

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

ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018

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. The PACMH is responsible for "...coordinating, reviewing, and reporting on the progress of, mental health initiatives across the university."

2017-18 committee membership:

Ann Tierney	Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs – Chair
Jennifer Dods	Executive Director, Student Wellness Services
Sydney Downey	Manager, Return To Work and Accommodation Services, Human Resources
Shannon Hill	Learning and Development Specialist, Human Resources
Palmer Lockridge	AMS Representative
Tyler Morrison	SGPS Representative
Kim Murphy	Director, Office of the V-P (Finance & Administration)
Ellie Sadinsky	Executive Director, Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs
Claudio Soares	Head, Department of Psychiatry
Cameron Yung	Rector

The university, the AMS and the SGPS, continue to implement a broad range of activities, programs and services that align with Principal's commission's four-level pyramidal structure:

- **Promoting a Healthy Community**
- **Transitions and Resilience**
- **Encouraging Help-Seeking and Helping Behaviour**
- **Providing Effective Response, Service and Care**

Implementation of the recommendations and 16 priority initiatives identified by the PACMH will be substantially completed in 2018-19 with the opening of Mitchell Hall, which includes new central space for Student Wellness Services and a new Examination Centre, along with other student services and academic spaces.

Over 2017-18, the PACMH discussed next steps in the university's strategic approach to student mental health, in the context of the university's commitment to campus health and wellness, more broadly, for students, faculty and staff. A generous donation was received that will fund a two-year campus wellness project. The project will result in the creation of campus-wide framework to support, encourage and inspire a culture of wellness to help support all who learn and work at Queen's – students, faculty and staff. As this project is launched in Fall 2018, the PACMH will evolve into a new committee, the Provost's Advisory Committee on Campus Wellness, with expanded membership.

This final report of the PACMH reports on the progress made in 2017-18 on the priority initiatives previously identified by the committee. In addition, as noted on page 9, Student Wellness Services is developing a report, to be posted to its website annually, that includes statistics and metrics for its services.

Progress on PACMH-identified Priorities

The following 16 commission recommendations were identified by the PACMH in June 2014 as priorities for further assessment and action over 2014-2016. The work continued through 2016-2018.

	Recommendation	Champion	Status/Target Date for Implementation	Comments
1	Establish an Exam Centre	Student Affairs	Fall 2018	The centre will open in Mitchell Hall in December 2018.
2	Look at options for students who have had a false academic start, e.g. dropping a mark	Provost's Office	Complete	<p>There is a common 'drop date' deadline of week eight in each of the fall and winter academic terms.</p> <p>Courses dropped between week one and eight will not appear on a student's transcript, and there is no academic penalty.</p> <p>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.</p>
3	Consider day-to-day academic scheduling (class and exam) to respond to compressed and close-to-conflicting exam schedules	Provost's Office	Complete	<p>The scheduling of Sunday exams starting in December 2015 helped decompress the exam schedule.</p> <p>A two-day Fall Break in the seventh week of the fall term was implemented starting in Fall 2018 to help alleviate the stress students often experience during this point in the semester.</p> <p>A significant upgrade to the university timetabling system was implemented by the Office of the University Registrar in 2018, that includes comprehensive software for the scheduling of courses, exams, events and meetings, and</p>

Recommendation		Champion	Status/Target Date for Implementation	Comments
				improved timetabling processes, to reduce class conflicts, and decompress day-to-day academic scheduling and exam schedules.
4	Review the planning and delivery of dual degree programs	Provost's Office	Complete	
5	Increase the promotion and benefit of academic advising	Student Affairs	Complete/ongoing	<p>A Career and Academic Advising Community of Practice was developed that has built a strong referral network among advisors across campus to improve the student experience and access to service.</p> <p>The undergraduate Major Maps, the annual Majors Night, the introduction of academic advising to undergraduate incoming Arts and Science students at Summer Orientation to Academics and Resources (SOAR) and in summer webinars, as well as Grad Maps, have all enhanced the academic and career advising available to all students on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Major maps are used in some engineering core courses to support degree and career planning.</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	Complete	<p>The Division of Student Mental Health has been established and serves as a centre of excellence in the provision of student mental health care and a place for scholarship and training.</p> <p>http://psychiatry.queensu.ca/divisions/student_mental_health</p>

Recommendation		Champion	Status/Target Date for Implementation	Comments
7	Consider the utility of academic prep programs in ensuring incoming students are optimally prepared	Provost's Office/ Student Affairs	Ongoing	Research continues into models and target participant groups to pilot a summer residential university prep program.
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 and health and wellness, are addressed	Student Affairs (Student Experience Office and Undergraduate Admission and Recruitment)	Complete/Ongoing	<p>Surveys were completed and the BISC currently offers a suite of programming to its first-year students throughout the year that prepares them for their transition to the Kingston campus. These initiatives include:</p> <p>First-semester:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-campus housing (upper-year residence) • Off-campus housing with Student Community Relations • Don and Residence Society Recruitment Presentations • Deciding on Housemates <p>Second semester:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition workshops – Cultural Adjustment, Moving Home • Panel with Queen's Upper Year students • Kingston campus resources: raising awareness and making connections before they leave the BISC. <p>• BISC Mentor program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting first-year BISC students with an upper-year BISC alum mentor (ideally in the same faculty) while they are still at the castle • Welcome to Kingston Day during Orientation Week of their second year • Drop-in social events throughout second year run by mentors • Regular emails advising newly arrived students

Recommendation		Champion	Status/Target Date for Implementation	Comments
				<p>about campus resources, services and supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen’s Student Affairs Peer Positions: advertising and recruiting these on-campus positions to BISC students to help them build community on the Kingston campus • Peer program connections: Connecting BISC student committees (e.g. Peer Health Educators) with the same group operating in Kingston
9	Distribute “referral information” slides that could be shown before classes on a regular basis	Student Affairs (Student Wellness Services)	Complete/ongoing	Slides are updated and distributed annually.
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)	Complete	Instructions for incoming transfer students have been 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.
11	Consider whether a compassionate waiver process for the academic appeal fee could be developed with strict and standardized criteria that would be applied	Provost’s Office	Complete	Practices are in place in Faculties/Schools

Recommendation		Champion	Status/Target Date for Implementation	Comments
	consistently across the university			
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.	Complete	<p>The AMS and SGPS have enhanced mental-health-related benefits through their health plans, including increasing coverage for psychological services and expanding the eligibility of mental health practitioners. They will continue to respond to student demand and requests for adjustments.</p> <p>Most recently, the AMS has increased psychological services to cover 100 per cent of visits up to an annual maximum of \$750.</p>
13	Consider imposing a mandatory meeting between a staff academic advisor and all students who fail a first term midterm	Provost's Office	Complete	The <i>Bounce Back</i> program has been expanded to all faculties/schools, as well as Athletics, 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 also now being made by faculty-based academic advisors and counsellors.
14	Increase FTE complement of psychiatrists to assist students with more serious mental illness	Department of Psychiatry	Complete	Student Wellness Services now has two permanent part-time (1.4 FTE) Mental Health Psychiatry positions funded by SEAMO. SWS also has physicians doing GP Psychotherapy equivalent to 0.8 FTE.

Recommendation		Champion	Status/Target Date for Implementation	Comments
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	2018-19	Student Wellness Services will be co-located with other student services and programs, as well as academic and innovation spaces, in Mitchell Hall.
16	Develop performance targets for Student Wellness Services with metrics and reporting mechanisms.	Student Affairs	Ongoing SWS is developing a report, to be posted annually on the SWS website, that includes additional statistics and metrics.	2017-18 statistics highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total appointments: 45,173, a 15.5% increase over 16-17 • Total mental health appointments (direct service) 18,968, a 12.5% increase over 16-17. • # counselling appointments: 8,722, a 3.6% increase over 16-17 – 3 positions not filled until January • # GP mental health appointments: 6,838, a 15.8% increase over 16-17 • # Psychiatrist appointments: 2,567, a 33% increase over 16-17