness literacy at uOttawa to help reduce stigma

Best practice in the sector recommends a focus on health literacy in an institution's population<sup>33</sup>. As uOttawa has a very large and diverse population, mental health and wellness awareness should focus on consistent and ongoing messaging, increasing the mental health and wellness literacy of our population. People learn differently, have different needs throughout the academic year, and will be receptive at different times. Communication with our community should be relevant, practical, feasible and usable. The CAG recommends dedicating ongoing funding and resources for multi-pronged, recurring promotional campaigns to remind staff and students to be aware of what services, activities and events exist to support them along their full spectrum of need.

An additional aspect to this recommendation is to encourage additional funding for communications tools and media. To date limited, sporadic funding and therefore limited staff capacity has hampered efforts by the CAG and other groups to push out consistent awareness messaging materials to all stakeholders in our community. The University of Ottawa is the size of a Canadian city, and our communications funding and planning should correspondingly reflect those needs.

# MOBILISATION

## (TO BETTER COORDINATE INITIATIVES ACROSS CAMPUS)

The University of Ottawa offers a number of services and activities promoting well-being. However, unnecessary duplication of supports and programming exists throughout the university. Conversely, many members of the community do not know what is available in other areas, therefore assuming the resource does not exist. Mobilisation across campus is key to better advocate together to advance health and wellness on our campus.

### WHY IS MOBILISATION IMPORTANT?

Our community has communicated that they often do not know about various services and programming, and do not understand the role of various stakeholders. This often leads to:

- A misinterpretation of what is available
- Misinformation that there are waiting lists or no services available
- Inefficient duplication of services across the institution and missed opportunities to collaborate
- Missed opportunities by staff or students to utilise appropriate programming or services to their benefit
- Lack of recognition of all the work and contributions of the stakeholders

### FEATURED INITIATIVES

Initiative	Description
<b>Creation of the Standing Committee on Student Wellbeing (SCSW) in 2017</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focusing on non-academic needs that affect student well-being and proposes actions accordingly</li><li>• Working with students and staff stakeholders for input and ideas regarding programming and opportunities</li></ul>
<b>Launch of the Campus Action Group (CAG) in 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better cross-campus coordination and mapping of existing activities and services</li><li>• Creation of an action plan to further development of wellness at uOttawa and move initiatives forward</li><li>• Partnerships with various stakeholders, internal and external, to launch exciting new initiatives.</li></ul>
<b>Increased collaboration with the University of Ottawa Student Union (UOSU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Undertook a referendum and agreed to increase their student levy to \$400k per year for SASS Counselling and Coaching.</li><li>• uOttawa aims to match this funding, supporting an increase in frontline services for students</li></ul>
<b>Development of the HR Priorities Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing a plan to bring stakeholders together to coordinate and utilize the expertise on campus</li><li>• Establishing committees tasked with implementing best practice for employee mental health and wellness</li></ul>



### ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES

- Cross-university Wellness Week
- Healthy & Active Campus - Employee Group
- Development of a University Joint Health & Safety Committee for psychological health and safety
- Contribution to the development of the National Psychological Post-Secondary Mental Health Standard
- Thinking Ahead, Giving Back (TAGB) Initiatives
  - › Student led Mental Health Workshops
  - › CRX Quotes by alumni art project
- Psychology Graduate Student Mental Health Project (Faculty of Social Science)
- Collaboration with the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) Kiosk in order to increase financial literacy through workshops and initiatives
- Hosting the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health Regional Forum in March 2020 for post-secondary mental health professionals and service providers
- Development of a Postvention Working Group to create resources to support our community through incidents
- Increasing referral capacity to community services by establishing new partnerships and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Royal Ottawa and other community agencies
- Partnerships with volunteer charities to offer on campus pet therapy sessions<sup>34</sup>

Based on our previous and ongoing progress evaluation, going forward, we will need to evolve the Mobilisation pillar's components to truly embed it in the way we do things and strengthen our synergy to improve our collaborations, so it becomes part of uOttawa's identity. The aspects of mobilisation needs to move from just coordination among stakeholders to truly embedding mental health and wellness within the uOttawa community processes and culture.

**1682 participants registered for pet therapy** IN 2018-2019

SUPPORTED BY MULTIPLE CAMPUS STAKEHOLDERS, **1,530 students and 590 employees attended flu vaccination clinics** OVER 3 DAYS IN EARLY NOVEMBER 2019

ESCAPE THE UCU INITIATIVE ENGAGED **600 participants with multiple campus support services** IN JUST ONE DAY

# RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

## 1. Implement a stronger infrastructure for long-term collaboration, coordination & mobilisation of stakeholders

The CAG has been a launching pad for better coordination and mobilisation of stakeholders across campus and has started moving uOttawa towards a culture of wellness. However, for long-term sustainability, it is recommended going forward for the CAG to have:

- A steering committee, with strong project management resources in order to coordinate, evaluate and keep track of the multiple stakeholders and projects across campus for students, employees and academic needs, similar to what exists in other post-secondary institutions.
  - › The Steering Committee's role would consist of making decisions on priorities, provide direction, ensure alignment and reporting back on the framework.
- Additional resources and expertise, particularly from academic areas, research and mental health and wellness professionals.
- An infrastructure to implement, evaluate and report on mental health and wellness
  - › Similar to other institutions, a project management office or functionality will support all of the work and functions across the entire institution.
  - › This stronger infrastructure would support uOttawa in coordinating and responding to new evidence and best practice; adapting institutional processes to align with new legal requirements; incorporating recommendations from expert reports (such as coroners' reports, Ombudspersons' recommendations, etc.) and adapting to shifting government policy directions.
- A systemic method for all stakeholders to contribute and report back to the main committee about their initial vision or initiative.
- Better communication between areas/sectors of what work they are doing and how they are related.
- Regularizing the position of the Senior Mental Health Advisor in order to provide continuity to the portfolio.

- Best practice in the post-secondary sector has been to implement cross-university mental health and wellness strategy or framework, embedded at a very high level within the university's structure, with a named senior administrator as the portfolio leader, usually the president or a vice-provost. It is recommended that a senior administrator be announced as the portfolio lead in the near future.

## 2. Reduce structural and systemic barriers

It is broadly accepted that organisational context has significant impact on student and community mental health, affecting student learning<sup>35</sup> as well as employees. The uniform implementation or application of policies or procedures can also have unintentional impacts that negatively affect our community. Moving forward, the CAG recommends considering a mental health and wellness lens in policies and procedures and, in particular, focusing on the key projects below to address unintentional inequities created by the current institutional processes:

- **Implementing a cross-campus Roles and Responsibilities Charter (Code of Conduct), for the entire community, staff and students**
  - › This initiative could be spearheaded by the Human Rights Office.
  - › In order to promote health and wellness, an institution must be clear in what behaviours and roles it expects its community members to play. A roles and responsibilities charter will provide clear, upfront values around human rights, health, and wellness. The University of Ottawa is one of few institutions that does not have a such a charter, which leads to confusion and grey areas around the expected behaviour of community members.
  - › Students living in residence currently sign a code of conduct in order to live on campus, which can serve as a template for the cross-campus version.
- **Implementing an equitable, clear set of policies and procedures for students reporting being unwell.**
  - › This will enable the University to reduce inequity between different programs, faculty and departments, and support those in need of recovery.
  - › Several post-secondary institutions in Ontario have implemented better-articulated policies and procedures to ensure clarity and transparency.

## 3. Commit to adopt the best practices in the sector through the lens of mental health and wellness

The post-secondary sector is evolving and ever changing. New evidence, reports with recommendations (such as coroners' reports<sup>36</sup>, Ombudspersons' recommendations, etc.), new policy direction from governments and industry leaders and best practices emerge continuously and it is important for an institution to not rely solely on internal expertise but use the latest evidence-informed information.

Best practices in the sector also apply not only to our policies and service provision, but also to the design of our campus environment and facilities. Health promoting universities focus on creating supportive campus environments, including the built environment<sup>37</sup>. This is particularly applicable to upcoming large-scale projects such as new residences and the planned Student Services Hub, as well as smaller renovation projects and updates to our facilities.



In order to move towards a culture of wellness, the CAG recommends implementing well-respected, evidence-based guidelines at uOttawa that are commonly used or emerging in the post-secondary sector, such as:

- **Signing the Okanagan Charter as an institution**

This charter would provide the university with a set of guidelines on what to incorporate to become a health promoting university. The charter has two calls to action:

  1. *To embed health into all aspects of campus culture, across the administration, operations and academic mandates.*
  2. *To lead health promotion action and collaboration locally and globally*
- **Implementing the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety of Post-Secondary Students** (when it launches in 2020)
  - › This standard, which is currently in development (and received input from members of the uOttawa community) is a set of voluntary process and evidence-based guidelines to help Canada's academic institutions promote and support students' psychological health and safety, and support students' success.
  - › Key principles in the standard include "embedding health into everyday operations, business practices and learning environments, policies and academic mandates".
- **Implementing of the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace**
  - › This standard is the first of its kind in the world. It is a set of voluntary guidelines, tools and resources intended to guide organizations in promoting mental health for employees and preventing psychological harm at work. The Standard outlines a systematic approach to develop and sustain a psychologically healthy and safe workplace, focusing on mental illness prevention and mental health promotion<sup>38</sup>.
  - › Several universities have already implemented the standard, and some have achieved silver status (i.e. University of Calgary)<sup>39</sup> and platinum level, the top status (Carleton University)<sup>40</sup> for their work.
  - › To implement the standard, uOttawa will seek to obtain Mental Health certification by Excellence Canada for its employees which certifies employers that have met the requirements of the standard.

# TRAINING (TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW TO SUPPORT ONESELF, EACH OTHER AND THE COMMUNITY)

“Training” in this case refers to the skill development necessary in order to undertake a task related to health and wellness.

In 2018, additional focus was placed on promoting the various existing training opportunities available at uOttawa for both staff and students, both in person and online. Additional training opportunities were since launched for key student and staff leaders in the community and a training opportunities section on the mental health and wellness website was created.

## WHY IS TRAINING IMPORTANT?

Due to the breadth of our uOttawa population, training needs differ. They include developing personal skills and resilience in order to *take care of oneself*; developing practical skills and knowledge to *take care and support others*; and learning what is best practice to *take care of our larger community* in regards to, for example, racism, stigmatisation, sexual violence and other societal topics.



## FEATURED INITIATIVES

Initiative	Description
Redesign of the student peer mentor training curriculum (as of Autumn 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In addition to the training received regarding academic skills, the 200 peer mentors across the 19 faculty and service mentoring centres all received appropriate mental health and wellness training for recognising, responding and referring peers in distress they may encounter while working <sup>41</sup>.</li><li>This includes SafeTalk training, and additional related training within the 30 hours of training they undertake throughout the academic year.</li></ul>
Consolidation of leadership and management competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implementation of Human Resources priorities that contribute to a productive and healthy workplace for uOttawa employees.</li><li>Enhancing leadership and management capabilities in managers impacts the quality of the environment that people work and thrive in.</li><li>Supporting leadership and management capacity across all levels of the University to ensure the presence of conditions fostering a healthy workplace.</li></ul>
Overhaul of the Summer Orientation program (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The new program puts the student’s needs first and encourages them to proactively plan for their academic, health and wellness needs in their studies, prior to arriving on campus for their studies.</li><li>For incoming undergraduates, 34 sessions were offered from mid-August to mid-September, with 2530 enrolled.</li><li>For incoming graduate students, 8 sessions were offered with 610 students enrolled.</li></ul>
Inclusion of mental health and wellness workshops to the Orientation for New Professors programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developing a plan to bring stakeholders together to coordinate and utilize the expertise on the campus.</li><li>Establishing committees tasked with implementing best practice for employee mental health and wellness.</li></ul>

## ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES

- Training of key student groups who support and teach their peers in mental health and wellness:
  - Health Promotion Peer Educators<sup>42</sup>
  - Community Advisors in residence<sup>43</sup>
- Implementation of Sexual Violence Prevention training
- Work-life balance and stress reduction workshops offered during Career Week and periodically throughout the year
- Training available to staff and faculty members<sup>44</sup>:
  - Mental Health First Aid
  - More Feet on the Ground
  - ASIST Facilitator Training
- Development of an additional, in-person workshop to supplement More Feet on the Ground training for faculty and staff
- Contribution to a provincial working group on updates to More Feet on the Ground curriculum
- Targeted training of Protection Services agents and staff on mental health
- uOttawa Academy of Mindfulness and Contemplative Students expanded the access of their mindfulness workshops to all students and staff
- Partnership with Art of Living offers meditation in residence weekly<sup>45</sup>
- Fitness Attendants receive mental health info during orientation
- Physical Activity Counselling sessions offered to employees and students
- Launch of Meetings on the Move mapping project to encourage physical activity within the work day
- Initiation of the services mapping exercise
- Successful implementation of the employee Mindfulness Challenge in January to June 2018 meant that it was expanded to the entire campus on World Mental Health Day from October 10 2018 to October 2019.

The Health Promotion Mental Health Team Peer Educators had **6,930 conversations about mental health** in 2018-2019.

Residence Life student staff (102) and professional staff (12 coordinators and the Assistant Director) have all **completed Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and More Feet on the Ground training**, as well as information on local resources and supports. Many of the professional Residence Life staff also have Mental Health First Aid training.

From January 2018 to November 2019, Human Resources offered **43 workshops** on various topics related to mental health and wellness for faculty and staff. The workshops were well attended with a total of **1,529 participants**<sup>46</sup>.

University-wide 30 Day Mindfulness Challenge was launched on World Mental Health Day October 10, 2018.

**1071 people registered**, with a mix of faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students and their buddies

96% of those who completed the online training reporting **better focus, better management of stress and increasing self-care**, and 91% recommending it to others.<sup>47</sup>

# RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Going forward, it is recommended that uOttawa focuses on capability and capacity development as it is not the offering of simple training itself that will allow the adoption of a wellness culture, but the various strategies to support the appropriate behaviours. Enhancing capabilities is enhancing the presence of desired behaviours that support good mental health and wellness.

Integral principles of all the recommendations related to training is to:

- Move away from the passive offer of training, which is often only taken by those who already have an interest or understanding of the topic to more active offers of training;
- Have concrete recognition of those who do complete training, such as by offering certification, or a positive contribution to the employee or student record;
- Make base level mental health training a mandatory requirement for key groups.

## 1. Promote and develop training and skill development opportunities that help the uOttawa population *take care of themselves*

Many opportunities already exist to support well-balanced students and staff. The CAG recommends pushing these even further and promoting workshops and learning opportunities that support the development of personal skills, throughout one's entire time in the uOttawa community, whether staff or student.

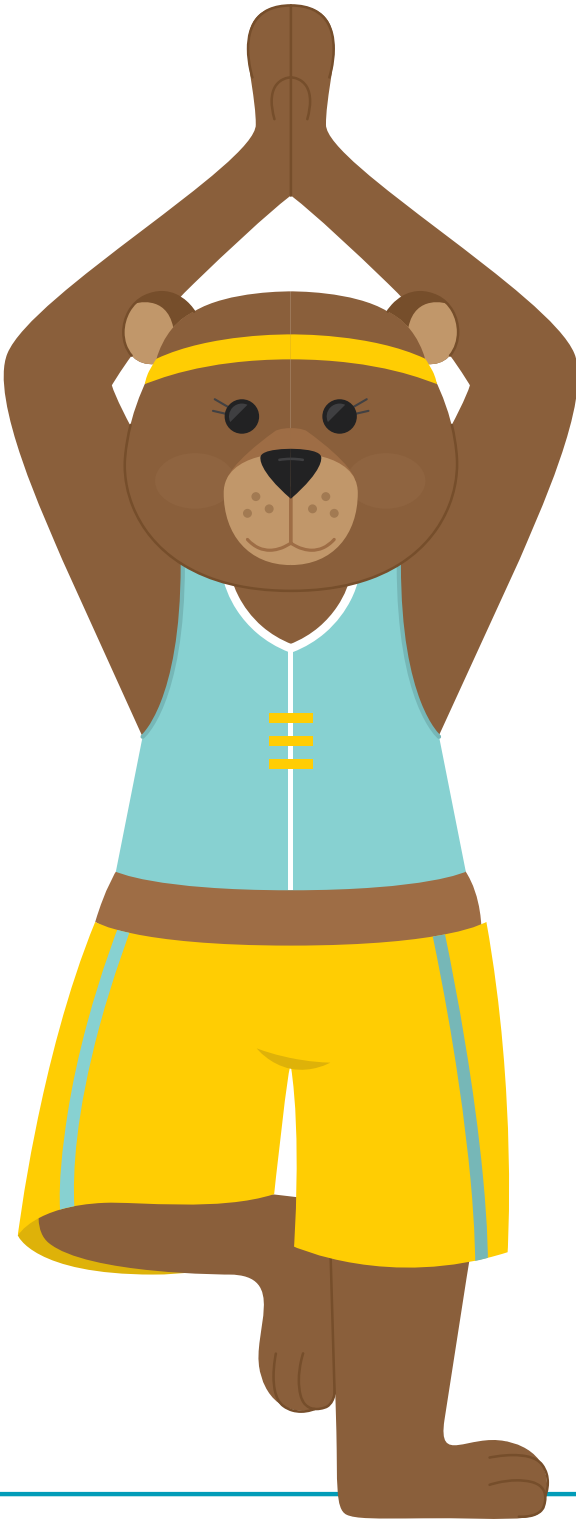
In order to reach a maximum number of people among the uOttawa population, promotional tactics will need to be diverse. Existing training currently targets those who are already interested in the subject. To encourage the uptake among a larger population, accrediting wellness-related courses or offering recognized certifications that provide an added benefit to the student or employee is recommended. We also recommend requiring mental health and wellness activities to be embedded in all performance management plans. Encouraging training development will address the gap in individual's knowledge and skills and increase long-term chances of academic success.

## 2. Promote and develop training and skill development opportunities that help our uOttawa population *take care of their peers*

This report has outlined that some key groups are already trained in helping and supporting their peers (peer mentors, peer educators, community advisors, some management staff, etc.) through mental health concerns. However, more training opportunities should be promoted, so that staff and students can identify colleagues in distress and know how to recognize, respond and refer their peers. We recommend introductory training be mandatory for all employees at all levels, at a minimum, with particular focus on ensuring those with direct student contact and all employees with managerial or supervisory responsibilities have role aligned training (offered at differing levels of need and capacity). This would enable more people on campus to respond to community members in distress and connect students, colleagues and peers more quickly to the right resources. This would also ensure those who witness distress know how to support themselves without becoming at risk.

## 3. Promote and develop training and skill development opportunities that help our uOttawa population *take care of our entire community*

This recommendation also encourages us to increase our community's knowledge (such as academic and student groups) to move forward on more widespread problems. Increasing the uptake of training related to wellness on topics such as racial inequities and oppression, sexual violence prevention, diversity & inclusion, accessibility, and overall health and fitness would truly enable our entire community to move towards a culture of wellness, in a holistic and wholesome manner.



# STRENGTHENING (OUR SUPPORTS AND SERVICES)

The breadth and depth of services and supports currently available to the uOttawa community is a strong foundation on which to build. Indeed, innovative and evidence-informed work from our staff and student community members, as outlined throughout this report and below demonstrates great creativity and drive to support our community. Nevertheless, there are still unmet needs, thus a focus on strengthening our offerings would allow us to answer feedback from student and staff on perceived or experienced gaps.

To move towards a culture of wellness, uOttawa needs to work on multiple areas, with multiple stakeholders, to ensure the resources available meet the community's needs. To meet

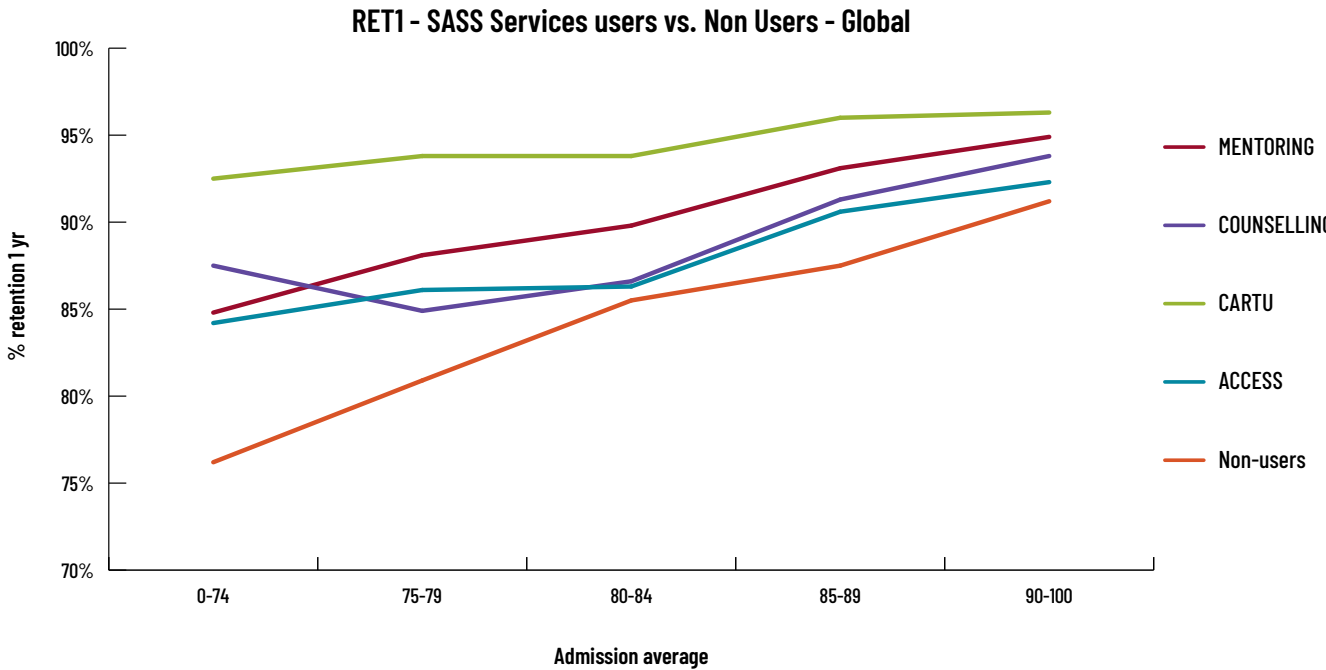
increased demands on our supports, services and resources we also need to adapt, modernise and incorporate best practice into our methods of providing services and programming – methods that have proven successful in similar institutions will help us improve our own. In addition, policies, guidelines, programs and policies should all be developed using a mental health and wellness lens. Finally, we need to ensure our community is brought on board via consultation – and a strong feedback loop, evaluating and publishing our changes – so that our community members can see the progress towards a culture of wellness and understand their role within it.

## WHY IS STRENGTHENING IMPORTANT?

The increase in demand and complexity from our population for our services are multi-factorial. Some key drivers are an increase to the university's overall population; changing demographics of both the student and staff populations, the increasing wait times in the external mental health and social services systems. Others include changes in society around stigma <sup>48</sup> and help-seeking (both positive and negative), changing societal norms, students arriving on campus with more complex needs, and many more. The natural cyclical nature of our institution creates key stress points affecting our community (i.e. exam period for students or year-end administrative deadline for employees). This results in bottlenecks, exceeding the current capacity to deliver and resulting in long wait times, a mismatch between need and service provision, and stretched

staff members who have less capacity to adapt to new challenges. In order to strengthen our support and services, uOttawa needs to seek out and implement improvements, innovation in service provision and new opportunities – on or off campus.

The chart below demonstrates how our support services provide real value to uOttawa. It clearly demonstrates that students who use the support services (formerly known as SASS, see note<sup>49</sup>), are retained in their studies. Simply put, those who engage with the supports offered, stay in university at a higher rate, and value and benefit stays constant no matter their admission average bracket – academically strong or weak students all benefit, and stay enrolled and succeed at the university.





## FEATURED INITIATIVES

Initiative	Description
Introduction of the Stepped Care Model (Autumn 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shifting from a more traditional model to a flexible, diverse and responsive model</li><li>• SASS Counselling and Coaching actively revamped their website to provide more information and self-serve options</li><li>• Addition of walk-in appointments (Autumn 2018) and additional evening and weekend appointment offerings (Autumn 2019)</li><li>• Customizable and adjustable service</li><li>• In 2018: 1761 individuals used the service, with 1937 to date in 2019.</li></ul>
Addition of Therapy Assisted Online (TAO) to the breadth of services available to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Optimizing the use of technology to provide an option of support and skills development</li><li>• Since the launch in Autumn 2018, utilised by 640 campus wide self-help users, with 310 using the tool as part of their therapy.</li></ul>
Development of new HR Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enable all managers to think deeply and intentionally about mental health and wellness in the workplace</li><li>• Review, create and coordinate policies and practices with attention to health and wellness.</li></ul>

## ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES

- Development of post-crisis intervention protocol and communication strategies
- Founders Breakfast 2019 – Theme of recognition of employee contribution
- Revision of Learning and Organizational Development (LADO) Leadership Program
- Environmental scan of available resources and training
- Needs assessment on the results of the Work Climate Survey
- Analysis of Human Resources statistics related to mental health (EFAP, absences, Human Rights complaints, benefit utilization, etc.)
- Graduate Student Café<sup>50</sup> programme offers practical, in-person learning support and reduces isolation of graduate students
- Human Resources Manager Survey
- Implementation of a new student health insurance process for increased insurance reimbursements and capacity for mental health services by the GSAED
- Launch of “Empower Me” for undergraduate students by UOSU student health insurance, offering increased counselling and support around mental health and wellness including telephone & e-counselling (Autumn 2019)
- Piloted the From Intention to Action (FITA) students who are experiencing significant stress and overwhelm during their studies
- Implementation of the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) Survey in 2019
- Development of a Wellness Hub to centralise all wellness-related services in one location
- Development of additional peer to peer resources
- Commencing the redesign of the Roger Guindon cafeteria
- Development of the long-term Wellness and Recreation strategic planning
- Launch of the Musician’s Wellness Centre to the broader uOttawa community and the public
- Light therapy offered to support those with Seasonal Affective Disorder<sup>51</sup>
- Creation of new positions:
  - › Health and Accommodation Advisor (employee focused)
  - › Case Manager to support complex cases & referrals (student focused)
- Addition of Varsity Mental Health Coordinator & Registered Psychotherapist
- Participation in the Canadian Post-Secondary Alcohol and Drugs Survey in 2020
- Development of a Wellness Lounge in residence
- Development of a Student in Distress policy and procedure for front line Health Promotion staff<sup>52</sup>
- Drop-in Coaching sessions around mid-terms and finals commenced Autumn 2019
- Re-organisation of Student Life services to develop a Wellness & Recreation focussed sector
- Change in management of Health Promotion Services from external partnership with University of Ottawa Health Service to internal section of the Wellness & Recreation sector of uOttawa’s Student Life (integration commenced Autumn 2019, full implementation May 2020).

THE LONG NIGHT AGAINST PROCRASTINATION (LNAP)<sup>53</sup> HAD **640 attendees** AT THE MARCH 2019 EVENT.

THE HEALTH PROMOTION RESOURCE CENTRE HAS SEEN A **452% increase in visits** SINCE 2014, WITH **88,895 visiting** IN 2018-2019.

## RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

### 1. Address gaps and strengthen our services and programming to improve the continuum of support

Due to the diverse needs of the population and the multitude of stakeholders involved in mental health and wellness, it is easy for certain groups to miss out on support services. A focus on improving the transitions, link and connections of our community members will to supports help address these gaps and allow for integration of these groups. For instance:

- Students such as part-time students, those studying offsite at placement or those at the outlying campuses have weaker connections and inequitable access to services available on the main campus.
- Employees with certain employment statuses do not have access to the Employee and Family Assistance Program.

The University of Ottawa needs to dedicate resources and funding to address these inequities, such as providing services in more remote or disadvantaged locations or case management in order to support complex referrals.

A key recommendation by the CAG is that Employee and Family Assistance Programme (EFAP) services should be extended to all contract employees who currently are not offered the option to have access to this service.

### 2. Evaluate, adapt and continuously improve our processes

Since the launch of the CAG in 2018, additional emphasis has been placed on collecting local data for decision-making, as is industry recommended best practice<sup>54</sup>. The collection of data supports keeping our pulse on our community's evolution, allowing us to strengthen and pivot our services and allocate resources to our employee, faculty and students' actual needs. Useful information has come from this work, such as noting differences between undergraduate and graduate student students' receptivity to health topics at different stages of their studies<sup>55</sup>, allowing tailoring of promotion and programming to the right audiences at the right time.

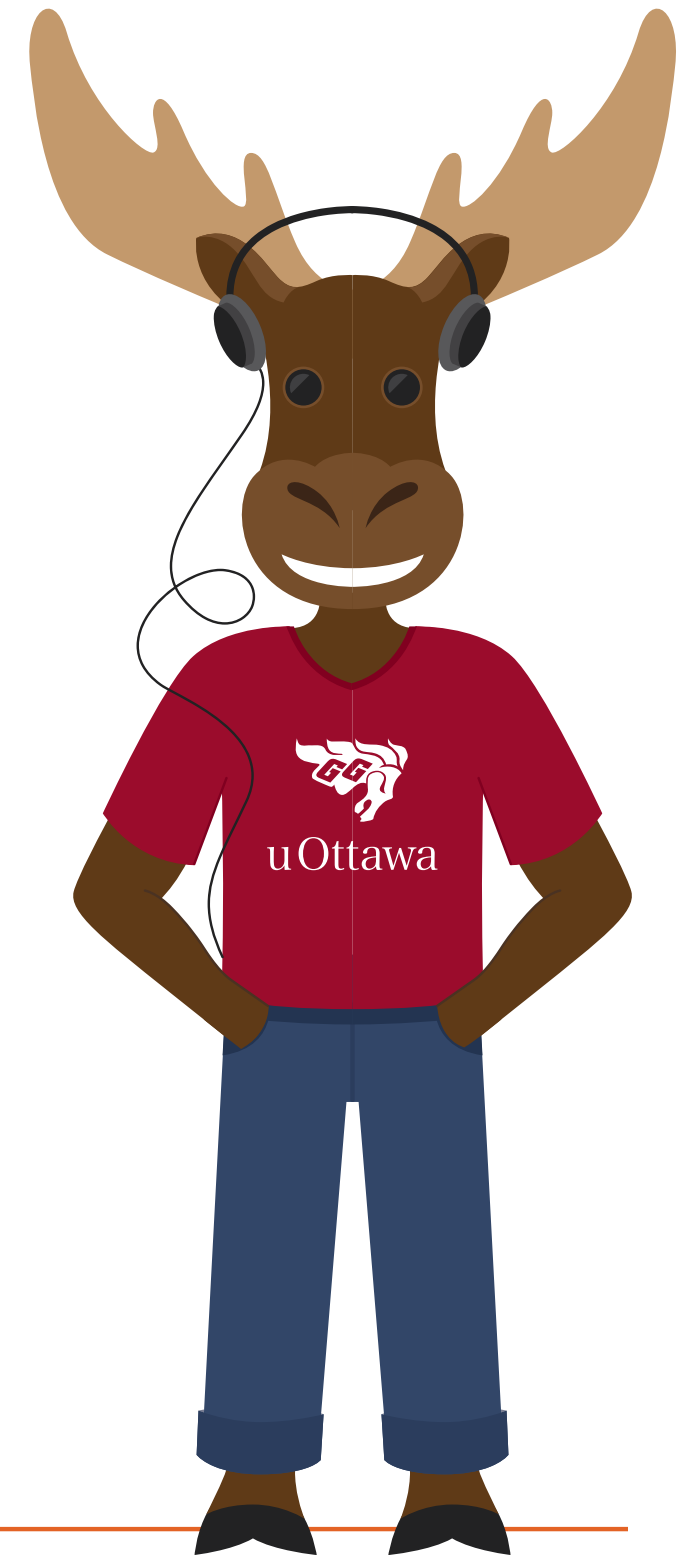
To avoid overlooking such important data and opportunity to improve, it is recommended that long-term, dedicated staff and resources are put towards the evaluation and development of key performance indicators so that they can report back to the steering committee. Within this recommendation is a commitment to reviewing implementation of large-scale initiatives on a regular basis, such as the launch of the new Stepped Care model of service provision in Autumn 2018. This will allow uOttawa to recognize and address gaps, better support sub-groups that are more vulnerable, observe changes after implementation of programming and activities, provide more precise and regular reporting, and monitor progress towards a better culture of wellness on a regular basis in the new framework.

### 3. Further invest in current services and programming

Over the past few years, significant work and change has been undertaken to improve frontline services, with demonstrable results as mentioned in the initiatives throughout this report. External partnerships, mobilising of internal stakeholder funding and work by staff has increased the number of frontline resources. For instance, the Stepped Care model has meant rapid access to support via the walk-in clinic, with new evening and weekend hours. Nevertheless, frontline services for students and employees are still understaffed and under-resourced for the sizable uOttawa community<sup>56</sup>.

Ensuring stable service provision of front-line resources like counselling is challenging. As is common in the sector, a significant portion of funding is non-recurrent or short-term grant funding<sup>57</sup>. This contributes to ongoing short-term contracts for staff, reduces the ability to respond to service demand, leading to overworked employees, and lower staff morale, which in turn affects service delivery and the user experience. This has a direct impact on engagement, retention and recruitment<sup>58</sup>.

The CAG asks the University's senior administration to recognize the value of mental health and wellness services and programming and work towards stabilising funding. It is recommended that when requests for funding are reviewed, they be considered within the broader lens of a mental health and wellness culture, rather than restrict consideration to short-term budget cycles and the value they add to the organisation in the long-term.



# NEXT STEPS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATION

## LAUNCH THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A LONG-TERM, CROSS-UNIVERSITY WELLNESS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

This report has outlined the many activities happening at uOttawa to support mental health and wellness, which has a natural alignment with the University's key strategic goals around reputation, recruitment, retention and engagement efforts. Our community's mental health wellness has been clearly raised by staff <sup>59</sup> and students as a key issue; and a focus on mental health and wellness is considered best practice in the post-secondary sector.

However, despite having a plethora of service offerings related to wellness, the University of Ottawa lacks a cohesive, overarching, sophisticated and modern strategic framework, which would truly enable us to move towards a culture of wellness.


- The University's direction, vision, mandate, objectives, key goals, and long-term vision in regards to mental health and wellness are still unclear to our broader community. This unintentionally suggests a lack of caring or commitment by uOttawa and makes it difficult for community members to buy-in to the University's plans, understand current status and contribute their skills to our evolution.
- The senior administration leadership and accountability over the portfolio is not clearly identified, making it difficult for community members to know who to approach with new ideas, resources or plans for collaboration. In most institutions the President or vice-president is the public face of the portfolio.
- There is no coordinated oversight over key indicators and data, to ensure that informed changes are made to programming, resources and services, within an appropriate feedback loop.
- The linkages to other uOttawa key strategic priorities have not been made explicit.
- It is hard to attach funding goals and long-term priorities to the multiple projects and stakeholders without overarching vision and goals.

The creation of a mental health and wellness framework for employees and academics that has a vision, principles and goals would provide an important frame for the University and would underline the importance we attribute to these critical issues.


In alignment with the University's strategic plan for 2030, the CAG's ultimate recommendation is that the university **launch the development and implementation of a long-term, cross-university wellness strategic framework** based on the principles and recommended steps in this report. This plan would have the ultimate goal of moving uOttawa towards a more sustainable culture of wellness. With a strategic framework in place, uOttawa will be able to fully embody the words and actions emphasised by our President in January 2019 – *everyone* has a role to play in wellness, and we can achieve this by *taking care of ourselves, of each other and of our community*.

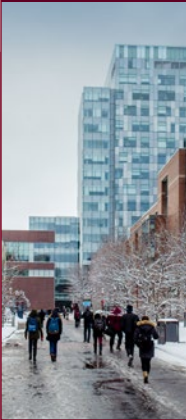
APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Mental Health and Wellness Action Plan – Status Report Winter 2019



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACTION PLAN STATUS REPORT





**FEBRUARY 2019**

This status report highlights activities since the announcement of the Campus Action Group (CAG) in January 2018. Accomplishments reported will be forthcoming in summer 2019.

On January 22nd, 2018, President Jacques Fréchet announced the creation of the CAG, whose mandate is to better coordinate activities on mental health and wellness at the University of Ottawa via an action plan, including clear accountability for the implementation of initiatives, projects and services.

The Action Plan consists of four pillars, which were key areas for activity and improvement:


- Awareness: of the entire community
- Mobilization: to better coordinate initiatives across campus
- Training: to better understand and how to support oneself and others
- Strengthening: our supports and services

As a Ottawa community, we have engaged our students and employees as well as our community partners in our helping efforts. The cultural change of education, well-being and thriving is a collective campus endeavour to better promote health and wellness to improve the awareness and access to resources and services available to our community members.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM WORK IN 2018-2019**



Mental Health visual identity



CRX alumni quotes



StairWell

**Mental Health branding and communications plan:**

Creative and visual identity that is approachable, memorable and adaptable over the years to various situations that members of the community may experience. The visual identity is neutral, original, functional and broad. Ottawa community can be adapted to interpret various mental health and wellness situations, one which provides consistent visual messaging over time.

**Stepped Care model of mental health and wellness:**

SASS Counselling and Coaching launched the new Stepped Care model, a well-associated resource of mental health and wellness based on best practices and community needs. The new model of mental health and wellness aims to support, strengthen and develop the capacity of the student community in a larger academic spectrum of support, resources and advancement.

**Walk-in counselling:**

Sameday availability to face-to-face single-session counselling which has resulted in a marked reduction in wait times for students.

**TAO (Therapy Assisted Online)**

TAO is a free, self-paced, online module that helps people learn about and change how they think and feel. TAO provides therapy and self-help tools to help students deal with stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. The module is available in French and English.

**Online resources:**

Access to online self-help resources such as books, podcasts and worksheets.

**National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey:**

Implementation of the national survey of student health, behaviors, and perceptions (Feb. 2019).

**Mental health quotes at CRX:**

In order to destigmatize discussion of mental health topics, students decided to install inspirational quotes on the historic on-campus wall at the Learning Crossroads (CRX). Alumni offered simple, powerful quotes describing what they would have liked to have known back when they were students. Their words now adorn the walls in several areas of the CRX.

**Mental Health Workshops:**

The students gave a workshop on what they would have wanted to know in their first year of university. They shared their stories and tips with participants to help them learn about healthy snack courtesy of Chartwells. Participants were provided with a USB key containing information on mental health resources. The project was a daily reminder by the Learning Crossroads program of the success of the workshops were extended to first-year students in September 2018.

**Mindfulness Challenge for employees and students:**

Abling a evidence-based online training that participants join to improve their mental well-being and their daily lives and work lives. The mindfulness challenge is available to the entire 50,000 uOttawa community.



Wellness Week



**COUNSELLING AND COACHING STEPPED CARE MODEL**

- 1 GET STARTED: Start with self-help resources
- 2 WALK-IN: Walk-in counselling
- 3 ONLINE THERAPY: Self-assess and receive mental health resources (TAO)
- 4 DEVELOP PSYCH SKILLS: Therapeutic services and workshops
- 5 GROUP PROGRAMS: Group programs facilitated by professional counsellors
- 6 MEET A COUNSELLOR: Meet with a counsellor
- 7 RESOURCES: Access to self-help resources



The Grower

**Mental Health conference:**

Attended by Student, Employees to share best practices in the area of mental health and wellness on various campuses.

**Leadership and Management Program:**

Promoting the creation of working conditions necessary for the well-being and commitment of employees in organizational performance.

**Wellness website for students and employees:**

A one-stop-shop of all appropriate resources. [uOttawa.ca/wellness](http://uOttawa.ca/wellness)

**Wellness Week:**

An annual event that consists of workshops, events, conducted by alumni, students, employees and community organizations and activities.

"safeTALK" train the trainer training for 200 mentors.

"safeTALK" train the trainer provided to designated employees who will provide on-going training to members of our community.

**Training for 200 Peer Mentors:**

SASS Academic Support Unit in partnership with all of the faculty peer mentoring centres delivered "safeTALK" training to all 200 peer mentors. Mental health and wellness training for recognizing, responding and offering peer support so they may encounter while working as peer mentors.

**Food Services Initiatives:**

Mind, Body and Soul and Pantries at the Dining Hall, collaboration with uOttawa's own Grower.

**November 20, 2018 Stress Management:**

Stress management workshop developed by SASS given to uOttawa employees.

**ASSIST training for varsity coaches and athletic therapists**

SASS mentoring for International Students

**Presentation of new "Stepped Care" model in various Faculties, including Arts and Health Sciences**

"More Feet on the Ground" and "Extend the Reach" training for coaches

"Mental Health First Aid" given to employees in frontline roles

"Can I Kiss You?": presentation on the importance of consent

Dedicated counsellor for student-athletes

Creation of a counselling service map between SASS and UOHS

New Professor Orientation (SAEA)



**OUR PROGRESS**


The focus of the year has been on shifting the culture into a culture of wellness, with more integrated and coordinated programming and projects.

In 2018 and the early part of 2019, we partnered with some unique stakeholders to bring new tools and resources to campus such as Chartwells Thinking Ahead, Giving Back (TAGB) program which supported many of our initiatives and projects and the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) to establish financial wellness.

We will continue to partner with student and employee groups to use their skills to promote wellness, such as delivering workshops and fun health challenges to the community. We will pursue the therapeutic and student support and health to partner and knowledge in the Ottawa community towards a stronger campus culture of wellness leading to access to streamlined services - where everyone has a role to play.

**UPCOMING DELIVERABLES:**

- Full report - June 2019
- March 7 - Stress Management & Work Life Balance Workshop
- StairWell research findings
- Screen time reduction project
- Development of Photo Mental Health Initiatives on campus and SASS new Stepped care model
- RGN facilities kitchen and lounge renewal and wellness programming
- Access feasibility of an on-campus peer-to-peer Wellness Centre
- Wellness Wednesdays
- Ontario-wide benchmarking exercise
- Long Night Against Procrastination
- Implementation of SASS/UAHS counselling service map



Appendix 2 – Mental health and wellness services, initiatives & programming provided to students at uOttawa

The University of Ottawa community provides and receives a plethora of services, activities, education and research for its student community members around mental health and wellness. There are innumerable links and partnerships with local community services, both public and private to serve the needs of students, staff and faculty on and off campus.

Please find below a list various services and initiatives offered, listed in alphabetical order. Due to the broad nature of mental health and wellness, these supports may not be explicitly be titled "mental health," but all contribute to helping students be successful in their university journey.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES OFFERED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

SERVICES

Academic Accommodations (formerly SASS)

[Academic Accommodations](#) service is the central resource for disability advising and the development of accommodation plans for students with disabilities. Academic Accommodations works to provide students and student applicants with disabilities academic accommodation to allow them an equitable opportunity to fully access and participate in the learning environment. Primary disability identified as mental health is approximately 30% for each of those years.

Total students registered with the office, with approved accommodations have been increasing in recent years:

2016-17 – 2,254

2017-18 – 2,474

2018-19 – 2,812

2019-20 – 3,200 (estimated based on the first half of the year)

Academic Writing Help Centre (formerly SASS)

The [Academic Writing Help Centre](#) (AWHC) is a peer help centre where students can learn at any step of the writing process how to become more efficient and autonomous writers. The AWHC peer mentors can give constructive feedback on academic papers that must be submitted as part of a course, and uses student-centered teaching practices to teach about, plagiarism and referencing, the structure of a paper, and grammar.

Common Law Section, Faculty of Law

The [Common Law Student Centre](#) offers a number of services intended to support students who are faced with a personal challenge or crisis over the course of their studies.

Law students (including Civil Law students since they are studying in Ontario) are also eligible to take advantage of the [Members Assistance Program](#). The MAP is a confidential service designed to help members achieve their health and wellness goals. Lawyers, paralegals, law students, judges, other legal professionals in the law sector and their families covered by the MAP are provided with confidential access to these targeted services.

Counselling & Coaching (formerly SASS)

[Counselling](#) provides short-term psychotherapy to students experiencing distress associated with various life events, challenges, and acts as a referral resource for additional services both on and off campus. In 2016-2017 SASS Counsellors offered 7229 individual counselling appointments. In Fall 2018 SASS Counselling and Coaching launched the [new Stepped Care model](#), which provides a new breadth of services, including a walk-in clinic model, Therapy Assisted Online (TAO) and additional supports for mental health literacy.

Health Promotion Resource Centre – University of Ottawa Health Services

Until Autumn 2019, through a partnership with the University of Ottawa Health Services, the [Health Promotion Resource Centre](#) was available on campus to our students. Now this contract has been changed, and the service will be provided by the same team, in-house, via Student Life.

The Health Promotion Resource Centre offers a safe space for students to seek help and it relates to health and wellness on campus. The Health Promotion Resource Centre is made up of 2 Health Promotion Specialists, 1 Marketing and Communications Coordinator, 2 Administrative Assistants, 7 team leaders and 80 peer educator volunteers. Health Promotion strives to enable students to increase control over their own health by providing tools, resources and education on various health and wellness topics.

In 2018-2019, the Peer Educators had a total of 46153 conversations with students on campus, of which 6930 were about mental health specifically. This dynamic team can be found educating and encouraging the University of Ottawa community, focusing on empowering students towards healthy living and academic success by offering free bilingual resources, services, programmes, events and interactive activities that touch on student health issues such as, but not limited to:

- Mental health, stress management and sleep
- Sexuality
- Drugs & alcohol consumption
- Tobacco
- Nutrition and physical activity
- Global health and development issues

### Human Rights Office

The [Human Rights Office](#) provides expert advice regarding the creation, implementation and evaluation of policies, procedures and practices on inclusion, employment equity, accessibility, prevention of harassment and discrimination and sexual violence. The office provides confidential information and assistance to all members of the University community who may have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment. The Office also handles any complaints related to discrimination and harassment for uOttawa community members.

### Mashkawaziwogamig: Indigenous Resource Centre (IRC)

The [Indigenous Resource Centre \(IRC\)](#) works closely with all university faculties and services to develop initiatives that support and benefit First Nations, Inuit and Métis students. IRC provides services that support students in their classroom, career and personal needs in a manner consistent with Aboriginal culture and values. Students that self-identify as First Nation, Inuit, or Metis can register to access the resources and services.

### Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Services

The [University of Ottawa Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Services](#) endeavours to serve the entire university community, including persons of any religious identity or no particular religious identity. The multi-faith team of volunteer chaplains and faith liaisons work to provide spiritual resources and care for students, faculty and staff on the University of Ottawa campus.

### Office of the Ombudsperson

The [Office of the Ombudsperson](#) serves the entire University community. The Office of the Ombudsperson provides impartial and independent advice and information to parties to assist in resolving disputes and problems. The office can support community members who feel their rights have not been respected or have been a victim of an injustice, and can provide information, advice and coaching, third party interventions or recommend changes to policies, procedures and practices.

### Protection Services

[Protection Services](#) is the on campus security service, and it is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, all year round, offering a bilingual service. Protection staff and constables receive a wide variety of training to support them in responding to the broad range of situations they encounter with students or campus community members in distress or at risk situations. Protection Services also offers awareness and training opportunities to the community, such as self-defence courses, the [uOAlert and SecurUO app](#), and emergency preparedness.

### Student Affairs (Wellness) Faculty of Medicine, Roger Guindon Campus

The [Student Affairs](#) office provides supports to medical students during their studies to achieve personal and professional success and a healthy and positive life balance during their medical studies at the University of Ottawa.

### Student Associations

Both the [undergraduate](#) and [graduate student](#) associations provide mental health and well-being services through various means, such as through their student health insurance policies (undergraduate or graduate), or their peer led initiatives. Their student health insurance policies have varying criteria and reimbursement limits. However, generally these plans can provide access to counselling options such as e-counselling, video or telephone counselling, as well as 24/7 access to support via the call centre. These plans can also provide reimbursement, within the limits of the policy, for outside access to mental health supports such as seeing a psychologist or counsellor.

uOttawa Graduate students have free access to a program called the *Student Support Program (SSP)* - for those enrolled in their [GSAÉD Student Health Plan](#). Graduate students can call 24/7 to **1-855-649-8641** to speak to a counsellor or make an appointment, or **visit** [the SSP Website](#) to access the service via electronic chat or email.

As of September 1, 2019, uOttawa undergraduate students have access to their *Empower Me* programme, for those enrolled in their [Student Care insurance plan](#). Undergraduate students can call 24/7 to **1-844-741-6389** to speak to a counsellor or make an appointment, or **visit** [Empower Me](#) to access the service via electronically.

### Undergraduate Study Offices

Undergraduate Study Offices provide in faculty support via the academic advising model. Overall, the aim is to improve and systemize efforts to ensure student success and retention in their academic life. Academic advising services are located within the faculties.

### University of Ottawa Health Services (UOHS)

The University of Ottawa has very significant partnership with the UOHS [Family Health Team](#), which provides services to registered students, staff and faculty on campus.

UOHS consists of over 100 full and part-time employees as well as close to 90 health care professionals, offering care in the areas of Family Medicine (FHT), Specialty Medicine, Physiotherapy, Psychiatry, and other services. Physicians include family medicine and sports medicine physicians as well as specialists in Gynecology/Obstetrics, Physiatry, Orthopaedics, Endocrinology, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics and Psychiatry.

Student can access a psychiatrist or psychotherapist covered by OHIP through UOHS, however, it is important to note that the services of UOHS are also open and serve the broader community, therefore services are not exclusively available or reserved for students, and they generally have the same waiting times as the general public.

## INITIATIVES & PROGRAMMING

### Academy of Mindfulness and Contemplative Studies

uOttawa's [Academy of Mindfulness and Contemplative Studies](#) is an interdisciplinary group of faculty and students who share a common interest in supporting the university community in learning about mindfulness and other contemplative practices. Their initiatives include integrating mindfulness and contemplative practices into workshops, research, integrating partnerships with university-affiliated hospitals and research institutes and promoting public education about the benefits.

### Awareness & Communications Campaigns

To reach our broad, diverse and dispersed university community the university uses various methods of communication, including student, staff and community newsletters, targeted periodic emails during strategic times during the academic year, print materials, social media, activities and events. Please see the university's [media](#) page for some examples of the communication tools used to reach out to our community.

### Elder in Residence

The [Elder-in-Residence](#) at the University of Ottawa, ensures and promotes emotional, physical, mental and spiritual wellness for all Indigenous learners as well as any student who would like to meet with them.

### Events

The events promoting mental health and well-being at the university are simply too numerous to list. Highlights include the university wide [Wellness Week](#), as well as many events hosted by [Student Life](#). Events and activities serve to foster connections amongst community members, inform, educate, communicate and develop the social fabric of the university community.

### External Partnerships

The number of external partnerships formed to support our students are too numerous to list in this brief overview. An example includes work with the [Centre for Innovation for Campus Mental Health \(CICMH\)](#) to further advocacy and implementing best practice within the uOttawa community.

The University of Ottawa is also a member of the Ottawa-wide [Suicide Prevention Ottawa](#). Suicide Prevention Ottawa is a network of local Ottawa services such as public health, hospitals, school boards, and local community agencies working towards better local mental health and suicide prevention. Furthermore, various staff, students and faculty host, develop and attend conferences, research events and forums around mental health and well-being.

### Graduate Writing Initiatives – Café, Retreats and Boot Camps

The Graduate Café, writing retreats and writing boot camps are held throughout the academic year. These peer supported [writing related initiatives](#) are intended to reduce isolation, increase motivation and productivity for graduate students.

### International Office

The [International Office](#) provides multiple initiatives to international students and related visitors to uOttawa. This includes supporting students with the [University Health Insurance Plan \(UHIP\)](#), various initiatives and programming related to welcome, integration and support services for engaging and adjusting to student life in Ottawa, pre-departure and post-mobility student preparation and training, peer mentoring programme, and much more.

### Members Assistance Program

The [Members Assistance Program](#) is a confidential service available to our law students on campus. The MAP is unique in that it covers the law profession in Ontario – Lawyers, paralegals, law students, judges, other legal professionals and their families are covered by the MAP. The MAP provides information, tools and resources on topics such as psychological challenges, relationship concerns, stress, depression and anxiety, and can provide counselling services to its members.

### Mental Health & Wellness Website

In 2016 the university its new cross-university mental health and wellness [website for](#) all stakeholders involved in our campus – students, faculty, staff and the wider community. It acts as a central location for information and resources at our University and in the surrounding community, and supports students, staff and community members to navigate through the various supports, services, policies and resources available.

### Mentoring

The [mentoring centres](#) on campus offer a variety of services to help any student who is experiencing academic problems or wants to work on their academic skills, including 19 mentoring centers, over 220 devoted student mentors, over 20 different workshops themes, over 70 study groups and a variety of [study skills](#) tips available online. Mentoring is provided by trained peers to support students in their studies, supported by university staff.

### Musicians' Wellness Centre

[The Musicians' Wellness Centre](#) educates, provides research and provides specialised treatment for musicians' physical wellness, mental wellness, and auditory and visual wellness. The Musicians' Wellness Centre serves music students, professors, professional musicians, health professionals and in Autumn 2020 opened their doors to musicians in the general public of all ages and levels.

### Peer Counselling

Peer Counselling acts as additional resource to students accessing support with the Counselling Service in Student Life. The [Peer Counsellors](#) receive extensive training for their role from the service's registered psychotherapists, in order provide informal emotional support to their fellow students and deepen the connection to the campus experience.



Photo – Peer Counselling Team

### Pet Therapy

Pet therapy is offered regularly at the university during the academic year via volunteer pet therapy teams who are certified by local volunteer organisations. [Pet Therapy](#) events are very popular, with sometimes over 100 students showing up in an hour to spend time with the dogs. In 2018-2019 1682 participants joined the pet therapy sessions. The university was one of the first to offer this very popular activity to support the community, and now many universities and post-secondary institutions are offering similar programmes.



Photo – Pet therapy sessions

### Physical Activity Counselling

Via Human Kinetics at uOttawa, students and staff have access to free Physical Activity Counselling. [Physical Activity Counselling](#) (PAC) focuses on motivating students and staff to be more physically active for their own reasons through the use of evidence-based behaviour change techniques, to improve their overall physical and mental health. The physical activity counsellors of the PAC program are students who are on the path to becoming registered Kinesiologists, who have taken a course in Physical Activity Counselling which delivers practical training in motivation building and behaviour change.

### Research

The research activities and output by our staff, faculty and students are simply too numerous to mention. Please consider visiting the websites of the [Brain Mind Research Institute](#), the websites of the research chairs, multiple labs and collaborations at the [School of Psychology](#), or the announcements from the [university's research office](#) regarding the extensive work the university's scholars are undertaking around mental health.

### 7 Pillars of Wellness

The [7 Pillars of Wellness Initiative](#) asks uOttawa community members to consider and incorporate the 7 dimensions of wellness into their overall health: financial, physical, emotional, spiritual, environmental, social & intellectual. Often people do well on a few dimensions of wellness but recognize via this initiative they need to focus on forgotten pillars in their lives. The multiple wellness programmes and services available to support community members are organised under the 7 pillars are used as a tool to increase awareness of the availability of supports, and the contributions of multiple stakeholders across.

### Therapy Assisted Online

[Therapy Assisted Online \(TAO\) Self-Help](#) is a platform of tools and educational modules available for staff and students to learn about their own personal mental health and wellness. Using the TAO tool empowers you to work on personal goals, such as changing thoughts and feelings, or dealing with stressors in your life. TAO's evidence-based, flexible skill development modules can be completed at any time and anywhere with Internet access, and it provides progress measures along the way for participants. Since the launch of the platform in Autumn 2019, 310 students have been enrolled by their counsellor in the **Therapist Assisted (Counselling)** function, working through modules as part of their mental health services. In addition, 633 students have self-enrolled in the campus wide TAO self-help platform. An upcoming project in early 2020 will be creating a TAO group for graduate students in the Faculty of Medicine, to allow **their onsite counsellor to enroll students while providing their mental health services.**

### Training Opportunities for Interns and On Campus Clinics

The [Centre for Psychological Services and Research](#) (CPSR) offers internship training opportunities to students completing their Masters of PhD work in clinical psychology. CPSR offers fee-based assessment and psychological services via their service to the Ottawa-Gatineau area.

[Community Counselling Services](#) (CCS) offer internship opportunities to students completing their Masters studies in Counselling Psychology, and provides some capacity via their interns to support the mental health and well-being of uOttawa students.

### Sexual Violence Prevention

The launch of the [Sexual Violence Prevention Resource](#) website provides the entire uOttawa community with confidential and practical information regarding sexual violence support and prevention. It also hosts information about workshops such as the Mobilising the Bystander training and 6 Weeks of Sexual Violence Prevention on Campus campaign.

uOttawa has partnerships with the [ORCC](#) (Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre) and [CALACS](#) (Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel) to offer free and confidential support on and off campus to students who have been the victim or have been exposed to sexual violence.

### Standing Committee on Student Wellbeing

The [Standing Committee on Student Wellbeing](#) identifies, shares leading practices and propose actions concerning non-academic student needs that affect student well-being. Its goals are to: create better linkages between services, faculties and key stakeholders on campus; address increasing complexity of social well-being and health needs; strengthen the university's capacity to prevent issues, raise awareness and respond; spot gaps and service needs, and potentially avoid duplicating efforts; promote synergies between services; respond to emerging information around policies, laws, regulations from environmental scans; and develop university wide responses and best practices. Selected students, representatives from student unions, student and university service directors and senior university administration sit on this committee.

## Appendix 3: Highlights of mental health supports provided to faculty & staff at uOttawa

### Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

The [EFAP](#) is a confidential and voluntary support service that can help employees or their family members. The EFAP assists employees in finding solutions to all

kinds of changes at any age and stage of life. The employee and members of their family can receive support over the telephone, in person, online and through a variety of self-guided resources.

### Healthy and Active Campus

The [Healthy and Active Campus](#) is an employee initiative that runs [events](#) and activities to support employees to stay healthy and active on campus. Healthy and Active Campus has a network of more than fifty "champions" across the university, who are involved in multiple events such as Lunch and Learns, the stair climbing and pedometer challenges, campus walks and social activities throughout the year.

### Volunteer Student Clubs & Events

There are also many student led initiatives and clubs on campus that work on peer support, awareness and advocacy around mental health and well-being. Please see a selection of some of the volunteer initiatives [here](#).

### Wellness Lounge

The [Wellness Lounge](#) is a location on campus where students can take a break, recharge and get help from peers. When students drop in for a visit, student mentors and peer educators are on hand to share information about on and off campus mental health and wellness related resources and help to direct students who need help.

### Workshops

Multiple services across campus offer a variety of [workshops and groups](#) geared towards addressing common areas of concern for students, including the Student Academic Success Service, Academic Advisors and individual services. New in 2019 is the Wellness Drop-In Groups series, to find supports on shared challenges. This series is targeting supports to different populations or specific students such as international students or first year students.

### Human Resources

From January 2018 to November 2019, Human Resources offered 43 workshops on various topics related to mental health and wellness for faculty and staff. The workshops were well attended with a total of 1,529 participants. The workshop themes included, but not limited to, *Understanding and Contributing to Mental Health in the Workplace*, *Work-Life Balance* and *Introduction to Diversity*.

Human Resources is also involved in helping employees remain healthy and productive at work. The Health and Wellness sector offers programmes and resources such as the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP); and Return to Work which promotes healthy and safe workplaces and minimizes work related injuries and illnesses.

### Other resources

If under the terms of employment with the university an employee does not have access to the University's EFAP, there are [other community resources](#) - on and off campus - available.

Appendix 4 – Training Opportunities on Campus – Take Care of Each Other & the Community

Training opportunities listed below are not courses taken towards accreditation or a degree. They are skills development courses related to supporting peers and colleagues around mental health and wellness.

More Feet on the Ground

What is it?

[More Feet on the Ground](#) is a free educational website on how to recognize, respond and refer students experiencing mental health issues on campus. Mental illness often strikes individuals during the years that they attend university, but early identification and treatment can help make a major difference in the lives of these students. More Feet on the Ground is intended to provide you with tools to support students experiencing mental health issues.

SafeTalk

What is it?

[safeTALK](#) is a workshop for the community that prepares participants to identify and engage people with thoughts of suicide and connect them with further help and care. It is offered by the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Who can take it and how much does it cost?

This training needs to be organised by individual departments directly with a SafeTALK trainer. The workshop lasts about 3.5 hours.

Students or anyone from the general public who is at least 15 years old and would be interested in following the training can do so by registering directly with safeTalk (cost: 60\$).

ASIST

What is it?

[ASIST](#) (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is the standard training experience for suicide prevention in our community, presented in collaboration with LivingWorks.

Who can take it and how much does it cost?

This training is available on a cost recovery basis (approximately \$100 for uOttawa participants, \$180 for external participants. Contact an on campus trainer for registration information. The training lasts 2 days. uOttawa Housing services has four trained facilitators who will provide group training when pre-arranged.

Students or anyone from the general public who is at least 16 years old and is in a position of caregiving (official or not) can follow the training (cost: 250\$ / 200\$ for students). [See the ASIST website for more information.](#)

Mental Health First Aid

What is it?

[Mental Health First Aid](#) is a workshop that supports employees to acquire basic knowledge about mental health issues and society, and basic tips on the mental health first aid concept.

Who can take it and how much does it cost?

The training is available at no cost to employees who are in a supervisory position at uOttawa. They must make a request to your supervisor and have it approved to register. Learning activities take 12 hours to complete (generally requires 2 business days worth of employee time).

Free resources and print materials

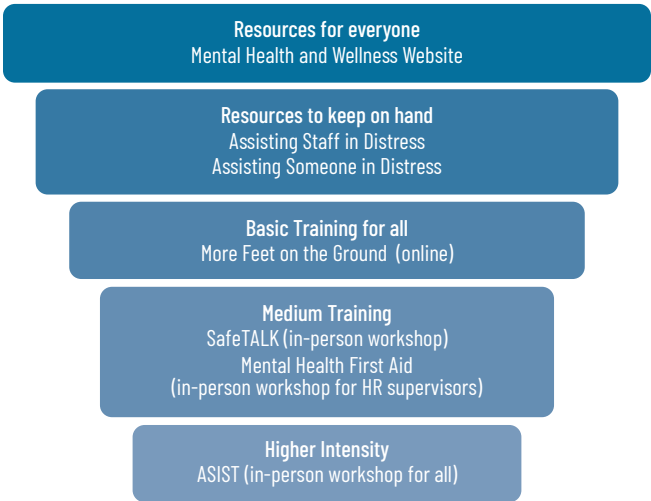
- For a quick reference guide on helping students for mental health issues, print out the uOttawa [Helping a Person in Distress](#) guide
- For a quick reference guide on helping employees with mental health issues, print out and post the uOttawa [Assisting Staff and Faculty in Distress](#) guide.

Other options

- Some student, staff and broader community groups also offer mental health and anti-stigma awareness training. See the [mental health and wellness](#) website to discover various student groups working towards a better mental health on campus.

Spectrum of Training/Resources

Depending on your role in the university community, you have different opportunities to learn more, develop your skills to, and to recognize, respond, refer and support someone in distress. Consider what is right for you in your role:



Appendix 5: Consulted Documents/Works/Strategies

Please see below aligned internal University of Ottawa strategies, best practice resources and post-secondary sector documents consulted in the development of this report. The works are listed in alphabetical order.

ALIGNMENT WITH RELATED UNIVERSITY STRATEGIES

The Mental Health and Wellness plan does not exist in a vacuum. Related internal work and strategic projects that also have an impact on mental health and well-being align with the work in this report; and were reviewed as part of the report writing process.

Environmental Scans (Internal Documents)

- Employee Wellness Scan (2017)
- Cross-University Mental Health Resources Scan (2017)
- U15 Mental Health and Wellness Website, Awareness & Strategy Scans (Internal Projects 2016-2017)
- University of Saskatchewan Wellness Resource Scan (2018)
- All U15 and various Canadian university and college mental health and wellness strategies

Internal Data Sets & Surveys

- Employee Climate Survey
- Housing Survey
- Human Resources internal data
- Employee and Family Assistance programme data
- National College Health Assessment Survey (2019)
- SASS/Student Life Internal Service Usage Data
- Graduate Wellness Survey
- Health Promotion internal data
- Internal panels, consultations and focus groups from multiple events related to mental health and wellness (i.e. Wellness Week panels, Student Life focus groups, student advocacy activities and events)
- Office of the Ombudsperson Ninth Annual Report June 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019 – *Building a Culture of Fairness*
- University of Ottawa *GradMinds* Baseline Survey 2019, Faculty of Medicine Student Leadership Initiative
- University of Ottawa – Roger Guindon Campus Graduate Student Wellness Survey (2017)
- Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services. (2019). *Graduate Students in Psychology's Mental Health: Needs Assessment Findings*. Ad Hoc Mental Health Committee and Working Group.

Internal uOttawa Documents & Aligned Strategies

- Imagine 2030 (Transformation 2030)
- Wellness Recreation Strategy
- Indigenous strategic planning
- Strategic Enrolment Management

External Documents & Consulted Works

- Academica Top Ten – related articles on student and staff mental health and wellness, and highlights of external institutional strategies
- CACUSS Mental Health Strategic Planning documents and resource website, including: Canadian Association of College & University Student Services (CACUSS/AESUCC). (2014). *Post-Secondary Student Mental Health: Guide to a Systemic Approach*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 at: <https://healthycampuses.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The-National-Guide.pdf>
- Centre for Innovation and Campus Mental Health Resource Website
- Higher Education Mental Health Alliance (HEMHA)
- More Feet on the Ground training and resource website
- National College Health Assessment Survey – National & Provincial Reference Sample, 2016 & 2019
- [Suicide Prevention Ottawa](#) Resources
- Canadian Alliance of Student Associations. (2017). *“Shared Perspectives” A Joint Publication on Student Mental Health*. Retrieved November 12, 2019 at: [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ousa/pages/464/attachments/original/1501593637/Shared\\_Perspectives\\_Joint\\_Publication\\_on\\_Student\\_Mental\\_Health\\_document.pdf?1501593637](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ousa/pages/464/attachments/original/1501593637/Shared_Perspectives_Joint_Publication_on_Student_Mental_Health_document.pdf?1501593637).
- Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2019). *Draft Standard – Psychological health and safety for post-secondary students* (Working Draft). CSA Z2003:20. Restricted Distribution by Universities Canada – Final Standard to be published in 2020.

Post-Secondary Institution Strategies & Resource Websites

- Carleton University (2009 & 2017)
- Queen's University
- Simon Fraser University
- University of British Columbia
- University of Calgary
- University of Guelph
- University of Saskatchewan
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- York University
- U15 and various Canadian university and college mental health and wellness strategies, nationally and internationally
- See for example Best Practices in Canadian Higher Education, *Post-Secondary Mental Health Strategies* 2018.

Appendix 6: Notes & References

1 Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario – Mental Health Works. (2017). *Mental Health in the Workplace – An Accommodation Guide for Managers and Staff*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from: [https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CMHA\\_Mental-Health-Works-Guidebook-8.5-x1lr.pdf](https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CMHA_Mental-Health-Works-Guidebook-8.5-x1lr.pdf)

2 Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario – Mental Health Works. (2017). *Mental Health in the Workplace – An Accommodation Guide for Managers and Staff*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from: [https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CMHA\\_Mental-Health-Works-Guidebook-8.5-x1lr.pdf](https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CMHA_Mental-Health-Works-Guidebook-8.5-x1lr.pdf)

3 Canadian Mental Health Association. (2019). *Fast Facts About Mental Illness*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from <https://cmha.ca/fast-facts-about-mental-illness>. N.B. Original report, from 2010 the Mental Health Commission of Canada commissioned report. (i.e. Appendix 3). (2016). *Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from: [https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing\\_in\\_Mental\\_Health\\_FINAL\\_Version\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing_in_Mental_Health_FINAL_Version_ENG.pdf)

4 Canadian Mental Health Association. (2019). *Fast Facts About Mental Illness*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from <https://cmha.ca/fast-facts-about-mental-illness>. N.B. Original report, from 2010 the Mental Health Commission of Canada commissioned report. (i.e. Appendix 3). (2016). *Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from: [https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing\\_in\\_Mental\\_Health\\_FINAL\\_Version\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing_in_Mental_Health_FINAL_Version_ENG.pdf)

5 Canadian Mental Health Association. (2019). *Fast Facts About Mental Illness*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from <https://cmha.ca/fast-facts-about-mental-illness>. N.B. Original report, from 2010 the Mental Health Commission of Canada commissioned report. (i.e. Appendix 3). (2016). *Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from: [https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing\\_in\\_Mental\\_Health\\_FINAL\\_Version\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing_in_Mental_Health_FINAL_Version_ENG.pdf)

6 Canadian Mental Health Association – Mental Health Works. (2017). *Mental Health in the Workplace: An Accommodation Guide for Managers and Staff*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from: [https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CMHA\\_Mental-Health-Works-Guidebook-8.5-x1lr.pdf](https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CMHA_Mental-Health-Works-Guidebook-8.5-x1lr.pdf)

7 Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2016). *Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada*. (page 2). Retrieved June 4, 2019 from: [https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing\\_in\\_Mental\\_Health\\_FINAL\\_Version\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-06/Investing_in_Mental_Health_FINAL_Version_ENG.pdf)

8 Best Practices in Canadian Higher Education. (2018). *Post-Secondary Mental Health Strategies*. September 6, 2018. Retrieved October 8, 2019 from <https://bp-net.ca/program/post-secondary-mental-health-strategies/>.

9 University of Calgary. (2016). *Campus Mental Health Strategy: Implementation Advisory Committee*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from [https://ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/files/mentalhealth/15-unv-018-mental\\_health\\_strategy\\_final.pdf](https://ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/files/mentalhealth/15-unv-018-mental_health_strategy_final.pdf)

10 University of Calgary. (2016). *Campus Mental Health Strategy: Implementation Advisory Committee*. Retrieved June 4, 2019 from [https://ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/files/mentalhealth/15-unv-018-mental\\_health\\_strategy\\_final.pdf](https://ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/files/mentalhealth/15-unv-018-mental_health_strategy_final.pdf)

11 Okanagan Charter. (2015). *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges* Accessed May 31, 2019 at: <http://www.healthpromotingcampuses.ca/okanagancharter/>. New organisations added updated December 10, 2019.

12 The two Health Promotion Specialists from the Health Promotion Resource Centre attended the development of the charter.

13 Such as new mindfulness & meditation learning opportunities; Long Night Against Procrastination attendance increased by 250%; the new summer orientation curriculum and delivery model.

14 The ACHA-National College Health Assessment II (ACHA-NCHA II) is a national research survey organized by the American College Health Association (ACHA), initiated in 2000 and intended to be completed longitudinally, generally every 3 year. uOttawa participated for the first time in the Spring 2019 survey cohort.

The intent of the NCHA is to assist post-secondary service providers, academic and health educators, counsellors, and administrators in collecting data about their students' habits, behaviours, and perceptions on prevalent health topics affecting student life.

In Canada, the NCHA is endorsed by the Canadian Association of College & University Student Services (CACUSS), and they coordinate the sharing of national results and Canadian specific questions.

15 Internal data via the Imagine 2030 consultation, Winter 2019 (Transformation 2030 internal report)

16 National College Health Assessment Survey, University of Ottawa. March 2019. Internal Data.

17 Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services. (2019). *Graduate Students in Psychology's Mental Health: Needs Assessment Findings*. Ad Hoc Mental Health Committee and Working Group, Internal data prior to publication, University of Ottawa.

18 National College Health Assessment Survey, University of Ottawa. March 2019. Internal Data.

19 uOttawa also provides relevant vaccinations in multiple methods, such as via the health clinic. One very successful project is the annual flu vaccination programme, which involves multiple stakeholders across campus, including Human Resources Health and Wellness Sector and University of Ottawa Health Service Health Promotion Service. In 2019, 1,530 students and 590 employees attended the on campus clinic over a 3-day period in early November 2019.

20 This is the current mandate of the Health Promotion Mental Health Team

21 See, for example the 2017 Graduate Wellness survey, where up to 80% of graduate students at Roger Guindon campus stated information about some or all of uOttawa's mental health services.

22 For example NCHA data indicators, internal survey data, etc.

23 NCHA Internal data, 2019

24 Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services. (2019). *Graduate Students in Psychology's Mental Health: Needs Assessment Findings*. Ad Hoc Mental Health Committee and Working Group, Internal data prior to publication, University of Ottawa.

25 Both uOttawa, the Mental Health and Wellness website, and Health Promotion all did Wellness Wednesdays social media themed days. In 2019-2020 to date for example, there were 303 views/reach for the Health Promotion social media alone.

26 A podcast tackling issues of mental health and student life at the University of Ottawa by the Fulcrum student newspaper and CHUO 89.1 FM. <https://share.transistor.fm/s/8cf8d243>

27 In 2018-2019, 689 were distributed

28 1000 students have attended since 2017

29 2019-2020 Health Promotion reached 1753 students

30 Internal Health Promotion Resource Centre data.

31 Launched publicly December 2019 at <https://transformation2030.uottawa.ca/en/home>

32 Recent NCHA data have demonstrated the strategy has been particularly effective with international students mandatory orientation training in recent years, with their reported knowledge of health-related topics similar to full-time students

33 In the Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2019). *Draft Standard – Psychological health and safety for post-secondary students* (Working Draft). CSA Z2003:20. Restricted Distribution by Universities Canada – Final Standard to be published in 2020.

Section 5.4.3 states that the "level of mental health literacy is a contributing factor to a healthy, supportive and inclusive environment. Promoting mental health awareness plays a role in reducing the stigma around mental health issues and contributes to a culture of help-seeking and support".

34 In 2018-2019, 1682 participants

35 Canadian Association of College & University Student Services (CACUSS/AESUCC). (2014). *Post-Secondary Student Mental Health: Guide to a Systemic Approach*. Page 10. Retrieved June 4, 2019 at: <https://healthycampuses.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The-National-Guide.pdf>

36 A recent case example is the recommendations for uptake by all post-secondary institutions. *Response and Recommendations following Chief Coroner's Inquest into death by suicide in a Post-Secondary Institution*. Retrieved November 20, 2019 from <https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/Deathinvestigations/Inquests/Verdictsandrecommendations/OCCInquestSimon2019.html>.

37 Okanagan Charter. (2015). *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges* Accessed May 31, 2019 at: <http://www.healthpromotingcampuses.ca/okanagancharter/>

38 Mental Health Commission of Canada & CSA Group. *The National Standard of Canada titled Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace – Prevention, promotion and guidance to staged implementation*. Retrieved November 27, 2019 from: [https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/MHCC\\_Standard\\_FAQ\\_ENG-1.1.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/MHCC_Standard_FAQ_ENG-1.1.pdf)

39 University of Calgary – University Relations Staff. (July 17, 2017). *UCalgary succeeds at achieving silver-level certification for workplace mental health: Continuing to implement the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace*. Retrieved November 27, 2019 from: <https://ucalgary.ca/news/ucalgary-succeeds-achieving-silver-level-certification-workplace-mental-health>.

40 Carleton University. (2017). *Carleton's Excellence Journey*. Retrieved November 27, 2019 from: <https://carleton.ca/healthy-workplace/journey/>.

Carleton currently holds Platinum Level *Healthy Workplace*® certification (university-wide) as of June 2017.

41 Peer mentors received SafeTalk training, as well as additional mental health resources as part of the overall peer mentor curriculum.

42 Health Promotion Peer Educators in the Mental Health team received targeted training from the university's Senior Mental Health Advisor, plus additional training throughout the academic year.

43 Residence Life student staff (102) and professional staff (12 coordinators and the Assistant Director) have all completed ASIST and More Feet on the Ground training, as well as information on local resources and supports. Many of the professional Residence Life staff also have Mental Health First Aid training.

44 See appendix 4 for descriptions of training

45 2018-2019, 122 participants

46 The workshop themes included, but not limited to, *Understanding and Contributing to Mental Health in the Workplace, Work and Personal Life Balance and Introduction to Diversity*.

47 Data reported from survey and administrative data of registered participants. Internal uOttawa data as of September 10, 2019.

48 Queen's Campus Wellness Project. (December 2018). *Rising Demand for Campus Mental Health Services*. Student Wellness Services. Retrieved October 22, 2019 from: <https://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.swswww/files/files/Rising%20Demand%20for%20Campus%20Mental%20Health%20Services.pdf>

49 Due to re-organisation in September 2019, the services know as the Student Academic Support Service (SASS) still exist, but no longer under this acronym. The services are now Academic Accommodation (in chart as Access Service); Academic Writing Help Service (in chart as CARTU); Counselling was the former Counselling & Coaching; and Mentoring still remains mentoring services but under the Academic Support Unit.

50 See appendix 2 for a description of other related initiatives to the café

51 In 2018-2019, 105 drop-ins

52 2018-2019 – 12 students supported via this policy

53 The Long Night Against Procrastination has been run successfully at uOttawa for several years. LNAp is a unique interactive and inclusive study session held in several universities across Canada in an effort to raise awareness about the dangers of procrastination. The purpose of this event is to offer academic and moral support to students at a critical time during the semester.

54 Canadian Association of College & University Student Services (CACUSS/AESUCC). (2014). *Post-Secondary Student Mental Health: Guide to a Systemic Approach*. Page 10. Retrieved June 4, 2019 at: <https://healthycampuses.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The-National-Guide.pdf>. See also the Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2019). *Draft Standard – Psychological health and safety for post-secondary students* (Working Draft). CSA Z2003:20. Page 17, Figure 4. Restricted Distribution by Universities Canada – Final Standard to be published in 2020.

55 For instance, the NCHA data outlines that 74% of undergraduate students, particularly in the early years of their degree are interested in receiving information about prevention of sexually transmitted infections, whereas by the time they have reached their graduate studies this only interests 51% of graduate students.

56 The recommended ratio in the literature, such as by the International Association of Counselling Services (2013), is 1 counsellor to 1000 to 1500 students. At the high range, that would be 42 full-time equivalent (FTE) counsellors for uOttawa's 42000 students, or 28 FTE for the low end of the recommendation. The average ratio among 33 similar-sized US schools: 1:2,210 (see Queen's Wellness Project for comparison). Currently the Counselling service at uOttawa Student Life has **18 FTE**, approximately 1:2300 (not including the non-clinical support provided by peer counsellors). This is an improvement since 2016, when the FTE was 12, 1:3500.

57 Up to 50% of frontline resources, particularly in the services formerly known as SASS, come from outside funding sources and not from Central Administration funding.

58 Combination of CMHA Mental Health Works; Imagine 2030 feedback.

59 See for example Transformation 2030/Imagine 2030 reports for staff; Student Wellness surveys, focus groups, student newspapers and the NCHA data.



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