
SHERIDAN

WELLNESS:

OUR STRATEGY

FOR COMMUNITY

WELL-BEING



We would like to acknowledge that the land on which we gather has been and still is the traditional territory of several Indigenous nations, including the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, the Métis and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Since time immemorial, numerous Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples have lived and passed through this territory. We recognize this territory is covered by the Dish with One Spoon treaty and the Two Row Wampum treaty which emphasize the importance of joint stewardship, peace and respectful relationships.

Sheridan College affirms it is our collective responsibility to honour and respect those who have gone before us, those who are here and those who have yet to come. We are grateful for the opportunity to be working and living on this land.



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Sheridan's five-year Strategic Plan, [Sheridan 2024: Galvanizing Education for a Complex World](#), sets a bold, clear blueprint for Sheridan's future. Together, our faculty, staff and students crafted a vision for Sheridan that reflects our diversity, our capacity for disruptive innovation, and our commitment to creating inclusive, healthy spaces that promote everyone's well-being. Throughout this collaborative process, wellness emerged as a vital priority for Sheridan's future.

To put it simply: our community cares deeply about wellness.

As stated in the Plan, we will create healthy and vibrant communities on each campus and across Sheridan through wellness practices and spaces that bolster our community members and their ideas, and nurture diverse approaches to wellness, creativity and innovation.

That's why I'm so proud to share our community wellness strategy with you, *Sheridan Wellness: Our Strategy for Community Well-being*. This Strategy puts into action the clear mandate for fostering wellness that is so central to our Strategic Plan. The Strategy is anchored in the collaborative, inclusive approach to wellness set out by the [Okanagan Charter](#) – a set of shared principles and best practices for wellness on postsecondary campuses championed by leading institutions across North America. Sheridan is proud to adopt these guidelines and commit to living out the values of the Charter through our Community Wellness Strategy.

Our Strategy reflects a broad, holistic approach to fostering well-being – one that extends far beyond a simple, physical definition of wellness – and was developed hand-in-hand with our community.

I invite you to stay up to date on our progress towards achieving our objectives at wellness.sheridancollege.ca

Warmly,

Janet Morrison, PhD
President and Vice Chancellor

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2019, we shared the first draft of our community wellness strategy – a guiding document to foster all dimensions of wellness at Sheridan for our students and employees. The impetus for the Strategy came from the community consultations that influenced Sheridan's Strategic Plan, which identified health and wellness as a key priority, and which was embedded in the Strategic Plan through the empowering enablers of a flourishing workforce and healthy and creative communities.

Recognizing the strong role that equity, diversity and inclusion play in fostering a healthy college community, our strategic focus on wellness is also directly tied to our institutional commitment to create a culture where everyone feels valued and respected.

“EVERYONE IS IN CHARGE OF THEIR OWN WELLNESS JOURNEY. WELLNESS MEANS DIFFERENT THINGS FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE.”

(WELLNESS STRATEGY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK)



A HEALTHY CAMPUS CONSIDERS HOW WELL-BEING IS INFUSED THROUGHOUT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, THE CLASSROOM, COMMUNICATIONS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES. (OKANAGAN CHARTER)

A HOLISTIC APPROACH GUIDED BY THE OKANAGAN CHARTER

The emerging best practice for fostering wellness in postsecondary institutions, as crystallized in the [Okanagan Charter](#), affirms that well-being needs to be thoughtfully and intentionally cultivated and recognized as foundational to our vision and mission. A 'healthy campus' considers how well-being is infused throughout policies and procedures, the built environment, the classroom, communications, programs and services (Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges, 2015). The Charter calls on participating institutions to embed health into all aspects of campus culture, across the administration, operations and academic mandates.

The definition of wellness that guides our Strategy is wide-ranging: wellness refers to more than physical health, and encompasses an individual's physical, mental and social well-being (World Health Organization, 1946, p. 1). On a holistic level, wellness is commonly viewed as having eight dimensions (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, environmental, occupational and financial), each of which contributes to a personal sense of total well-being and quality of life.

The Okanagan Charter encourages institutions to engage and amplify the voices of students and employees when designing their plans for wellness. Recognizing this important principle, we held community-wide consultations on the draft wellness strategy over a six-month period ending in spring 2020.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 placed a sharper focus on fostering wellness for both students and employees. Employees across the college were faced with added pressures of working from home, caring for dependants and contributing to Sheridan's extensive pandemic response efforts. Students were challenged with completing the spring 2020 semester remotely, while managing added stressors such as financial hardship, travel restrictions, and the overall uncertainty of how the pandemic would unfold and continue to impact their learning experience.

As a result, this second and final draft of the community wellness strategy reflects not only feedback received during the community consultation process in fall 2019/ winter 2020, but also the renewed focus on nurturing wellness in the challenging, rapidly-changing environment presented by the pandemic.

RESEARCH AND KEY COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FINDINGS

Over the 2019-2020 academic year, Sheridan undertook extensive consultations with our community stakeholders for their input on the draft Strategy, which has helped to guide the final version we're sharing with you here. This feedback reinforced key findings from a thorough literature review and data from the 2019 National Colleges Health Assessment, which also contributed to the body of knowledge that grounds our community wellness strategy in solid research.

KEY FINDINGS PERTAINING TO STUDENT WELL-BEING

Findings from the 2019 National College Health Assessment on student wellness underscore the need for a holistic approach to wellness that addresses its multiple dimensions, and reflects the important role of inclusivity in fostering well-being:

- **51.9% had felt so depressed it was difficult to function.**
- **34.6% of students identified anxiety as a factor impacting their academic performance.**
- **46% of students rarely felt like they belonged to a community.**
- **17% of students had family members who were dependent on them financially.**
- **70% of students did not meet physical activity guidelines.**

KEY FINDINGS PERTAINING TO EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Key figures from Sheridan's internal human resources data highlighted the critical role of mental health support services in fostering employee wellness – particularly during the past year.

- **Aggregate highlights from our Employee and Family Assistance Program engagement data (2019-2020), showed an upward trend in support sought relating to both physical and mental health concerns.**
- **Aggregate human resources data revealed a 5% increase in Mental Health Short Term Disability Claims (2019 to 2020).**

FINDINGS FROM SHERIDAN WELLNESS STRATEGY COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

In keeping with the commitment to community participation outlined in the Okanagan Charter, the Sheridan Wellness Strategy team invited students and employees to attend in-person sessions, share their feedback via email, and held hallway campaigns as well as a virtual townhall. In addition, the team presented the draft strategy at departmental team meetings and launched a social media campaign to unveil the draft and elicit student feedback.

We heard from 300+ employees and 1,000+ students on how we could collectively work together to make Sheridan a healthier place to live, work and learn.

OUR CONSULTATION PROCESS INCLUDED:

1,100+

Student consultations, including 1,000 surveys and 111 follow-up consults.

3

Sessions with Sheridan Student Union leadership.

300+

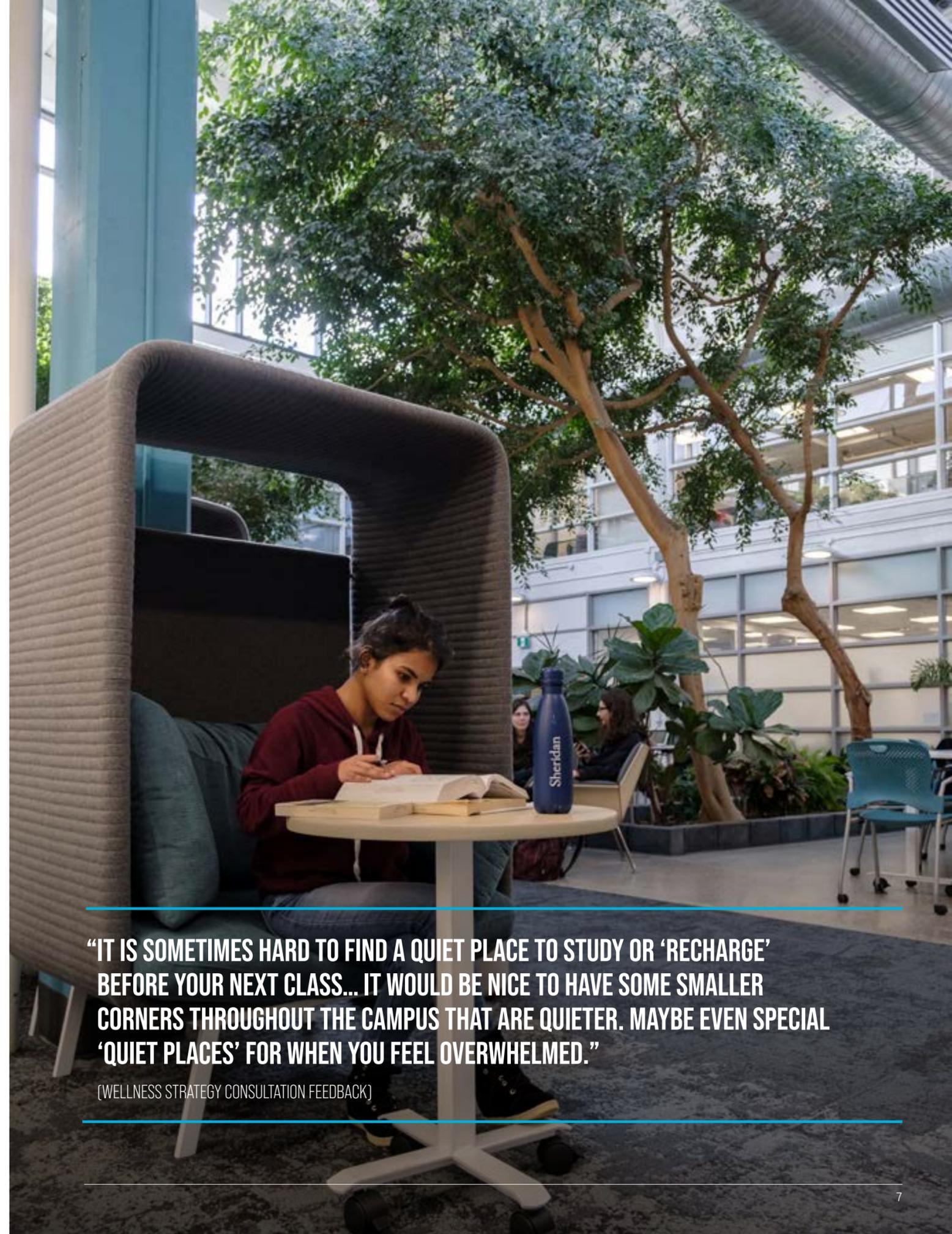
Online feedback forms collected from students and employees.

20

Wellness feedback sessions with department leaders and employee teams on every campus, including Sheridan's Centre for Equity and Inclusion, and the Office of the Registrar.

344

Employee voices represented.



“IT IS SOMETIMES HARD TO FIND A QUIET PLACE TO STUDY OR ‘RECHARGE’ BEFORE YOUR NEXT CLASS... IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE SOME SMALLER CORNERS THROUGHOUT THE CAMPUS THAT ARE QUIETER. MAYBE EVEN SPECIAL ‘QUIET PLACES’ FOR WHEN YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED.”

(WELLNESS STRATEGY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK)

THE EIGHT DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

Wellness is commonly viewed as having eight dimensions, each of which contribute to a personal sense of total well-being and quality of life, and each of which overlaps and affects the others. Our community wellness strategy has been developed to reflect all eight dimensions of wellness:

PHYSICAL WELLNESS involves taking care of the body by making informed and responsible decisions about physical health.

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS encompasses optimism, self-esteem, self-acceptance, and the ability to recognize and share a wide variety of feelings with others in a constructive manner.

INTELLECTUAL WELLNESS involves a commitment to lifelong learning and is nurtured through engagement in creative and stimulating activities that develop our knowledge and abilities.

SOCIAL WELLNESS refers to the ability to relate to and connect with other people; and to establish and maintain positive relationships with family, friends, co-workers and peers.

SPIRITUAL WELLNESS means living a life with purpose, direction and strong values.

ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS refers to having an understanding of the impacts of our actions and behaviours on the environment.

OCCUPATIONAL WELLNESS means finding fulfillment and meaning in our work, being actively engaged while on the job and seeking to make a positive impact.

FINANCIAL WELLNESS involves being able to meet your financial needs, feeling secure about your financial future and being empowered to make informed financial life choices.

Through these dimensions, overall wellness is enhanced through the pursuit of continued growth and balance. Sheridan is committed to supporting students and employees as they strive to improve their overall health and well-being.

“[WELLNESS] NEEDS TO BE AT THE CORE OF EVERYTHING WE DO. IF YOU EMBED WELLNESS WITHIN THE CURRICULUM, WITHIN DEPARTMENTS, WITHIN OUR CULTURE AT ITS CORE, IT WILL HAVE A STRONGER IMPACT.”

(WELLNESS STRATEGY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK)



1 | PHYSICAL WELLNESS



2 | EMOTIONAL WELLNESS



3 | INTELLECTUAL WELLNESS



4 | SOCIAL WELLNESS



5 | SPIRITUAL WELLNESS



6 | ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS



7 | OCCUPATIONAL WELLNESS



8 | FINANCIAL WELLNESS



STRATEGY IN ACTION: PILLARS AND KEY OBJECTIVES

Our Strategy for Community Well-being rests upon four key pillars, designed to directly respond to our community's feedback and reflect the eight dimensions of wellness: **Whole Systems Approach; Healthy, Supportive Environments; Promoting Lifelong Wellness; and Inclusive Wellness Services.**

Each of these pillars will be supported by key goals, and objectives to be accomplished each year.

“PLEASE PROVIDE HEALTH CLASSES – I WOULD LOVE TO HAVE HEALTH CLASSES/WORKSHOPS THAT EXPLAIN HOW TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF MYSELF.”

(WELLNESS STRATEGY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK)

THE YEARLY OBJECTIVES FOR OUR OVERALL GOALS, AND OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THEM, WILL BE TRACKED ON: [WELLNESS.SHERIDANCOLLEGE.CA](https://wellness.sheridancollege.ca)



WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH

We'll align our framework for wellness at Sheridan with the best practices laid out in the Okanagan Charter – and formally commit to the Charter's principles to embed wellness into all elements of campus culture, academics and operations.

KEY GOALS

- Create frameworks to embed wellness throughout our governance, policy and procedures, recognizing the impact they have on the physical, social and mental well-being of our community – bolstered by signing the Okanagan Charter.
- Form the Sheridan Wellness Committee and work closely with them to plan, implement and evaluate the success of our Wellness Strategy, ensuring that the voice of the Sheridan community remains at the heart of this work.
- Measure the success of our strategy by developing key wellness indicators for operations across the College and commit to continuous improvement as we implement our initiatives.



HEALTHY, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Each of our campuses is distinctive in its built, natural and cultural environments – all of which impact our physical, mental and social well-being. Recognizing the intersection between wellness, equity and inclusion, our strategy will ensure our campuses evolve in a way that helps foster connection, inclusivity and belonging.

KEY GOALS

- Enhance our spaces – physical, social and virtual – with the goal of increasing access, inclusion and a sense of belonging for all community members.
- Support the implementation of Sheridan's Campus Master Plan, which was developed with these unique qualities in mind and will guide current and future developments through a wellness lens.
- Champion events for both students and employees that reflect the different dimensions of wellness, with a focus on fostering belonging and inclusion.



PROMOTING LIFELONG WELLNESS

We'll build wellness competencies and knowledge among students and employees, aided by a comprehensive communications strategy that engages, empowers and educates our community.

KEY GOALS

- Continue developing resources and supports for students and staff in light of the ongoing pandemic.
- Support concrete opportunities for our community to learn more about health and wellness practices through comprehensive wellness programming, and a robust online presence for wellness resources on Sheridan Central, our intranet.
- Develop and implement a wellness communication strategy that will ensure our community is connected and well-informed.
- Contribute to the wider body of knowledge and practice of health and well-being through research and communities of practice, in keeping with the Okanagan Charter.



INCLUSIVE WELLNESS SERVICES

We'll continue to offer and expand a spectrum of services to support the student/employee life cycle and collaborate with our local communities to enhance access to external wellness services.

KEY GOALS

- Focus on developing services that support all eight dimensions of our students' and employees' wellness.
- Build and enhance partnerships with internal and external stakeholders that strengthen our community's access to wellness services and resources, including healthy food options, individualized supports such as counselling, and connections to peers to foster belonging.
- Enhance targeted wellness supports and resources for equity-deserving groups.

SHERIDAN COMMUNITY WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Formed in fall 2020, the Sheridan Wellness Committee will be tasked with putting our community wellness strategy into action beginning January 2021. This includes embedding wellness into our policies and procedures, physical and virtual campus spaces, learning opportunities and services, and bringing forward ideas on how to promote well-being through various campus initiatives, education, and partnerships with community organizations and resources. The Committee will work in collaboration with other Sheridan groups/departments to take a proactive, holistic approach to wellness that considers all aspects of our community's well-being.

Committee members reflect the diversity of students and employees. The Sheridan Wellness Committee membership list can be found on [Sheridan Central](#).

TRACK OUR PROGRESS

To track Sheridan's progress on implementing *Sheridan Wellness: Our Strategy for Community Well-being*, including achieving our yearly objectives, please visit wellness.sheridancollege.ca

“CREATE INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT EMPLOYEES’ MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS. IT WILL SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE WORK HAPPINESS, SATISFACTION AND WILL RESULT IN A BETTER AND MORE EFFICIENT WORK ENVIRONMENT.”

(WELLNESS STRATEGY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK)

THANK YOU

The Sheridan community wellness strategy team would like to acknowledge the following individuals and teams, whose hard work and dedication was integral to the development of this final document.

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Prerna Bajaj, Health Promotion Specialist

Kevin Choi, HR Operations Assistant

Tammy Datars, Senior Manager, Student Healthcare Services

Stewart Dick, Senior Graphic Designer

Erin De Jong, Health Promotion Specialist

Mia Fatrdla, Senior Manager, Marketing and Communications, Sheridan Student Union

Kerry Hately, Professor, BHSc. Kinesiology and Health Promotion

Kelly Kwon, Senior Manager, Occupational Health and Safety Services

Lori MacBeth, Learning and Organizational Development Specialist

Jamie-Lynn Maki, Workplace Abilities Coordinator

Mark Mulloy, Editorial Production Specialist

Ryan Piper, Vice President, Human Resources

Kimberlyn Porter, Graphic Designer

Carolina Salcedo, Corporate Communications Officer

Erica Shaw, Manager, Creative Studio

Rebecca Sprague, Director, Human Resources Services

Leah State, Manager of Wellness and Counselling

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Tara Aune, Alex Baj, Jessalyn Carvajal,

Ledia Gamil, Kevin Maruya

The Sheridan Student Union

OPSEU – Local 244

OPSEU – Local 245

Sheridan

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GET IN TOUCH

DAVIS CAMPUS

7899 McLaughlin Road
Brampton, Ontario L6Y 5H9
T 905-459-7533

HAZEL MCCALLION CAMPUS

4180 Duke of York Blvd.
Mississauga, Ontario L5B 0G5
T 905-845-9430

TRAFALGAR ROAD CAMPUS

1430 Trafalgar Road
Oakville, Ontario L6H 2L1
T 905-845-9430

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