

**Provost's Advisory Committee
on Mental Health**

ANNUAL REPORT

September 2016

1. Introduction

The Provost's Advisory Committee on Mental Health (PACMH) was established in June 2013 to build upon the recommendations of the 2012 [final report](#) of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health. PACMH is responsible for "...coordinating, reviewing, and reporting on the progress of, mental health initiatives across the university."

The PACMH met twice over the 2015-2016 academic year.

Members for 2015-16:

Mary Acreman	Acting Director, Counselling Services
Lorne Beswick	SGPS Representative (until April 30, 2016)
Anastasiya Boika	SGPS Representative (starting May 1, 2016)
Laeque Daneshmend	Deputy Provost (Chair) (until December 31, 2015)
Jennifer Dods	Executive Director, Student Wellness Services (starting May 1, 2016)
Sydney Downey	Manager, Return to work and Accommodation Services, Human Resources (Starting May 10, 2016)
Sarah Letersky	AMS Representative (until April 30, 2016)
Roumen Milev	Head, Department of Psychiatry
Kim Murphy	Director, Office of the V-P (Finance & Administration)
Ellie Sadinsky	Executive Director, Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs
Carolyn Thompson	AMS Representative (starting May 1, 2016)
Ann Tierney	Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs (Chair starting January 1, 2016)
Mike Young	Rector (until April 30, 2016)
Cameron Yung	Rector (starting May 1, 2016)

In May 2016, the HR-led Campus Wellness Working Group became a subcommittee of the Provost's Advisory Committee on Mental Health. The working group will focus on campus-wide education relating to employee mental health, raising awareness of the resources, programs and services available, and enhancing collaboration among existing groups and initiatives in support of a health campus.

This third annual report of the PACMH consists of:

- Updates on the implementation of key recommendations of the report of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health (2012); and
- Progress to date on the 16 priority initiatives identified in PACMH's first annual report (June 2014);

2. Implementation Progress on recommendations of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health

The university continues to implement the recommendations made in the 2012 report of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health. Developed through extensive consultation with the Queen's and wider Kingston community, these recommendations are organized in a pyramidal structure reflecting four levels of action:

1. Promoting a healthy community
2. Transitions and resilience
3. Encouraging help-seeking and helping behavior
4. Effective response, service and care

This section of the PACMH report highlights 2015-2016 activities and specific initiatives that respond to, and/or align with, those recommendations. In many cases, these initiatives, and others, are ongoing, have a broader focus and support objectives beyond the recommendations.

Promoting a Healthy Community

- Queen's participation, along with 30 Canadian universities, in the 2016 National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey in February 2016. Further to the 2013 benchmark survey, the findings will inform health and wellness programs and services to enhance support to students; Updates to the [green folder](#) resource for faculty, TAs and staff, including more detail about the steps students can take if they or someone they know has experienced sexual violence and the resources available;
- The establishment of a dedicated *Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator*, a [new position](#) in the Human Rights Office that will be the central point of contact for students, staff and faculty and will lead campus-wide education, response, support, training and advocacy activities;
- New sexual violence-related prevention and education initiatives implemented for Orientation Week, including the distribution of consent and resource information to all first-year undergraduate students and incoming graduate students. Also, visiting scholar [Dr. Rachel Griffin, a gender violence expert, spoke to all first-year students](#);
- Approval by the Board of Trustees of the [Sexual Violence policy](#) on March 4, 2016;
- The start of construction on the revitalization of Richardson Stadium, scheduled to reopen for Fall 2016. The project will modernize the stadium facilities for the benefit of student athletes and community users;
- The launch of a university planning process for a major renovation to 67 Union St. that will include a new Student Wellness Centre and student services, including the Queen's University International Centre, the multi-faith Chaplaincy, Athletics and Recreation space, and an Exam Centre, in addition to Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science and Innovation spaces;
- The launch of the Queen's Thrive initiative (November 2015), a week-long series of events focused on building positive mental health among students, faculty and staff.

AMS highlights

- The AMS Food Bank continues to grow and expand its community garden behind the MacGillivrayBrown gym.

SGPS highlights

- Student Advisors have started a new initiative to work more closely with QUIC and international commissioner, with different training. A conversation has started to create a new position for an advisor specializing in international issues.

- SGPS has helped Sexual Health Resource Center (SHRC) to continue providing service to the community by providing them with some of resources that they needed to survive as an organization (e.g. physical space, support with regard to insurance related issues, etc.)
- The training of Student Advisors has been expanded to include additional training from SHRC, and interactions with the newly appointed Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator.

Transitions and Resilience

- Expansion of the *Q Success* first-year transition support program to include on-line cohorts, in addition to weekly in-person skills development sessions;
- Enhanced outreach to all first-year students eligible for *Bounce Back* starting in the first term and new early referrals processes through faculty-based academic advisors and counsellors;
- The opening of two new residences in Fall 2015: Brant House and Smith House, containing 550 additional beds, 18 common rooms and a new food outlet, Location 21;
- The launch of Academic Excellence Awards for incoming graduate students (\$450K);
- The development and launch of SGS Habitat that includes resources for living well and staying well in grad school (sections include: counselling, learning about mental health, combating loneliness, stress and low mood; eat well, sleep well and work well). Habitat received the 2015 CAGS-ETS award for excellence in innovation.

AMS Highlights

- The Mental Health Awareness Committee and Peer Support Centre received funding from Jack.org and Queen's Student Initiative Grant to provide SafeTalk training to students at large
- The Peer Support Centre hosted 'How to help a friend: Transition to University' in partnership with Peer Learning Assistants

SPGS Highlights

- Acknowledging financial emergencies as a prominent cause of distress among its members, SGPS has gone through a review of its criteria for granting its general bursaries, to ensure a fair distribution of resources through establishing a need-based policy.

Encouraging Help-seeking and Helping Behaviour

- Piloting of a day-long “Get It Done” writing event for first-year students to help them combat procrastination around essays, labs and assignments (SASS-Residence Life partnership);
- Development of a video by SGS to promote health and wellness in graduate school that includes students speaking about the importance of seeking help and how it enabled them to continue to progress in their studies;
- Development and hosting of a donor-funded first peer health educator conference (January 2016), bringing students and professional staff from Ontario universities together to share their experiences and strategies for encouraging students to reach out;
- The development of sexual violence bystander intervention training delivered by trained students starting in Fall 2015 to all orientation leaders and student volunteers, dons and other residence student leaders, security staff, and others.

AMS highlights

- The Peer Support Centre hosted ‘How to Support a Friend who is a Survivor of Sexual Violence’ and ongoing Peer Helping Skills Training to students at large.
- Improved branding and increased marketing has resulted in a 50% increase in usage at the AMS Food Bank.

SGPS highlight

- Student Advisors have shifted their activities around a new model of empowerment of students for self-advocacy.
- SGPS has recently started a conversation with Student Affairs on the prospect of normalizing help-seeking behavior in the future Wellness and Innovation Centre at 67 Union St. through providing training for students at the Innovation wing who will share the building with students who will seek help from the Wellness wing.

Providing Effective Response, Service and Care

- Increased access to multi-denominational faith support with the hiring, by the [University Chaplain](#), of three part-time chaplains with office hours, and the opening of a new multi-denominational faith space on west campus;
- The development of first-responder training delivered to security staff, residence student staff, the AMS Peer Support Centre staff and volunteers, staff and volunteers with the Sexual Health Resource Centre, and others;
- A review of policies and practices related to students with severe allergies to ensure continuous improvement to services resulting in a report and recommendations;
- Student Health Services, Counselling Services, and Accessibility Services continue to experience annual increase in demand for service and in the complexity of cases. This is happening at universities and colleges across the province and the country. Several strategies are in place at Queen's including:
 - Additional FTEs and contracted physicians;
 - Expanded hours of service;
 - The "hub and spoke" counsellor model, with outreach counsellors located in residences and faculty/school buildings;
 - Implementation of a new intake processes and the piloting of a first-year transition program in Accessibility Services;

AMS highlights

- The Peer Support Centre had another record year of peer-on-peer sessions, leading them to expand their hours as well as space to accommodate their growth.
- The AMS, through the Accessibility Queen's fund, has committed to providing funding for students who require out of city health care. This funding will go towards students travel and will be disbursed by the Registrar's Student Awards Office.

SGPS highlights

- Student Advisors have built and maintained a strong network of support, working with the Wellness Center, SGS counselor, Ombudsman Office, etc.

3. PACMH Priorities for Assessment and Action for 2014/15 and 2015/16

The following 16 recommendations were identified by the PACMH in June 2014 as priorities for further assessment and action over 2014-2016. The following progress has been made to date:

	Recommendation	Champion	Target Date for Implementation	Comments
1	Establish an Exam Centre	Student Affairs	In progress. Dependent on the 67 Union St construction schedule.	In 2014-15, the Office of the University Registrar established a new position, Assistant Registrar, Special Projects. One of this position's first priority projects has been to develop a model for an Exam Centre in the 67 Union St project (see below). This is now underway through the design process. STATUS: In progress
2	Look at options for students who have had a false academic start, e.g. dropping a mark	Provost's Office	2015/16 academic year	There is a common 'drop date' deadline of week eight in each of the fall and winter academic terms. Courses dropped between week one and eight will not appear on a student's transcript, and there is no academic penalty. After week eight, there are appeal processes in each Faculty/School, through which students can seek to drop a course. Students can also appeal to the University Registrar for a tuition refund for dropped courses at any time. STATUS: Complete
3	Consider day-to-day academic scheduling (class and exam) to respond to	Provost's Office	2015/16 academic year	The university is undertaking a significant upgrade to its timetabling system that will include comprehensive software for the scheduling of courses, exams, events and meetings. Improved timetabling processes and software

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	compressed and close-to-conflicting exam schedules			<p>will help reduce class conflicts, and decompress day-to-day academic scheduling and exam schedules. This is a major project that is expected to take 2-3 years to complete.</p> <p>The scheduling of Sunday exams, to help decompress the exam schedule, was implemented starting in December 2015, after Senate approval in April 2015.</p> <p>STATUS: Ongoing</p>
4	Review the planning and delivery of dual degree programs	Provost's Office	2015/16 academic year	<p>Dual degree programs allow students to complete degrees from both the Faculty of Arts and Science and another different faculty or school at the same time.</p> <p>In 2014, the Faculty of Arts and Science began reopening certain dual degree combinations that had been suspended. This was made possible due to the creation of a new academic advising position in Arts and Science, new training for academic advisors, and a revised degree audit process in the faculty office. Currently, Arts and Science offers 17 general degree programs as dual degrees</p> <p>STATUS: In progress</p>
5	Increase the promotion and benefit of academic advising	Student Affairs	Ongoing	<p>Building on the academic and career advising committee coordinated through Career Services, the university developed and released (Jan 2015) Majors Maps for all 44 undergraduate programs. These award-winning planning tools are the first of their kind in Canada and provide advice on academics, extracurricular activities, networking, international opportunities and career development all in one place. The online maps have been viewed online more than 60,000 since their release. Graduate level maps are now in development.</p>

Recommendation		Champion	Target Date for Implementation	Comments
				<p>To further promote academic advising, Career Services, the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society and Departmental Student Councils launched the annual Majors Night event in February 2015 to help first-year students with the process of picking a major.</p> <p>In addition, academic advising for first-year Arts and Science students is now available at SOAR, and the Faculty has introduced summer webinars on course selection.</p> <p>STATUS: Complete and ongoing</p>
6	The Faculty of Health Sciences consider creating a Division of Student Mental Health & Addictions within the Department of Psychiatry	Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Health Science	2016/17 academic year	<p>Division of Student Mental Health & Addictions created in October 2015. SEAMO support for two new FTE confirmed June 2016. Next steps include sending proposal to Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.</p> <p>STATUS: In progress</p>
7	Consider the utility of academic prep programs in ensuring incoming students are optimally prepared	Provost's Office/ Student Affairs	In progress	<p>Research continues into models and target participant groups for summer residential university prep programs.</p> <p>STATUS: In progress</p>
8	Survey past Bader International Study Centre students and new upper year students to ensure specific transition issues, including those pertaining to reverse culture shock	Student Affairs (Student Experience Office and Undergraduate Admission and Recruitment)	Ongoing	<p>Student Affairs, the Faculty of Arts and Science and the AMS club Castle Connections have developed a BISC mentorship program. Before arriving in Kingston after spending their first year in England, students are paired with an upper-year mentor who also spent their first year as a Queen's student at the castle. These mentors help facilitate a smooth transition experience for their mentees by offering a support network, hosting social and academic</p>

	Recommendation	Champion	Target Date for Implementation	Comments
	and health and wellness, are addressed			<p>events and activities, providing guidance and advice, and encouraging faculty-specific interaction.</p> <p>The NEWTS (New, Exchange, Worldly Transfer Students) orientation program continues to support a smooth transition through programming, guidance, and the fostering of a tight-knit community of students.</p> <p>As Queen's recruits more upper-year undergraduate transfer students, Undergraduate Admission and Recruitment launched a summer transition event in August 2014 for students coming to Queen's from other institutions. Participants toured campus, connected with student support services, spoke with faculty advisors, toured Kingston and met other transfer students. This event has now been integrated into SOAR.</p> <p>STATUS: Complete and ongoing</p>
9	Distribute "referral information" slides that could be shown before classes on a regular basis	Student Affairs (Student Wellness Services)	Ongoing	<p>Starting in early fall 2014, 'referral information' slides that encourage help-seeking and helping behaviour, have been distributed annually to faculty members along with speaking notes and FAQs. Faculty are encouraged to show the slides before classes on a regular basis throughout the academic year. They are also encouraged to share the slides and FAQs with the TAs and Teaching Fellows for whom they are the employment supervisor.</p> <p>STATUS: Complete and ongoing</p>

Recommendation		Champion	Target Date for Implementation	Comments
10	Review the information that may be received from other universities when students transfer to Queen's to ensure all files – including counselling files – are sent to the appropriate offices with confidentiality protected as required	Student Affairs (Student Wellness Services, with support from the OUR)	2014/15 academic year	Instructions for incoming transfer students are posted to relevant university webpages (Undergraduate admission, student affairs, Student Wellness Services etc.) advising new students how to ensure their health, counselling and/or academic accommodation files from their previous institutions are sent to Student Wellness Services to promote continuity of care. STATUS: Complete
11	Consider whether a compassionate waiver process for the academic appeal fee could be developed with strict and standardized criteria that would be applied consistently across the university	Provost's Office	2016/17 academic year	Discussions with Associate Deans are underway. There are a variety of practices currently in place. STATUS: In progress
12	Explore the creation of an enhanced insured student benefits package for services not currently covered by provincial health plans, and consult with other post-secondary institutions to maximize cost-effectiveness	AMS and SGPS with support from Student Affairs with and HR as needed.	Ongoing	The AMS has completed the following pertaining to their plan coverage: -Advocated to Studentcare to increase mental health initiatives; -Promoted Studentcare's mental health resources information; - Conducted a survey to understand student needs. Results are under review. If any changes are made to coverage, this would most likely happen for the 16-17 year because the fee is already set for 15-16. The SGPS has been exploring with the CRA whether or not psychological assessments are subject to taxation.

Recommendation		Champion	Target Date for Implementation	Comments
				STATUS: Ongoing
13	Consider imposing a mandatory meeting between a staff academic advisor and all students who fail a first term midterm	Provost's Office	Alternative implemented.	This recommendation has been considered. Mandatory meetings have not been implemented, however the <i>Bounce Back</i> program has been expanded to all faculties/schools and has implemented referral and outreach mechanisms starting early in the fall term to first-year students who show signs of academic difficulty. Program referrals are now being made by faculty-based academic advisors and counsellors. STATUS: Complete
14	Increase FTE complement of psychiatrists to assist students with more serious mental illness	Department of Psychiatry	2016/17 academic year	Will be increasing FTE by one day per week due to a new faculty member starting in September 2016. Further increases dependent on outcome of Recommendation #6. STATUS: In progress
15	Establish a process to design and find new facilities for the various functions within HCDS to address the deficiencies and limitations of the current physical space with a goal of establishing a student health and wellness centre	Student Affairs and Physical Plant Services	Dependent on construction schedule for 67 Union St. project	67 Union Street has been identified as the future location of a Student Wellness Centre that would include a larger purpose-built space for Student Wellness Services and related student services and programs. Planning and design work continues. STATUS: In progress
16	Develop performance targets for Student Wellness Services with metrics and reporting mechanisms.	Student Affairs	Next phase underway	The 2014 and 2015 PACMH Annual Reports included available metrics. With the hiring of the Executive Director, Student Wellness Services, these metrics are being reviewed and the unit will develop an assessment and reporting plan.

	Recommendation	Champion	Target Date for Implementation	Comments
				Status: In progress