

BOARD MANAGEMENT REPORT**Date:** February 18, 2025**Report No.:** BG.26.02.142**Report to:** Board of Governors**Author(s):** Sarah Irwin-Gardner, Director, Equitable Learning, Health & Wellness**Class:** Information Decision Discussion Consent
 Open Closed**Title:** **Student Mental Health Policy Annual Report****1.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Report BG.26.02.142 Student Mental Health Policy Annual Report be received for information purposes.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Student Mental Health Policy Annual Report provides the Board of Governors with a summary of the programs, services, and initiatives delivered through the Health & Wellness Centre and Accessible Learning Services (ALS) in support of student mental health and well-being.

The Student Mental Health Policy was implemented in July 2025 and operationalizes key values and directions from the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan by embedding student-centered, inclusive, and equity-focused approaches throughout mental health and well-being supports at the College. This inaugural report presents data from the Spring 2025 and Fall 2025 terms during which time we saw consistent service utilization while also taking time to intentionally review service scope and delivery, focusing on identifying gaps in service, opportunities for innovation, and the reduction of barriers to access for students.

We are now in a focused phase of service transformation. Current efforts include establishing more robust data-gathering and evaluation practices, implementing new services and program offerings to meet the needs of our diverse student population, and utilizing elements of a stepped care model to ensure students receive the right level of support at the right time. Alongside these developments, we are working to set the conditions for sustainable change through thoughtful planning, ongoing assessment, stakeholder engagement, and developing community partnerships.

3.0 BACKGROUND:

The *Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024* (the 'Act', formerly Bill 166) amends the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act* and introduces new key requirements to colleges of applied arts and technology and publicly-assisted universities in Ontario. The Act requires the development and implementation of a formal student mental health policy that outlines available programs, policies, services and supports for students. The policy must be reviewed at least once every five years and be reported on annually to the College's board of governors focused on the implementation and effectiveness of its student mental health policy in the preceding year.

4.0 DISCUSSION:

The Health & Wellness Centre, Accessible Learning Services, and Indigenous Student Services teams provide essential services and supports to promote student mental health and well-being and are outlined below, along with relevant data for this reporting period.

4.1 HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES

Health & Wellness Services is comprised of a team of clinical counsellors, wellness care coordinators, nurses and physicians who provide critical services to support the mental health and well-being of students.

Individual Counselling

- Available to full-time and apprenticeship students.
- 1174 completed individual appointments with 235 students accessing this service.

Wellness Care Coordinator Support

- Provided through referral by clinical counsellors to assist students with follow-up, resources, and ongoing wellness planning.
- Conducted 93 Wellness Care Coordinator check-ins, promoting continuity of care and proactive support.

Mental Health Promotion Activities

- Health & Wellness team members participated in 15 tabling, orientation, and program events.
- The "Hanging out with ADHD" 2-part workshop was co-facilitated by the Health & Wellness Centre's specialist physician, an Accessible Learning Services counsellor, and a Health & Wellness counsellor and was attended by 25 participants in total.

Medical Services

- Completed 3627 medical care appointments.

- While 70 Physician appointments were documented as primarily addressing mental health, the actual number of visits involving mental health concerns is believed to be significantly higher.
- 21 ADHD consultations with specialist physician with 47 follow-up appointments completed.

4.2 ACCESSIBLE LEARNING SERVICES (ALS)

ALS provides academic accommodation support through a team of staff across multiple specialized accessibility roles.

- 1963 students registered with ALS of which 758, or 39%, reported a mental health diagnosis.
- In Fall 2025, ALS implemented an auto-renewal process for academic accommodations for most students, removing the need for recurring meetings to continue previously approved supports. This approach supports student mental health, learning, and equitable access while aligning with student-centered service principles that seek to reduce barriers.

4.3 INDIGENOUS STUDENT SERVICES

Indigenous Student Services offers a wide range of services and activities designed for Indigenous students, of which there were 514 attending programs across all campuses between May 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025.

- Indigenous Student Services (ISS) has an Indigenous Counsellor that provides Indigenous learners with confidential personal, social, and academic support. They are embedded into ISS and have a wholistic role in supporting students that goes beyond clinical counselling alone.
- Workshops offered to Indigenous learners through ISS include Harm Reduction Workshop for Helping Professions, How to STAY SAFE when encountering Police Workshop, Growing Healthy Relationships, Surviving Dysfunctional Families over the Holidays, Indigenous Perspective on Anxiety and Stress, and Tea and Talk sessions.

5.0 IMPACTS

5.1 STUDENTS, PARTNERS & COMMUNITY

The Student Mental Health Policy provides a framework for enhancing access to mental health supports across the continuum of care. Its implementation is shaping how the College plans and delivers programs and services, laying the groundwork for more coordinated supports for students. The policy also guides future initiatives, including strengthened collaboration with community partners, and reinforces the College's commitment to student-centered, inclusive, an equity-focused approaches to mental health and well-being.

5.2 FINANCIAL & HUMAN RESOURCES

N/A

5.3 REGULATORY, LEGAL & RISKS

Bill 166 outlines the requirements of the College to have a Student Mental Health Policy that describes the programs, services and supports available at the College in respect to student mental health and publish the policy on its website. The College must provide its Board of Governors with an annual report on the implementation and effectiveness of its student mental health policy in the preceding year.

6.0 NEXT STEPS / FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS:

Enhanced Data Collection Practices

- Process review and improvements for ALS and Health & Wellness platforms are underway.
- The Canadian Campus Wellness Survey will be deployed in March 2026.
- Advancing plans for stakeholder engagement activities throughout Winter and Spring 2026 semesters.

Health & Wellness Service Model Revisions

- Wellness Consultation service launched Winter 2026. Available to all students.
- Redesigned counselling model implementation is underway. The model prioritizes timely access through a session-at-a-time, and short-term approach focused on prevention and early intervention.
- Strengthened service capacity through expanded workshops, group programming, and clinical internship opportunities.
- Strengthening crisis response protocols through updated processes and a coordinated communication strategy.

Community Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

- Prioritizing relationship-building with key system and community partners to enhance collaboration, coordination of care, and student support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved for Submission,

Katie Burrows
VP, Students, International & Infrastructure

Paul Armstrong
President

Appendices: N/A