

# Success through Wellness

2014

## University of Manitoba's Campus Mental Health Strategy-at-a-Glance

The *Success through Wellness* strategy represents a *call to action* for all campus community members to view the promotion and support of mental health as everyone's responsibility. *Promoting and supporting mental health and well-being will reap tremendous rewards*, including a more positive work and learning environment, improved performance/productivity, enhanced student experience/retention, and reduced absenteeism.<sup>1</sup>

**STRATEGY MISSION:** Examine all aspects of the university in striving to be a community that is committed, caring, healthy, responsive, supportive, and resourceful.

### A COMMITTED COMMUNITY

Review campus mental health-related profile, policies, and procedures to enhance commitment to a comprehensive and sustainable approach to campus mental health.

#### ❖ INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

- *Mental health and wellness are identified as priorities for the campus community, with a focus on creating sustainable campus mental health initiatives and cultural change.*

#### ❖ POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- *Review relevant policies and procedures related to mental health, inclusion, and diversity to ensure they are up-to-date and provide appropriate supports for students and employees.*
- *Increase access to workplace and student accommodations.*
- *Provide complete, accurate, and timely information about campus and community life, deadlines and opportunities.*
- *Increase student participation on committees and councils, and in informing improvements to course delivery and curricular content.*
- *Adopt the recommendations from the Academic Advising Review Committee to enhance quality and consistency of academic student advising.*
- *Identify and explore ways to address unnecessary stress associated with the academic calendar and course and exam scheduling.*



### A CARING COMMUNITY

Engage faculty, staff and students in creating a campus climate and environment that promotes positive mental health, and strives to prevent mental health problems and illnesses.

#### ❖ RESPECT AND INCLUSION

- *Promote respect, inclusion and valuing of diversity throughout all aspects of the learning and work environment.*
- *Encourage strategies to promote diversity in the workforce, with particular emphasis on recruiting and retaining Indigenous employees.*

#### ❖ SAFETY

- *Increase personal awareness and sense of physical and psychological safety on campus.*
- *Increase awareness of avenues to safely report experiences of disrespect, incivility, bullying or aggression.*

#### ❖ COMMUNITY BUILDING

<sup>1</sup> Healthy Universities, "Developing an Holistic and Joined-Up Approach to Mental Well-Being," 2013, [http://www.healthyuniversities.ac.uk/toolkit/uploads/files/developing\\_an\\_holistic\\_and\\_joined\\_up\\_approach\\_to\\_mental\\_wellbeing.pdf](http://www.healthyuniversities.ac.uk/toolkit/uploads/files/developing_an_holistic_and_joined_up_approach_to_mental_wellbeing.pdf)

- *Encourage programs and activities that support a sense of community and belonging among faculty, staff and students, while addressing barriers such as prejudice and discrimination.*
- *Foster open communication and consultation between senior administration, employees, and unions.*
- *Take advantage of performance reviews as an opportunity to build upon employee strengths and learning goals.*

#### ❖ **ORIENTATION**

- *Increase awareness of the vision of student orientation and review planned orientation events through this lens*
- *Increase orientation opportunities for graduate, international, Indigenous, and rural and northern students, and for sessional instructors and student academic workers.*

#### ❖ **CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT**

- *Continue to beautify campus environment through the Collaboration to Promote Art and Music and through initiatives that maintain the state and cleanliness of facilities.*
- *Launch a strategy to address the issues associated with smoking on campus.*

#### ❖ **SUPPORT FOR BASIC NEEDS**

- *Explore opportunities to partner with Student Unions, alumni, neighborhoods, and landlords to develop housing supports for off-campus students.*
- *Increase awareness of existing financial aid and facilitate access to new aid for students, while supporting students' ability to manage their finances.*

## **A HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

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Build awareness of mental health and its important relationship with academic and workplace success.

#### ❖ **MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION**

- *Explore creative ways to enhance the focus on workplace health and well-being, and support efforts to engage in practices that promote workplace mental health.*
- *Identify opportunities to address mental health within the academic environment to increase student success.*

#### ❖ **HOLISTIC HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

- *Broaden the scope and integration of spiritual support services as part of achieving overall health*
- *Increase awareness of the connection between physical health and mental health, sleep, learning, and quality of life.*
- *Promote active living opportunities on campus.*

#### ❖ **SUBSTANCE USE AND ADDICTIONS**

- *Introduce a broad approach to substance use and addictions by involving students, employees, and the broader community.*
- *Explore ways to reduce the misuse of alcohol and other substances during orientation week.*

#### ❖ **TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO UNIVERSITY**

- *Increase support to first year students to ease the academic and social transition from high school to university.*

#### ❖ **STIGMA REDUCTION**

- *Use evidence-based strategies to bring awareness to misconceptions about mental health and mental illness.*
- *Support initiatives by students to lead mental health awareness, education, outreach, and advocacy activities.*

## **A RESPONSIVE COMMUNITY**

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Educate and equip faculty, staff and students to respond to early warning signs of mental health issues and when to seek additional support.

#### ❖ **MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING**

- *Educate faculty, staff and students, including security personnel, to effectively identify, respond to, and refer a person with mental health problems and illnesses to appropriate campus and off-campus resources.*
- *Engage people who regularly interact with students such as parents, peers, and others in the community by providing information on the signs of mental health issues and useful referrals.*

## ❖ STUDENT HELP-SEEKING

- *Promote help-seeking as a smart strategy for academic and career success and target initiatives that encourage help-seeking of students who are less likely to request support.*

## ❖ EARLY INTERVENTION

- *Implement and evaluate the Early Alert program. Explore other academic support programs for students who are struggling or feeling overwhelmed.*

## A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

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Increase the accessibility, availability, integration and effectiveness of mental health services available to faculty, staff and students.

### ❖ INTEGRATED SERVICES AND SHARED CARE

- *Adopt an integrated culturally-appropriate approach to delivering mental health services to students, accessing both on-campus and off-campus supports and resources.*
- *Strike a community liaison committee with external agencies to explore ways to extend services for students and employees, especially in specialized areas such as addictions and culturally-informed care.*

### ❖ ACCESS TO STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- *Explore ways to enhance accessibility to campus mental health services, including stepped care approaches, group programming, and session limits.*
- *Provide support to faculties in assessing a student's fitness to practice as a program requirement.*
- *Explore opportunities to develop and enhance programs and services delivered by students, such as the PEERS program and other student-led offerings.*

### ❖ SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND ILLNESSES

- *Enhance support to employees with mental health problems and illnesses through a variety of approaches, including strengthened EAP services.*

## A RESOURCEFUL COMMUNITY

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Build awareness of the signs of a mental health crisis or suicidal thinking, and the appropriate responses and resources for referral.

### ❖ CRISIS INTERVENTION AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

- *Increase opportunities to equip faculty, staff and students with skills to respond to a mental health crisis or suicidality.*
- *Review the campus environment to reduce access to means of suicide.*
- *Increase awareness of Student Threat Assessment Triage Intervention Support (STATIS) and its important role.*

### ❖ POST-TRAUMA SERVICES

- *Create awareness of post-trauma resources, and develop a protocol for responding to a traumatic event such as a student death by suicide.*

## AN INCLUSIVE VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Realizing the benefits and potential of the campus mental health strategy will involve efforts from all corners of the University of Manitoba. Our plan will be monitored for progress and outcomes, with an annual report tabled and highlights of successful initiatives profiled by campus media sources.

To access the full version of *Success through Wellness: University of Manitoba's Campus Mental Health Strategy*, see <http://umanitoba.ca/student/mentalhealth/mh-strategy.html>