Working with Partners to Improve Student Mental Health: A research-informed toolkit for service leads

Strengthening Mental Health Support in Universities - A Way Forward

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Context

"A lack of joined-up working means there are gaps transitioning between services…"
"Staff work defensively through fear of getting it wrong" (Staff)

"I hate repeating my story over and over… it definitely stops me from reaching out" (Student)

Student trends:

- Increased demand & growing diverse population
- Higher "complexity" of need

| Why develop university-NHS partnerships?

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Duplicated care and resource *"Different people involved in the student's care open a new case each time and the information is unlikely to be linked."*	**Unknown student outcomes** *"Information is not always shared with university services when students are discharged from NHS services."*	**Missing information on impact** *"Lack of access to comparable datasets means that evaluation across services is difficult…"*
Students repeat stories *"You've got to keep repeating yourself with different people…it can be traumatic at times if you've got to keep repeating yourself"*	***Students struggle to navigate services*** *"I didn't know at the time when I was having the problem who to call for… I didn't know where to go"*	**Limited service evaluation** *"Services must request data on a case-by-case basis and this is time consuming [so] evaluation data are hard to obtain."*

| Effective response towards a shared goal

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Coordinated care means:

"services work together to support student physical, mental and psychological health [and] share the common goal of promoting the wellbeing of students."

(Staff member)

An effective response requires:

- Stronger alignment between HE, NHS, and third-sector services
- Movement towards coordinated mental health care for students

Research aims:

1. To characterise the state of partnerships between university and NHS mental health services in England
2. To develop a research-informed toolkit to facilitate partnership working and evaluation

| Research, consultation & co-production

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CONSULT

- University site visits
- Service users & non-users
- Professional staff

RESEARCH

- Systematic review
- Scoping activities
- Focus groups & interviews

ANALYSE

- Framework analysis
- Thematic analysis
- Dedicated risk analysis

SYNTHESISE

- Combine findings
- Respond to consultations
- Develop toolkit domains

CRITIQUE

- Student research team
- University partners
- Critical friends

SHARE

- Publish the toolkit
- Blogs & videos
- Conferences & papers

| Case study approach and collective

- Case study approach (Crowe et al., 2011)
- Services = Counselling/mental health, disability, and wellbeing
- Semi-structured focus groups and follow-up interviews
- In-person and video calls (2019/20)

Guided by an evaluation proforma:

- Service model & structure
- Data collection procedures
- Service goals & challenges

- 27 staff, 39 students
- 8 Uni's, 5 hubs

- Directors, managers, practitioners

SPEQS

Student Services Partnerships Evaluation & Quality Standards

G., Gibbon, L., &
s (SPEQS) toolkit.

Partnerships

Office for Students

The University Of Sheffield.

PsychUP for wellbeing

DOMAIN 1

CO-PRODUCING MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

Hannah
Student Fellow who co-designed the SPEQS student research (University College London).

Alex
Student Engagement Assistant (University of Liverpool).

Anvita
Student Research Partner (University of Manchester).

Tobi
Medical student (University of Manchester).

Holly
Welfare Officer (University of Sheffield).

Marie-Clair
Student Fellow (University College London).

| Project partners and scope

UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Eight universities across 5 regional hubs in England engaged with toolkit development as part of an Office for Students funded project led by the University of the West of England.

Universities UK

University of BRISTOL

UWE Bristol University of the West of England

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

UCL

Imperial College London

MANCHESTER 1824 The University of Manchester

The University Of Sheffield.

student minds

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| Partnerships require a commitment to…

CO-PRODUCE WITH STUDENTS

Involving students in the development of new services and policies, to learn and respond to their priorities for mental health services.

GO TO DOMAIN 1 →

COLLECT AND SHARE DATA

Developing data collection strategies to underpin service evaluation. Enabling secure data sharing where appropriate, to facilitate decisions about student care.

GO TO DOMAIN 2 →

MANAGE RISK ACROSS PATHWAYS

Ensuring that procedures are in place to manage risk when students transition between services. Ensuring staff are adequately supported to manage risk.

GO TO DOMAIN 3 →

MEASURE PSYCHOLOGICAL OUTCOMES

Using relevant and consistent measures on a regular basis, to monitor outcomes for all students and determine what works for whom.

GO TO DOMAIN 4 →

EVALUATE SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Creating a robust service evaluation strategy that makes use of relevant data to improve services, inform decisions, and critically appraise practice.

GO TO DOMAIN 5 →

Broglia, E., Nisbet, K., Chow, H., Bone, C., Simmonds-Buckley, M., Knowles, L., Hardy, G., Gibbon, L., & Barkham, M. (2022). Student Services Partnerships Evaluation and Quality Standards (SPEQS) toolkit.

Broglia, E., Nisbet, K., Bone, C., Simmonds-Buckley, M., Knowles, L., Hardy, G., Gibbon, L., & Barkham, M. (2023). What factors facilitate partnerships between higher education and local mental health services for students? A case study collective. *BMJ Open*, 13(12), e077040.

| Domain 5: Measuring Psychological Outcomes

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Implementation at Sheffield

- Session-by-session outcome monitoring
- Validated measures relevant to students
- Positive culture & training for using measures - research active service
- All students entering the service complete the CCAPS-62 and CORE-OM for a comprehensive assessment and profile of need
- Students complete and discuss brief measures every session thereafter
- Use data to identify and respond to areas of need
- Students require little prompting

Outcomes & impact:

- Measures aid treatment decisions and identify risk or problem areas.
- Data helps to identify impact, barriers, deterioration, and adapt treatments.
- Services can evaluate effectiveness and report outcomes for all students irrespective of ending.
- Collecting data from every session means that outcomes for all students are available irrespective of whether they had a planned or unplanned ending.

| Example: A dedicated role across HE and NHS

GP and Medical Lead for Student Mental Health

- Works across primary care and university support services
- Input into specialist mental health services and local mental health-related initiatives
- Embedded into NHS and University services - enables collaboration and joined-up approach
- Clinical input to university support (Fitness to Study, Mental Health Charter and Strategy)
- Links to specialist services e.g., multidisciplinary meetings with the primary and community Mental Health teams
- Involvement in city Suicide Prevention board and Student Health and Wellbeing board

| Partnership building blocks

*"Partnerships are heavily reliant on specific staff members having **personal links**"*

*"Managers to come together to discuss **complex cases** and clarify a course of action"*

"A space where staff from different services regularly come together to discuss **risk**"

*"**Clarify** staff roles to enable them to hold **boundaries**"*

| Achieving positive outcomes now and in the future

*"Good relationships with other services mean care is more **joined-up**"*

*"**Direct referrals** and same-day mental health assessments"*

*"Working with the **NHS** [aids discussion] on what university services can and can't do to **contain** the work".*

*"**New strategy** for Student Emergency and **risk** procedures"*

*"Dedicated student mental health liaison in the **NHS**"*

*"Staff have developed **expertise** in student mental health"*

*"Developing a **data sharing contract**"*

*"Shared **quality standards** across services including IAPT"*

*"**NHS email** and **policy** that links services"*

Where to start…

Map	Involve	Enable
Map service pathways and gaps, both for students' journeys through services and where staff can/cannot access relevant data.	Involve students, practitioners and senior staff early, to identify priority areas to address the gaps that emerged from the service mapping exercise.	Cross-sector staff to meet regularly, build relationships, and share expertise and decisions about developments and cases. Provide a platform and allocated time to enable this.

Thank you

Access the toolkit:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lA_AMr2spLfz31JLpenG-pwLhHswI9k4/view

Learn more about the research:
https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/13/12/e077040

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