A Comprehensive Framework for Student Mental Health

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Strategic Aim

“Promote the health and well-being of students as a foundation for academic and life success.”

– Cornell’s Strategic Plan, Educational Excellence Goal
Impact of Mental Health Problems

• 4 in 10 Cornell undergraduates unable to function academically for at least a week in the past year due to depression, stress, or anxiety
  - PULSE Survey, 2017
  - Similar to National College Health Assessment reference data

• 12% seriously considered suicide in past year
  - 17% of Black students
Literature: Treatment Impact

• Mental health treatment is effective
• Early intervention increases effectiveness
• Counseling center treatment reduces risk of suicide
• Mental health interventions by primary care medical providers improves mental health and reduces risk of suicide
Factors Driving Increased Utilization

- Increased enrollment
- Increased willingness to seek help
- Improved identification and referral
- Prior effective treatment enabling students to pursue college
- Increased underlying distress
  - Impact of national and local climate (especially on students of color)
  - Cumulative effect of technology/social media
Comprehensive, Public Health Approach

• Social-ecological framework
  – Individual, group, institution, community, society
  – Focus on population as well as individuals
  – Treatment and prevention
  – Campus-wide
Comprehensive, Public Health Approach

Campus Health Executive Committee

VP for Student &
Campus Life Council

Behavioral Health
Committee
- Mental health
- Alcohol
- Sexual
  violence
- Hazing

Coalition on Sexual
Violence Prevention

Coalition on Mental Health
(Spring 2018)
Mental Health Framework

- Foster a healthy educational environment
- Promote life skills and resilience
- Increase help-seeking behavior
- Identify people in need of care
- Provide mental and medical health services
- Deliver coordinated crisis management
- Restrict access to means of suicide
Foster a healthy educational environment

• Academic environment
  o Simon Fraser University model:
    ▪ Conditions for Well-Being in Learning Environments
      ✓ Optimal challenge
      ✓ Positive classroom culture
      ✓ Innovative teaching and grading practices
      ✓ Supportive advising

https://www.sfu.ca/healthycampuscommunity/learningenvironments/WLE.html
Foster a healthy educational environment

• Social environment
  - Strategies addressing climate issues impacting mental health
    - Alcohol
    - Sexual violence
    - Bias
    - Hazing
Promote life skills and resilience

- *Thrive* program for first-year students
  - Engineering, ILR, Hotel, A&S
Increase help-seeking behavior

- Let’s Talk
- *Beneath the Surface* campaign
Identify people in need of care

• Community Consultation & Intervention

• Educational programs
  o Notice & Respond
  o Friend2Friend
  o Intervene
Provide mental and medical health services

• Collaborative care model
• CAPS:
  o Brief phone assessments
  o Individual & group therapy
  o Psychiatric treatment
• Medical services:
  o Depression & alcohol screening
  o Behavioral health consultants
• Team approach
Deliver coordinated crisis management

- Coordinated system that includes:
  - CU Police
  - Cornell Health
  - Dean of Students Crisis Managers
  - Cayuga Medical Center
Restrict access to means of suicide

- Lab chemical, weapon restrictions
- Means restriction on bridges
  - Reduces jumping deaths, risk of clusters
Mental Health Program Reviews

• 2017  Jed Foundation review
• 2015  Active Minds award
• 2015  AAAHC re-accreditation
• 2014  University Audit Office
• 2010  External consultation
  - Faculty from Yale, Columbia & U Rochester