

Suicide Prevention and Student Mental Health Implementation

University of Montana, Missoula – AY 16/17

Campuses prioritize these four recommendations:

Clinician on every campus - #1

- Curry Health Center (CHC) Counseling Services (CS) employed 11 counselors/psychologists (8.2 FTE annualized). The student to licensed practitioner ratio was 1500:1. They also trained 6 graduate students and 1 pre-licensure Masters-level clinician (1.29 FTE annualized). Student to combined licensed & in-training practitioner ratio was 1300:1.
- CS served 11% of the student body. Average wait time for first appointment was 1-2 weeks.
- Over 20% of UM students received behavioral health care at CHC in either the medical or counseling clinics, or both.
- In response to two ASUM resolutions, CS will increase session limits this year from 8 to 12 sessions per academic year.

Depression Screening - #4

- CHC Medical Services implemented depression screening for all appointments once a semester regardless of the reason for the visit. Over 2400 screenings were performed spring semester; more than 200 students screened positive for depression. CHC conducted two quality improvement studies that assessed outcomes and set goals for improvement.
 - *Use of PHQ 2 for Depression Screening: ACHA Clinical Benchmarking and Beyond: Part 1, Safety, Screening and Prevention.*
 - *Management of Major Depression: Clinical Benchmarking Survey, Part II*

Complete surveys in recommendation - #5

- The report "*Depression Screening in Montana College Health Services Survey*" was submitted to OCHE in May 2017. Nine of eleven schools completed the survey. UM completed the survey.

Environmental Scans of Campuses - #7

- UM formed a **Suicide Prevention Environmental Scan and Means Reduction Evaluation Taskforce**. A review of completed suicides over the past 5 years did not find any locations in common (e.g. certain buildings or bridges). This group will resume this fall semester.

OCHE prioritize these three recommendations:

On-going training for professionals - #6

- CHC brought in Dr. John Sommers-Flanagan to train/update CHC Counseling Services practitioners in suicide assessment and safety planning spring semester 2017.

Partnerships - #9

- UM partners with [Project Tomorrow](#) and with the Montana College Counseling Association.

Funding - #10

- Given budgetary restraints, UM did not allocate any new funds to suicide prevention, selecting instead to utilize existing resources and partnering with community resources.

- Additional funding would be greatly appreciated and would speed up progress on these recommendations.

Task Force prioritize these three recommendations:

Guidelines for Prevention Training - #2

- UM does not have a committee or staff member to coordinate suicide prevention activities and strategies. Instead, UM staff and faculty have worked with the Missoula community coalition [Project Tomorrow](#) with the goal of educating both UM and Missoula communities. Regarding gatekeeper trainings (e.g. QPR, ASSIST and SOS), Project Tomorrow members provided several trainings specifically for Residence Life Assistants and Community/Village Assistants, faculty, staff and students. These were offered through annual trainings / events (RA training, Faculty Development Series, SARC advocates, Shine the Light on Mental Health Week, Out of the Darkness Walk, etc.).
- Last spring, UM formed a **Guidelines for Suicide Prevention Training Taskforce** to specifically address this MUS recommendation. It will resume meeting this fall semester. However, without additional resources, which do not appear to be in UM's budget for the foreseeable future, this taskforce is faced with limited options outside of the work already being done in collaboration with Project Tomorrow.
- Residence Life provided the [Step UP!](#) program for students. Step UP! is a prosocial behavior and bystander intervention training program that educates students to be proactive in helping others address a variety of concerning behaviors.
- UM Athletics is conducting behavioral health screenings (e.g. depression, anxiety) and referrals for all student athletes.

Collaboration - #3

- Though MUS has not yet developed a formal process per this recommendation, the Montana College Counseling Association (MCCA) does have a listserv for such communications. The MCCA also awards its annual Mike Franklin award to an individual or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to the field of college mental health, specifically suicide prevention.
- Many collaborations and consultations occur informally between schools on the phone or at conferences.

Review Programs and Policies - #8

- UM's Behavioral Intervention Team, Director of Communications and Counseling Services reviewed and updated postvention response to student deaths (including death by suicide).