Minding Mental Health – The Vital Role of University Administrators In Prevention and Intervention

Glenn Hirsch, Ph.D., L.P
Assistant Vice Provost for Student Affairs
Director, Counseling & Consulting Services
Presentation Overview

• A snapshot of mental health statistics for U of M students and how mental health services are delivered on our campus

• Administrative Support in Three Different Areas
  • Campus-Wide Public Health Approach
  • Prevention Efforts
  • Intervention Strategies
Presentation Overview

• Current and Future Challenges
Student Mental Health at the U of Mn (Healthy Minds Survey 2013)

- 18% of surveyed students screened positive for depression, 10% major depression
- 18% screened positive for an anxiety disorder
- 16% non-suicidal self-injury
- 8% suicidal ideation
9% “I would think less of others who have received mental health services”

46% Most people would think less of others seeking mental health services
Mental Health Service Delivery

• Primary:
  – Counseling & Consulting Services
  – Boynton Health Service Mental Health Clinic

• Supportive
  – Aurora Center
  – Intl. Student & Scholar Services
  – Disability Resource Center
I. Minnesota’s Public Health/Community Intervention Approach

• Provost’s Committee on Student Mental Health
  – Started in 2005
  – Administrative Support: Sponsored by Provost Tom Sullivan with continuing support now from Senior Vice President and Provost Karen Hanson

• 18 offices/programs represented
Committee Charge:

• Raise awareness about issues related to student mental health
• Effect policy change
• Improve conditions on our campus for students with mental health conditions
• Serve as a model of collaboration for our campus and other universities
Provost’s Committee on Student Mental Health

• The committee has served its charge well implementing 22 Initiatives since 2005—highlights:
  – Developed and Launched the Student Mental Health Website
  – [www.mentalhealth.umn.edu](http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu) (with video from President Eric Kaler)
Provost’s Committee on Student Mental Health

• Developed and provided collaborative, Faculty/Staff and Student trainings to over 2,600 students, staff and faculty; face-to-face and online components

• Developed the Mental Health and Stress Management Syllabus Statement

• Co-sponsored Cirque De-Stress (April and October 2013) and Mental Health Awareness Day (2011-2013)
II. Prevention Efforts

• Online Wellness Education for Incoming First Year Students
  – Administrative Support: Vice Provost for Student Affairs Jerry Rinehart and administrators from Boynton Health Service
  – Alcohol Edu
  – Haven
  – Online financial literacy course
Online Wellness Education for Incoming First Year Students

• Challenges:
  – Required but no "teeth" for not completing; completion rate 72% for all three Alcohol edu surveys
  – Hard for Int’l students and domestic Ss with diverse religious/cultural identities
Some Major UMN Alcohol Edu and Haven Findings:

• Drinking rates above the national average

• 30% of Twin Cities students reported drinking in a high risk way

• After completing AlcoholEdu, students reported increases in positive behavioral intentions, including 30% of high risk drinkers
Some Major UMN Alcohol Edu and Haven Findings:

- Two distinct groups of students—a strong majority who have healthy attitudes and behaviors and a minority who respond in a substantially less healthy ways.

- Attitudes and behaviors of some in the majority group move in a slightly less healthy direction from Survey 1 to Survey 2 in some cases.

- Minority group is consistently making positive improvements.
III. Intervention

• Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education
  – Established in 1986 with strong support from the Office for Student Affairs senior administration
  – provides both safe, confidential individual service and group educational programs about consent, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and bystander behavior
Aurora Services

• 24/7 crisis phone line
• Walk-in support/advocacy
• Academic Support
• Support during medical interventions
• Arranging Housing and Legal Support
III. Intervention

• Behavioral Consultation Team
  – Facilitated through Office for Student Affairs with strong support from University Colleges and administrators
  – multi-disciplinary team which offers consultation and intervention to the University community regarding concerning student behavior
Behavioral Consultation Team

- Works collaboratively with staff/faculty reporting parties while taking a student development/support perspective whenever possible (with disciplinary action as a back-up if needed)

- Challenges:
  - Getting active participation from concerned faculty/staff
  - Managing fear
Current and Future Challenges

• Addressing ever-increasing demand for services:
  – Online efforts
  – Text-based counseling
  – More counseling groups

• Serving International Students

• Decreasing the “college effect” for alcohol and sexual behavior

• Mass casualty mental health support planning