

### 1. Title of the Practice

Mental Well-being Program – Integrating Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention

### 2. Objectives of the Practice-

Develop multi-level integrated framework for Mental health Promotion, Prevention, and Intervention.

- Improve awareness about mental health needs and concerns.
- Improve access to ethical and affordable mental health care.
- Identify students displaying early signs and symptoms of a mental health concern and provide early intervention.
- Integrate mental health work into academic calendar and strengthen college action towards mental well-being of students.
- Contextualize mental health services to improve help seeking behaviours and attitudes.
- Normalize conversations about mental health to reduce stigma about mental health needs and care.
- Engage key stakeholders like college administration, academic staff, and students through mental well-being services.

### 3. The Context

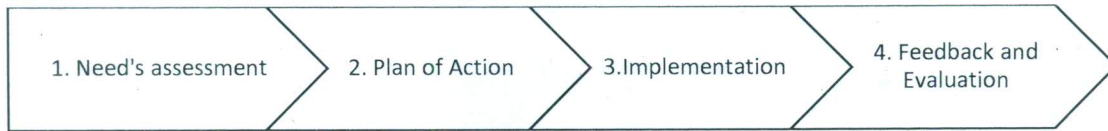
- A survey was conducted to explore existing beliefs, help seeking behaviours and concerns faced by students which informed the structure of the program.
- 1236 Students participated in the online survey. 70.1% students reported stress, 43.8 % anger issues and 39.2 % anxiety. 96 students shared that they have experienced suicidal thoughts at some point. Loneliness, witnessing violence, social media addiction and poor body image were other major concerns reported.
- 62.7 % shared that they would like to access mental health support on college campus through a professional through workshops (45%), group therapy (24.4%) and individual counselling (52.1%).
- Mental health work is not marked by a one-hour session yearly, students can choose from varied services. This program is guided by ethical principles of confidentiality and sense of safety which also promotes help seeking. We offer high quality care through a full time Psychologist with two other consulting clinical psychologists.



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#### 4. The Practice

##### Implementation Process:



Step 1: Assessment of Students' Mental health needs using value based and evidence-based frameworks.

Step 2: A detailed annual plan of action informing activities, their objectives and methodology is prepared based on the feedback and learning from earlier activities.

Step 3: Implementation of the services

Step 4: Continuous feedback, monitoring and evaluation of the services offered throughout the year using google forms.

##### Structure of the Program:

There are three major arms to our mental wellbeing program: Promotion, Prevention, and Intervention.

**Promotion:** All college platforms like daily sanctuary, notice boards and classroom discussions etc., are used to promote the need for and importance of mental wellbeing. Some examples of mental health promotion are interventions like awareness sessions and workshops on various concerns like stress, relationships, dealing with anxiety etc. designed to increase the sense of belonging and connectedness within the college. We introduce programs that support and strengthen coping strategies, that promote awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity.

**Prevention** refers to interventions that occur before the initial onset of a disorder to prevent the development of the disorder. Group therapy sessions, Support group sessions and Awareness sessions aim at identifying risk factors for student's mental health and enhancing protective factors like peer support, sense of trust and resilience.

**Intervention** comprises interventions that are appropriate for and specifically target students displaying the early signs and symptoms of a mental health problems. Individual counselling sessions are offered by team of Psychologists on campus.

##### Highlights:

1. This program identifies students as active participants rather than passive recipients of these services.
2. The program is informed by Social-justice and rights-based approach to mental health.



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**Challenges:**

1. One of the major challenges was to contextualize the program which identifies students with both psychological and socio-cultural factors.
2. The program had adaptive enough to integrate continuous feedback and upcoming needs of the students. For example, The outbreak of Covid-19 led to a sudden shift in the mode of our services.

**Limitation:**

1. The program is not equipped to take care of crisis calls and clinical/medical emergencies so adequate referrals were made whenever needed to nearby government hospital or national helplines.

**5. Evidence of Success**

This program has important policy implications indicating that integrative frameworks can lead to prevention and intervention with minimal resources.

- Improved access:

In 2019-20, 40 classroom sessions were conducted which benefitted 1701 students. 699 students attended online awareness session during 2020-21. 551 students joined classroom sessions in 2021-22.

- Surviving Covid-19 outbreak:

Program offered a safe, familiar space to students to reach out for their mental health needs during the lockdown. Various services and activities were conducted over zoom platform.

**1. Mental Health Awareness Webinar Series**

A webinar series was organized to address student's mental health concerns during lockdown. 333 students signed up for these sessions.

**2. Counselling Sessions during Covid-19**

Twenty-four students reached out for personal counselling sessions during the first month of complete lockdown and forty online sessions were offered by college counsellor.

**3. Online support group sessions:**

503 students accessed online support group sessions during outbreak of Covid-19.

- Improved help seeking:

In 2019-20, 138 students reached out for counselling sessions and 347 sessions were offered to these students. In 2020-21, 43 students reached out for personal counselling sessions and



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176 online sessions were offered to them. In 2021-22, 269 personal counselling sessions were offered to 71 students.

### 6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Requirements and Resources:

- Management approval to integrate mental well-being services in college academic plan
- Need for trained and experienced mental health professionals to offer services
- One full time college counsellor to conceptualize, implement and monitor the services
- Two part time consultants to offer counselling sessions.
- Need's assessment tools to identify students at higher risk due to gender, caste, and other psychosocial disabilities
- Continuous planning and monitoring and evaluation framework to inform the program
- Online mediums to conduct virtual sessions and programs
- Culturally appropriate mental wellbeing educational resources, activities, and tools
- Brochures and posters to inform students about various activities

### 7. Notes:

This program uses a continuum approach to mental health and identifies students as active participants with an intention to bring awareness and sustainable and feasible solutions for student wellbeing in higher educational settings.

Following are some important measures for adopting this program:

1. Integrate Promotion, Prevention, and Intervention to offer holistic student mental healthcare services.
2. Understand the cultural context and background of your students and staff members.
3. Dedicate a full-time position for mental well-being professional for students.
4. See students as active members of the program by making student bodies part of the planning, implementation, and evaluation of mental healthcare work.
5. Abide by ethical principles of mental healthcare work.
6. Inform and encourage staff members to speak about importance of mental health in their classrooms through teaching
7. Orient staff members with the various activities of the mental healthcare program.
8. Develop a mental healthcare policy.



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