

Students in Distress: Prevention and Action – A Shared Responsibility

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Overview

- Introduction
- Decrease in Mental Health
- Case Studies
- Service Gaps That Increase Risk
- Solutions in Progress to Reduce Risk
- Future Directions

Introduction – Our Current Service Level

- Over 14 000 registered students
- Three Full-Time Counsellors
- Increase in students seeking services
- Increase in severity of cases
- Current services feature individual, group and consultation

Decrease in Mental Health

- Brief
- Sudden Onset
- Chronic
- Acute
- Low-Grade

Decrease in Mental Health - Consequences

- A decrease in the mental health functioning prevents students from realizing or displaying their true academic potential
- Leads to lower quality of life
- When left untreated, contributes to development of chronic conditions
- Affects student and significant supports or systems

Case Examples: Early Intervention

- Increase in symptoms
- Minor disturbances in functioning
- Supports already in place
- No crisis
- Return to normal functioning

Case Examples: Just in Time Intervention

- Student is likely to not be attending classes regularly
- Reached a crisis
- When supports are accessed, symptoms are reduced
- Common academic outcome is deferral or withdrawal
- High probability of return to regular functioning

Case Example: Late Intervention

- Crisis has occurred
- Clear threat to health and safety of the student
- High probability of other students or staff being affected by the crisis
- Supports not in place
- Need for hospitalization
- High probability of student missing multiple semesters or discontinuing

Service Gaps that Increase Risk

- Reactive model of care
- Support model based upon dated model of course delivery
- No clear policy or direction for staff or faculty when dealing with distressed students
- Lack of treatment planning with outside agencies
- Lack of knowledge about services on campus
- Lack of specialized services

Solutions to Reduce Risk

- Distressed Student Protocol
- Mental Health Review
- Mental Health Strategy
- Developing better relationships with student supports and faculties
- Creating more stable relationships with community providers

Future Directions

- Prevention
- Increase in services offered
- Delivering multidisciplinary services
- Make Mental Health a Priority