Universities UK

Whole university approach to mental health

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Issues

Mental health presentation
- Narrative of crisis in student and staff mental health
- Continuing sharp rises in demand for student & staff support services

Scaling up the work already under way
- NHS-university support services
- Absence of strategic approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Variation in institutional approach: variation in outcomes

Strengthening political will and leadership
- Mental health and education

Vision

Students and staff who are supported to:
- understand how to foster and maintain good mental health;
- understand mental disorders and their treatments;
- decrease stigma
- seek help effectively

Institutions that see wellbeing and good mental health as central to their offer – to their performance in student experience and retention, in learning and teaching, in research, in organisational effectiveness and efficiency as well as their commitment to access and widening participation.

Universities working with their staff, students, families and local health services
HE sector that takes a system wide approach to improving mental health and wellbeing.

UUK Mental Health in Higher Education(MHHE) programme

The **first phase** of the UUK MHHE programme comprises policy and strategy development.

- **Evidence:** to work with IPPR and other partners to enhance the evidence base on the mental health and wellbeing of university populations.
- **Strategic framework:** to work with a range of key partners and expert voices to develop a shared vision, evidenced case and actionable organisational framework to support institutions to:
  o Adopt mental health and wellbeing as a <u>strategic priority</u> across all activities, all students and all staff, that is, a '<u>whole university approach</u>';
  o Integrate this approach vertically by working with <u>parents, schools, colleges, employers and communities along the student journey</u>; and
  o Integrate this approach horizontally with surrounding care services supported by the development of <u>guidelines for NHS organisations</u> and universities
- **Dissemination:** to promote an understanding and appreciation of the value of the integrated strategic approach amongst university leaders and government.

The **second phase** of the programme comprises policy and strategy implementation.
- to validate the 'whole university approach' through three pilot sites;
- to develop a suite of improvement tools;
- to develop tools to support an organisational improvement cycle including a Mental Health Audit;
- to set up a good practice exchange; and
- to mobilise these approaches and tools across the sector.