



Advancing a Mentally Healthy Campus

2017 – 2018

Annual Report

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York University's Mental Health strategy aims to promote a healthy, inclusive and supportive environment that fosters positive mental health and wellbeing among members of the York community. The initiative was developed on the premise that wellness is a necessary pre-condition to learning and working, and that physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, mental, cultural and environmental health and learning are interdependent. Guided by a framework focused on leadership, planning and promotion, service delivery, and campus engagement, York University's Mental Health strategy strives to promote a more holistic, and integrated approach to campus health that supports academic excellence, employee satisfaction and productivity, as well as the overall success of all York community members.

Well-Being Summit

The Mental Health Strategy identified Well-being as an integral element of advancing a mentally healthy campus, and this year, the Steering Committee with the leadership of Jenn Myers, undertook moving the Well-being agenda forward.

The Wellness Summit, was held in December 2017, was well attended with student, staff and faculty representatives from across the University. Overall there were 78 attendees, representing 21 distinct areas within York. The goal of the Summit was to begin to: 1) define Wellness/Well-being; 2) identify what York is already doing to support and promote wellness/well-being; and 3) identify a vision for wellness/well-being at York.

There were four recommendations that emerged from the summit.

1. The work of the Well-Being Committee should continue with the directive to lead the creation of a community of practice and make detailed recommendations regarding next steps including recommendations regarding structure, terms of reference and priorities.
2. A Community of Practice should be formed that includes members from across the University whose roles and expertise intersect with Well-being. The purpose of the Community of Practice is to share ideas, leverage expertise and resources, and to begin to move towards a systematic and coordinated approach to wellness/well-being.

3. The following definition should be used as a starting point to frame future conversations and initiatives;

York University is committed to the creation and sustainment of a healthy and well university that prioritizes the development of policy, space, programs, services, governance and academic principles that consider the health and well-being of all York community members.

We will prioritize education, programs and services to create a culture that;

- promotes physical activity and reduces sedentary behaviour
- considers built and natural environments and their impact on well-being
- creates a nutritionally sound campus
- fosters inclusion, safety and connections to create the best conditions for learning and working
- builds positive mental health and resilience for all.

4. It is recommended that the Well-being subcommittee position York to adopt the Okanagan Charter.

Recommended Changes in Governance

In collaboration with the mental health steering committee and the well-being working group, it is recommended that the university adopt the framework of an overarching well-being steering committee. This committee would adopt the five-pillars of the well-being definition and create separate working groups/committees for each pillar. The existing mental health steering committee would continue to develop and promote the existing mental health strategic plan, with the support of the newly hired manager of well-being and the newly formed well-being steering committee.

It is recommended that the well-being steering committee membership consist of the chairs of the 5 working groups/steering committees and would invite members who would bring a solid understanding of implementing well-being strategies. The wellbeing steering committee will be charged with developing a pan-university strategic plan to advance wellbeing. The committee members would be responsible for crafting terms of reference, a framework for a strategic plan and a series of recommendations all derived from the input of multiple stakeholders as gathered by the advisory group.

It is further recommended that an Advisory Committee for Wellbeing be established and could include a broad representation of community members.

See illustration of current state and proposed state

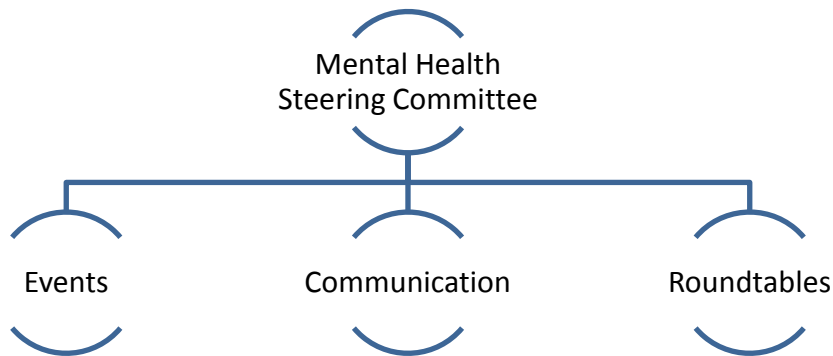


Figure 1 Current state

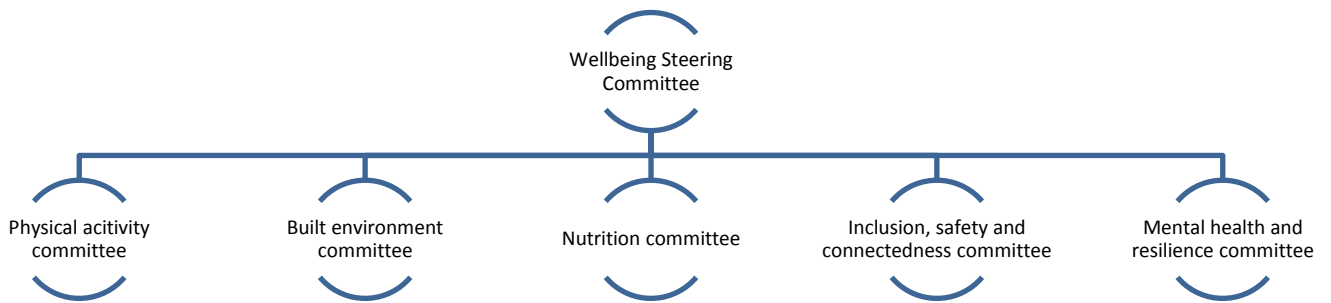


Figure 2 Proposed State

Mental Health Strategic Plan: Highlights & Accomplishments 2017-2018

Strategic Priority: Leadership

- Established a working group to examine campus well-being. (all)
- Organized a Wellbeing Summit attended by 75 individuals from all areas of campus, to discuss wellbeing within our community. Summit resulted in a report with recommendations to increase well-being across campus. (all)
- Began researching policy frameworks to ensure all academic and non-academic policies are congruent with the university's commitment to making mental health a priority. (all)

- Implemented Psychological Standard elements as part of the Competency Framework. (faculty/staff)
- Conducted 3 people leader focus groups as a baseline sample on psychological health and safety. (faculty/staff)
- Integrated psychological health and safety into the occupational health and safety policy, now entitled Healthy Workplace Policy. (faculty/staff)
- 3 year rolling Budget was submitted; approval pending (all)

Plans for 2018-2019

- Continued support for actions initiated in 2016-17 and 2017-18. (all)
- Establish a Well-Being Community Advisory Committee with student, staff and faculty representation. (all)
- Sign the Okanagan Charter. (all)

Strategic Priority: Planning & Promotion

- Provided ongoing training opportunities focused on mental health awareness, resources and support, and suicide awareness and intervention. (1300+ individuals trained in mental health awareness, resources and support; 400 individuals trained in suicide awareness; 120 individuals trained in suicide intervention). (all)
- Organized an exam prep program during Fall finals, which provided students the opportunity to explore learning skills and health and wellness strategies to help manage their stress. (students)
- Pilot of Robot Therapy Animals at Red Zone Kiosk to provide support to community members. (students).
- Communications strategy continues to be implemented to highlight relevant mental health services, events and information. (all)

Plans for 2018-2019

- Increase capacity to deliver safeTALK & ASIST Trainings by sending 8 employees to T4Ts. (all)
- Continue project with Centre for Human Rights, Equity & Inclusion and Health, Safety and Well-Being on mental health language and how to further reduce stigma surrounding mental health issues, disabilities and accommodations. (all)
- Expand pan university exam prep day to include Faculty involvement. (students)
- Continue to explore opportunities to deliver suicide awareness training within relevant faculties i.e. social work, nursing, and psychology. (all)
- Expand training opportunities in partnership with Teaching Commons (e.g. Universal Design), TAD, Morneau Shepell with a focus on managers, academic administrators and College Heads. (all)
- Continued support for actions initiated in 2016-17 and 2017-18. (all)

Strategic Priority: Campus Engagement

- Explored opportunities to embed language highlighting the importance of well-being into syllabi template used by faculty. (faculty/students)
- Participated in planning for the National College Health Assessment happening in 2019. (students)
- Completed workshops with different faculties and academic advisors to increase understanding of student mental health and how to support student well-being. (130 employees trained). (all)
- Began work on a mental health awareness opportunity grant open to student groups running events with regards to mental health (funds established, guidelines created). (all)

Plans for 2018-2019

- Participate in National College Health Assessment 2019 (students)
- Launch mental health awareness opportunity grant open to student, staff and faculty groups running projects/events that promote mentally healthy campus. (all)

- Develop Champion Recognition Program highlighting students, faculty and staff who contribute to a mentally healthy campus community. (all)
- Re-engage with Research and Innovation to pursue the development of a Mental Health Community of Practice /Research Hub to coordinate research projects focused on mental health. (faculty)
- Continued support for actions initiated in 2016-17 and 2017-18. (all)

Strategic Priority: Service Delivery

- WellTrack roll-out to the community with 2,280 users as of June, 2018 (2,064 student & 216 employees) (all)
- Rebranded and organized units within Counselling & Disability Services; Accessibility Services, which encompasses all accessibility units, and Student Counselling & Development. (students)
- Explored FITA (From Intention to Action) and ThriveRU programs to find opportunities for implementation on campus. (students)
- Re-established working group with faculties that engage in student's placements to review best practices when accommodating practicum students in the workplace, meetings are held on a regular basis. (students)
- Meetings with Humber River Hospital to finalize an MOU to better support the seamless delivery of student mental health services when a student visits both York University and Humber River for support. (students)
- Actively discussed Early Alert at Retention Council, focusing both on a pan-university perspective as well as that which can be accomplished collectively at the Faculty level. (students)
- Partnered with School of Nursing to have students complete their practicum within Health Promotion, where they promoted mental health tools to students, faculty and staff. (all)
- Piloted training and education around critical incident stress awareness and self-care for first responders in Community Safety. (staff)
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Plans for 2018-2019

- Continue offering WellTrack to the community; include Student Counselling & Development to implement aspects of the tool that can be used by a counsellor and user together. (all)
- Collaborate with Athletics & Recreation, Health Promotion and Faculty of Health to launch a Wellness Coaching Program for students. (students)
- Engage Student Counselling & Development and targeted units (i.e. Residence Life, York International, Athletics & Recreation) to explore opportunities to deliver mental health services locally via an embedded counsellor model. (students)
- Increase capacity for peer support, with new peer programs in key areas on campus (i.e. Student Financial Services, Career Centre) (students)
- Ongoing commitment to ensure protocols for critical incident debriefing are in place. (all)
- Continued support for actions initiated in 2016-17 and 2017-18. (all)