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# Curriculum Quality and Student Experience Committee

## 01 February 2024

## Mental Health Action Plan Update Jan 2024

**1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER**
**For discussion**

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the committee with an update on our Mental Health Action Plan and progress against the agreed actions.

**2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

2.1 The full mental health action plan is included within this paper. The 'status' column provides a visual overview of progress made against each action.

2.2 Across the plan, 13 of the 19 actions have been achieved, and we are making ood progress with the remaining six.

2.3 Key progress: October 2023-January 2024:

- External mental health partnerships established to provide 1-1 counselling support for students
- Now in post, our Student Wellbeing Coordinator provides dedicated wellbeing support for students.
- The Student Services team have introduced a range of tools to support wellbeing, including safety plans, CORE-10 assessments and external supervision for pastoral staff.
- Alignment of the Student Support Officer role has increased the levels of welfare support offered across college
- A short life working group is being convening to develop aligned approaches to identifying and supporting students at risk of withdrawal.
- The Director of Student Services is working with the Students' Association to develop the next Student Mental Health Agreement.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION(S) REQUIRED**

3.1 I recommend that the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee agree that the college is making good progress on the actions contained in the report.

**4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 The college's Mental Health Strategy details how we will support students in relation to this matter.

4.2 The Mental Health Action Plan aligns to the strategy and sets out a series of actions that address how we will support the college community. This paper provides an update on the plan.

## 5.0 Mental Health Action Plan - Update Jan 2024

**Mental Health Action Plan – Progress Monitoring (January 2024)**

| **Not started** | | **Complete** | | **Some slippage but will be complete by deadline** | | **In progress, carried over to next plan** | | **Will not be complete by deadline** | |
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| **Theme 1: Early identification and intervention for students who disclose a mental health issue or are referred for support.** | | | | |
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| Actions | Who | Measures of Success | Progress January 2024 | |
| 1.1 Continue to encourage and support all individuals to disclose mental health issues at application or enrolment. | Curriculum staff<br>Student Support Officers<br>MIS Staff<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Increased number of disclosures.<br>(KPI's on retention and success) | This is embedded into the application and enrolment processes. We monitor disclosures and plan support and help accordingly.<br><br>Quiet induction provides an opportunity to consider support requirements where relevant.<br><br>Working group established to explore opportunities to improve transitions arrangements with schools. | |
| 1.2 Include students who disclose a mental health issue as a priority group for learning support and development of a Personal Learning Support Plan. | Learning Support staff<br>Curriculum staff<br>Student Support | Increased number of LS interviews and partnership working with Schools | Learning Support make contact with students who disclose a Mental Health issue. | |

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| | Officers<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Procedure developed to support early assessment for those who have disclosed | | |
| 1.3 Encourage and support students disclosing a mental health issue to involve teaching and support staff in the discussion of potential trigger points and coping strategies for the year. | Curriculum staff<br>Student Support Officers<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | KPI's on retention and success | Student Services team offer advocacy and facilitate supportive discussions between students and other appropriate staff.<br><br>Induction sessions highlight mental health and wellbeing support available to students.<br><br>Trigger points and coping strategies are identified as part of safety plans. | |
| 1.4 Ensure all individuals provide the details of their next of kin on the enrolment form to ensure that speedy contact can be made in an emergency. (e.g. admission to hospital) | Curriculum staff<br>MIS Staff<br>Student Support Officer<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | 100% collection of data received | Information collected as part of enrolment processes.<br><br>Completed within the Mental Health Assessment for external counselling support. | |
| 1.5 Good mental health can be maintained through preparation to start college; having an understanding of what to expect and how to develop good and supportive relationships to enable this through our induction processes | Curriculum staff<br>Student Support Officers<br>Students' Association<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Development of a range of activities to support induction<br>KPI's on retention, achievement and success | BCSA Welcome Week activities help create a sense of belonging, and support the development of relationships with key staff.<br><br>Quiet inductions provide a calm space for students to learn about the college and access support before the start of term.<br><br>BCSA provide student tours during Quiet introduction and Supported Enrolment to share what is available to students coming to | |

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| | | | college, help settle any nerves about what to expect, and become familiar faces for students. | |
| 1.6 Ensure appropriate referral processes are maintained and that staff are fully aware of the process through awareness raising sessions and information | Student Support Officers<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator<br>Student Support Service Managers | Student feedback survey and complaints procedures and student engagement forums<br>Awareness sessions available during staff development days | New counselling partnership has been established with Insight Youth, funded through SFC mental health and wellbeing transitional fund.<br><br>New post created – Student Wellbeing Coordinator. Referrals to external counselling service are managed through this individual.<br><br>Developed a mental health assessment process utilising the CORE-10 to determine the appropriate intervention for students presenting with mental health concerns.<br><br>Monthly newsletter used to share information on how to refer students to the support services. | |

| **Theme 2: Challenging the stigma of mental health issues and developing shared understanding around mental health.** | | | | |
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| Actions | Who | Measures of Success | Progress January 2023 | |
| 2.1 Develop events and initiatives to promote awareness of a range of mental health issues and available | Students' Association<br>Student Support | Number of events taking place<br>Student Focus Groups | Student Induction/Welcome Week activities used to promote support internal and local services. | |

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| support | Officers<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator<br>Curriculum staff | National Initiatives | Student Support Forum launched by BCSA and Student Services to meet with a range of students and staff to work together to shape the support offer at college and promote the ongoing work on student mental health/wellbeing.<br><br>10 Therapet sessions supported by BCSA between October and January. A further 10 have been scheduled between January and Easter.<br><br>Winter Wellbeing Fair to be delivered by the end of January to promote internal and external support.<br><br>SMHFA courses made available to staff and students<br><br>Updated Student Portal including specific mental health support and access to 24/7 self-help materials.<br><br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator is developing wellbeing initiatives across the college.<br><br>Menopause cafes have been delivered – | |

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| | | | over 200 attendees across all sessions.<br><br>The college celebrates Mental Health Awareness in May as part of an annual awareness calendar.<br><br>Resilience sessions provided as part of student induction activities.<br><br>Supervision, debriefs and wellbeing support has been introduced for all pastoral staff. | |
| 2.2 Develop learning materials to support a whole college approach to supporting good mental health and embedding understanding within structured programmes | Curriculum staff<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | IV processes<br>Student Feedback | Understanding Mental Health online modules are available to all Staff and Students.<br><br>Promotion of CPD sessions including Mental Health first aid, Introduction to Mental Health and Inclusive Leadership programme.<br><br>Resilience sessions were delivered as part of student induction with further class sessions being planned by wellbeing coordinator. | |

| **Theme 3: Development of a range of practical support that is easy to access and responsive to the needs of our students.** | | | | |
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| Actions | Who | Measures of Success | Progress January 2024 | |
| 3.1 Continue to offer mental health first aid and ensure robust signposting to appropriate external support taking cognisance of availability of professional services | Student Support Officers<br>Students' Association<br>People Services<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Service usage statistics | Frontline/student facing support staff are trained in mental health first aid and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).<br><br>Class Rep training includes information on how to signpost effectively to support services.<br><br>Student Services and Students' Association working together to provide support and signposting to appropriate services.<br><br>CPD opportunities promoted to staff.<br><br>Alignment of student support services has enhanced our wellbeing offer, with Student Support Officers providing additional welfare support.<br><br>Referrals being accepted into student counselling partnership.<br><br>Regular attendance on campus by community agencies to augment and encourage awareness of support | |

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| | | | available, participation in monthly wellbeing events and drop in café sessions | |
| 3.2 Improve access to a range of self-help materials, books, on line resources and guidance. | Student Support Officers<br>Library<br>Students Association<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Wellbeing Hub<br>Focus Groups | Students can access Mental Health training modules which are available on the VLE<br><br>Access to 24/7 resources and online support from TogetherAll service<br>Reviewed and updated Student portal with specific area to self-help resources<br><br>Induction programme highlights Mental Health awareness and available resources including class based workshops<br><br>Wellbeing coordinator develops specific interventions to support students to enhance their wellbeing.<br><br>BCSA signposts students to wellbeing information/self-help support | |
| 3.3 Work in partnership with appropriate agencies to develop information, drop in and relevant participation opportunities/support | Students' Association<br>Student Support Officers | Schedule of events<br>User groups | Working with a range of support organisations e.g. NHS Borders Breathing Space, One Step Borders, CAMHS, SBRCC, and LGBT Youth – these | |

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| groups | Student Wellbeing Coordinator | | organisations provide resources, 1-1, online, peer and out of hours support for students.<br><br>SFC transitional funding has supported the implementation of student wellbeing coordinator and partnerships with several mental health services, with support delivered across both campuses.<br><br>Focus has been on building relationships with other professional mental health stake holders and agencies to optimise important referral pathways. This is to help develop collaborative working relationships between the college and those within the NHS and external agencies.<br><br>Worked in partnership with the Joint Health Improvement Team to develop a College Suicide Protocol. Pastoral teams have received training on how to implement this approach.<br><br>Working in partnership with BCSA and the Active Campus Coordinator to develop a range of wellbeing activities for students. | |

| Theme 4: Development of CPD, materials, resources and approaches to support an inclusive college. | | | | |
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| Actions | Who | Measures of Success | Progress January 2023 | |
| 4.1 Invest in an on-line method of increasing knowledge and understanding among all staff of mental health | People Services | Completion rates<br>Mindset training | Mental health modules available on virtual learning platform | |
| 4.2 Monitor attendance of at risk students to ensure appropriate support mechanisms and resources are implemented quickly | Student Support Officers<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator<br>Curriculum staff | Improved attendance/withdrawal rates | Learner badges support identification of students with disclosed mental health conditions.<br><br>Student Support Officers regularly monitor attendance and liaise with curriculum teams to identify support requirements and deliver support interventions.<br><br>Pastoral teams are now utilising safety plans for students experiencing suicidal ideation.<br><br>DSA support is available for Higher Education students, which includes access to study skills support and mental health mentoring.<br><br>SLWG will be convened to identify an aligned approach to identifying and | |

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| | | | supporting students at risk of withdrawal.<br><br>Insight Youth complete CORE OM 34 and provide tailored therapeutic input. Recommendations are shared with the college to ensure the appropriate support is in place to support learning. | |
| 4.3 Support the Students' Association to develop, implement and maintain our Student Mental Health Agreement | All | Student Mental Health Agreement approved and supported<br>Student Feedback<br>Improved KPI's<br>Students' Association Impact report | Director of Student Services is a lead for the SMHA. Work is underway to develop the agreement for 2024-25. | |
| 4.4 Review College Polices, procedures and practices to ensure these consider the impact on individuals and support wellbeing | Policy Authors | Impact assessments<br>Equalities Committee reports | Equality Impact Assessment is an embedded process in the development/updating of policy and procedure.<br><br>Policy updates are reviewed/approved at appropriate committees.<br><br>'Supporting Student Wellbeing' added to the Student Partnership Agreement for 2023/24 as a shared priority between BCSA and Borders College. | |

| Theme 5: Personal and Social Development and Promotion of good mental health and wellbeing across the College. | | | | |
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| Actions | Who | Measures of Success | Progress January 2024 | |
| 5.1 Raise awareness, through events and campaigns, of related issues that may affect mental wellbeing, such as sexual health, alcohol/substance misuse, finance and debt. There may be other areas which are relevant to specific groups or themes in the College<br>i.e. gender based violence, cyber bullying, LGBTQ, social exclusion and those that are care experienced. | Students' Association<br>Student Services Team<br>People Services<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Event Attendance rates<br>Student Focus Groups<br>Referral rates<br>Practitioner Attendance<br>Awareness/Training sessions available at staff development days | Student Induction and Wellbeing provide opportunities for a wide range of internal and external support services to meet students and raise awareness of supports available<br><br>College focuses on key equalities themes each month and supports themed awareness events/activities to ensure visibility of support, reduce stigma and raise awareness<br>e.g. Men's Mental Health month, Menopause café, 'Abilitea' cafe, LGBTQ+<br><br>Ongoing promotion of key local support groups via posters and social media. | |
| 5.2 Develop a range of events that promote good mental health, self-help and resilience (e.g. World Mental Health Day and You Matter, Yoga, Mindfulness) | Students' Association<br>Student Services Team<br>People Services<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Attendance at events<br>Feedback<br>Students' Association Impact report<br>Healthy Body Healthy Mind outcomes<br>Selection of information, advice and guidance | College focuses on key equalities themes each month with supporting activities and supports themed awareness events/activities to ensure visibility of support, reduce stigma and raise awareness<br>e.g. Men's Mental Health month, | |

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| | | options throughout College | Kindness café, Menopause café, 'Abilitea' cafe, LGBTQ+ peer support<br><br>Kindness at Christmas delivered by BCSA. 30 care packages were delivered to the Student Services Team to distribute to students who may struggle at this time of year.<br><br>Campus Pantry available to all students. This provides short-term food support and is located in the BCSA Office.<br><br>Stim Bins and Quiet Room provide students with support and space to centre themselves and prepare for learning.<br><br>Student Support work with the Students Association to deliver a programme of activities and events to enhance the student social experience<br><br>Inclusive Leadership programme for managers. | |
| 5.3 Continue to offer and develop learning support for students in study skills and exam strategies to minimise impact on mental health | Learning Support Team | Programme of support opportunities developed<br>Attendance at specific | Study skills and other self-help video resources are available on virtual learning platform | |

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| | | support events and sessions<br>KPI's | Learning support team is expanding their range of student skills groups across all curriculum areas.<br><br>Alternative assessment arrangements monitored and reviewed for implementation as required in line with changing awarding body guidelines. | |

| **Theme 6: Work in partnership to create a multi-agency approach in supporting individuals.** | | | | |
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| Actions | Who | Measures of Success | Progress April 2021 | |
| 6.1 Continue to work in partnerships with a range of local networks to build our support capacity within the College. | Student Services Team<br>Students Association<br>Student Wellbeing Coordinator | Establish a local practitioner forum to provide a platform for discussion and collaboration<br><br>External agencies using College to facilitate interventions and support<br>Student Feedback<br>Student Association Impact Report | Continue to actively collaborate with a wide range of local and national service providers including<br>NHS Borders College<br>Breathing Space<br>LGBT Youth<br>SBRCC<br>Wellbeing College<br>One Step Borders<br>We Are With You<br>Citizens Advice Bureau<br>CAMS and Quarriers<br>Member of Rural Mental Health Forum<br>Range of smaller community based MH support charities<br>Community Planning Partnerships<br><br>Student services team facilitated meetings with all the key support providers in the local area to ensure we were able to continue open communication and options to meet growing needs. | |

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

### 6.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications from the contents of this report.

### 6.2 Learner Implications

The current plan seeks to improve the mental health and wellbeing of students, therefore impacting positively on retention, success and student experience.

### 6.3 Staff Implications

The current plan seeks to improve the mental health and wellbeing of staff and supports the development of an aware and active staff community in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

### 6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications/Equality Impact Assessment

The plan seeks to address and challenge the stigma surrounding mental health, and encourages students to disclose any mental health conditions or low mood.

### 6.5 Sustainability/Environmental Implications

There are no direct implications in relation to sustainability and environment from the contents of this report.

## 7.0 RISK COMMENTARY

This report provides the Committee with assurance that the College is actively working to improve mental health and wellbeing across the college community through the delivery of the mental health action plan. Progress against the agreed actions will also mitigate this risk of students withdrawing due to poor mental health.

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

This paper seeks to assure the Committee that the college engaged in a range of activities to raise awareness for mental health and improve the wellbeing of students across the campus.

Amy Brydon

Director of Student Support Services

19/01/2024

**Previous Board or College Committee Approvals**:

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