Rising Demand for Campus Mental Health Services

Student Wellness Services

December 2018

This slide deck is based on a resource created by the Education Advisory Board, and includes additional sector-based and Queen’s-specific data. Sources are identified.
The New Normal
Demand for Campus Mental Health Services Continues to Soar

**Growing mental-health needs of students require creative solutions**

**Demand for youth mental health services is exploding. How universities and business are scrambling to react**

**Peace of mind: universities see spike in students seeking mental-health help**

**Combating the mental health crisis on Canadian campuses**

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| Demand for Services Outpaces Enrolment Growth (5 years: 2011-12 to 2015-16) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 13% ⬆ Queen’s enrolment growth                               |
| 45% ⬆ Queen’s counselling appointments                      |
| 9% ⬆ Canadian enrolment growth                               |
| 35% ⬆ Average increase in counselling appointments across 13 post-secondary institutions |

Enrolment & Mental Health Appointments* at Queen’s

*Counselling, Psychiatry, GP Psychotherapy, GP Mental Health, Mental Health Nurse
What Is Driving Demand Across The Sector?

- **Increased Awareness**: Institutional and national tragedies have spurred more open conversations about students’ mental health needs.
- **Structured Response Framework**: New teams and protocols streamline how institutions identify and respond to students with mental health needs.
- **Reduced Stigma to Seeking Care**: Campus and social stigma-reduction campaigns have helped students be more comfortable seeking care.
What Is Driving Demand Across The Sector?

- **Widening gap between high school and university educational contexts** (teaching, learning, and assessment methods, in-school supports) leading to greater academic anxiety and stress.

- **Increase in students who have more stressors and less supports** (international students, student parents, mature students).

- **Increased PSE participation among individuals with pre-existing mental illness**.

- **Decrease in social connections and supports**. Cumulative effect of lack of sleep, time pressure, academic rigor, financial worries, technostress, the socio-political climate, and eroding social support.

Some External Factors Driving Demand

**Substance Abuse**
Students look to drugs and alcohol to relax; use prescription drugs to focus, work late into the night.

**Social Media**
Time spent online amplifies existing stressors and contributes to an overwhelming sense of social isolation on campus.

**Intensified Expectations**
Students face early and persistent pressure to academically excel, fit in socially, and be successful after graduation.

**New Parenting Styles**
Highly involved parenting creates busy, overscheduled, failure-averse students who struggle to adapt to challenges as they arise in post-secondary.

**Political Climate**
Stress from current events and politics exacerbates students’ existing issues with stress, anxiety, and depression.
Canadians with Disabilities

Among youth aged 15-24, 13% report having a disability

- **10.8% Men**
  - Learning disability (52%), **mental health (49%)**, developmental disability (30%), chronic pain (26%), memory (20%), visual impairment (14%), flexibility (13%), dexterity (11%)

- **15.6% Women**
  - **Mental health (68%)**, learning disability (34%), chronic pain (38%), visual impairment (21%), memory (18%), flexibility (13%), mobility (13%), developmental disability (11%)

Statistics Canada, 2018: The Canadian Survey on Disability
Student Mental Health Needs on the Rise

31% of first year post-secondary students report experiencing a mental illness in the last 12 months

WHO, 2018

Among Queen’s Students:
- 20% report a diagnosis of anxiety
- 15% report a diagnosis of depression
- 31% report being treated for a mental health condition in the last 12 months

Queen’s NCHA 2016

1 in 12 youth*
were dispensed a mood/anxiety or antipsychotic medication

CIHI, Youth MH in Canada 2018 (does not include Quebec data)

Has hospital use for mental disorders changed?

CIHI, Youth MH in Canada 2018 (does not include Quebec data)
Waitlists Are the Most Visible Metric...

“After the first week, students have to wait weeks for an appointment. I know that there are students on the waitlist that we just won’t get to this semester.”

...But There’s More Below the Surface

- **Decreased frequency of therapy** appointments to accommodate more clients
- **Lack of physical space** to accommodate new hires and increased clinical hours
- **Limited access to community services** for specialized care or intensive treatment, all levels of care stay with campus team
- **Student dissatisfaction** about service availability
- **Staff burnout** because of long hours and overwhelming caseloads
- **Less time and resources** for outreach, early education, and other priorities
- **Increasing complexity of needs** as more students with psychiatric illnesses, trauma histories, and complex disabilities participate in higher education
- **Delayed treatment** can lead **students’ concerns to escalate**

EAB interviews and analysis.
SWS Service Use

SWS Total Appointments

40% are Mental Health > 18,000 appointments

13,000 appointments added since 2015-2016; No effect on wait times
SWS Service Use

Nursing and Occupational Therapy Appointments

Accessibility Appointments
SWS Service Use

• Top mental health presenting problems:
  
  – Personal Counsellor Appointments
    1. anxiety
    2. depressed mood
    3. relationships with family / intimate partner
    4. anxiety related to academics
    5. stress
    6. emotional regulation

  – Physician / Psychiatry
    1. anxiety
    2. depressed mood
    3. ADHD
SWS: Beyond Appointments 2017-18

SWS
> 60,000 incoming calls

Accessibility Services
10,950 email / phone follow-ups by 6 advisors

Health and Counselling
12,100 internal follow up actions

Health Promotion
90 student volunteers worked 4,300 hours
COR and PHE
SWS: Beyond Appointments 2017-18

SWS
35 SafeTALK and Mental Health Training sessions for students, staff and faculty

Health Promotion
52 staff-led presentations and 20 peer-led workshops

Health and Counselling
8 weekly groups (support, therapy, psychoeducational, skill building)
SWS: Beyond Appointments

• Concerns and questions from faculty / staff / parents / roommates / campus partners
• Student follow up (test results, next steps, instructions, crisis)
• Student inquiries about services / hours / issues
• Community (hospital, AMHS crisis) connections

• Scanning and faxing of reports, results, referrals
• Documentation assessments and reviews
• Arranging specialist referrals and diagnostic imaging
• Writing appeal and support letters
• Verification of Personal Health Condition / Short Term Academic Accommodations

• Meetings with departments, campus or community partners
• Team meetings
• Case consultations
• Clinical supervision
• Case conferences
SWS Staffing

New SWS health professional and staff position FTEs since 2015, include:

Mental Health
  • 2 embedded counsellors and one central counsellor
  • 1 psychologist
  • .5 psychiatrist

Supports Mental Health
  • in-house occupational therapist
  • triage nurse
  • QSAS intake coordinator
  • 2 QSAS advisors
  • integrated care manager (complex care)
  • additional physician clinics
SWS Staffing

SWS Counsellor / psychologist to student ratio = 1:1225
  – Roles include student appointments, running groups and programs, developing workshops and resources, case conferencing, meetings, administrative work
  – Shifts in positions to more full time positions and to include expertise in sexual violence, trauma, LGBTQ+, cross-cultural issues, crisis response, and eating disorders

Compared to…
  – Recommended ratio, International Association of Counselling Services (2013): 1:1,000-1:1,500
  – Average ratio among 33 similar-sized US schools: 1:2,210 (Association of University and College Counselling Center Directors)

SWS mental health professionals* to student ratio = 1:950

*SWS counsellors, psychiatry, GP psychotherapy, GP Mental Health, Mental Health Nurse
An Unsustainable Cycle
Hiring More Staff Is Not the Answer

Demand for mental health support is rapidly growing on Canadian campuses. In response, we have poured more and more resources into clinical support services. **Despite the additional investment, both waiting times and student distress are increasing.**

Andre Costopoulos
Vice-Provost and Dean of Students
University of Alberta

We have been throwing money at this problem for years and it is an endless pit. Our numbers just keep going up. **Hiring more therapists is not the answer. We now know that we can’t staff our way out of this problem.**

Vice President for Student Affairs
Public Research University

The Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors, Annual Survey Monograph 2016, [https://goo.gl/2nYfe9](https://goo.gl/2nYfe9); Costopoulos A, “Our Role is to Support Students When They Are Ready to be Students, University Affairs, August 25, 2017, [https://goo.gl/5wpyp7](https://goo.gl/5wpyp7); EAB interviews and analysis.
Time for a New Approach

Today’s Stark Reality Requires a New Path Forward

“Counseling centers have become a place where people expect solutions. There is a huge amount of expectation from students, parents, and faculty in the community that we will whisk in and fix people that are somehow broken. We can’t live up to that mission. Before folks run to counseling, they need to utilize the other services on campus. We need more resources to teach students how to be well and not just panic when students are unwell.”

Vice Provost for Student Life
Canadian Research University

Opening Up to New Ways of Providing Support

“The biggest shift for our profession—and university counseling centers on the whole—is that we have to think differently about how people can be helped. We can’t keep saying that the 50-minute hour is the best answer because we just don’t have the resources. We must get creative, explore and commit to new ways of working, and be open to new ideas that don’t compromise the quality of our work with students.”

Director of Counseling Services
Private Research University

Realigning Expectations Around Counseling Services

EAB interviews and analysis.
Addressing the Demand

Research and Resources to Target Interventions to Key Student Segments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH-NEED STUDENTS</th>
<th>STUDENTS WITH SHORT-TERM NEEDS</th>
<th>LOW-RISK STUDENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting Successful Off-Campus Care</td>
<td>Restructuring Individual Appointments</td>
<td>Driving Utilization of Self-Serve Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kingston: limited capacity for off-campus services</td>
<td>Reinvigorating Group Therapy</td>
<td>Fostering Non-Clinical Connections</td>
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<td>Exploring Dynamic Staffing Models</td>
<td>Skill and Strategy Building</td>
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<td>Virtual Solutions – Health Care and Online Counselling</td>
<td>Self-expression, Peer Support,</td>
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EAB interviews and analysis.
## Mental Health Model and Spectrum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thriving</th>
<th>Life is Great</th>
<th>Use strategies to promote and maintain mental health, build new skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Ups &amp; Downs</td>
<td>Able to re-frame stress &amp; use coping strategies, reach out to peers, friends and family for a listening ear</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dig Deep</td>
<td>Starting to feel overwhelmed &amp; daily functioning impacted, time to attend a group, and seek support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languishing</td>
<td>In distress</td>
<td>In a crisis or struggling to function, time for urgent professional help</td>
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Addressing Demand Across the Mental Health Spectrum

Building your base
- Self-care
- Wellness plans
- Healthy Living
- Sleep
- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Grit
- Lifestyle appointments

Skill building – Coping with everyday life
- Study skills
- Coping skills
- Mindfulness
- Managing difficult emotions
- Conflict resolution
- Reframing stress
- Big White Wall

Someone to listen
- 7 cups of tea (online)
- Family
- Friends
- Peer support centre
- Spiritual and Cultural supports
- Campus partners
- Good2Talk
- Text line
- Support Groups

Professional Help
- Support Groups
- Therapy groups
- Health
- Counselling
- Accessibility
- Good2Talk
- Community supports

Crisis
- Crisis text line
- AMHS KFLA
- Mobile Crisis team
- Crisis lines
- Good2Talk
- KGH
- 9-1-1

Self-care
Wellness plans
Healthy Living
Sleep
Exercise
Nutrition
Grit
Lifestyle appointments

Study skills
Coping skills
Mindfulness
Managing difficult emotions
Conflict resolution
Reframing stress
Big White Wall

7 cups of tea (online)
Family
Friends
Peer support centre
Spiritual and Cultural supports
Campus partners
Good2Talk
Text line
Support Groups

Support Groups
Therapy groups
Health
Counselling
Accessibility
Good2Talk
Community supports

Crisis text line
AMHS KFLA
Mobile Crisis team
Crisis lines
Good2Talk
KGH
9-1-1
A Campus Community Approach

- Embed wellness in the academic culture and context
- Develop curriculum and course content with accessible teaching and learning in mind
- Promote program supports (academic advising, wellness centers, faculty-based student services etc.)

- Enhance opportunities for social connections
- Encourage help-seeking
- Cultivate a campus culture that is inclusive and welcoming
- Broaden vision of supports - everyone has a role in promoting and/or supporting health and well-being

- Engage in health promoting activities to maintain personal health
- Build skills to manage challenge of everyday life
- Seek out supports and services as needed

Healthy Promoting Campuses
Recent Initiatives

Student Wellness Services

– Increase same day access for those with urgent needs
– Connecting students to service to best fits need
– Adding group programming (support groups, therapy groups, skill building groups, psychoeducational groups)
– Assess technological options to improve efficiency
– SWS Student Advisory Groups (u/g and grad)
– Increasing visibility of health promotion, prevention activities – shift towards healthier campus
– Language used to talk about mental health and mental illness

• Swipe It Forward
• Opening of Mitchell Hall, 2019
• Campus Wellness Project
Questions and Comments

Student Wellness Services welcomes your input and ideas. Please email wellness.services@queensu.ca

To learn more about Queen’s Campus Wellness Project, and how to get involved, visit https://www.queensu.ca/campuswellnessproject/