



# MOTION REGARDING SSMU KEEP.MESAFE FEE REFERENDUM QUESTION 2020-02-27

Submitted for: 2020-02-27

**Submitted to:** SSMU Legislative Council      **Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2020-02-27-002

**Moved by:** Billy Kawasaki  
Vice-President (Student Life)      **Current Status:**  FOR APPROVAL  
 APPROVED  
 POSTPONED  
 COMMITTED  
 NOT APPROVED

**Seconded by:** Elan Eisner  
Management Representative

## Issue

The Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) has made mental health a topic of priority. The SSMU, PGSS (Post-Graduate Students' Society), and the Macdonald Campus Students' Society (MCSS, representing undergraduate students at the Macdonald campus) have approached the University to assist in co-funding a mental health service available 24 hours per day, 7 days per year, 365 days per year (24/7/365) that can meet the needs of each society's Members. Through a competitive request-for-proposal process, the SSMU, PGSS, MCSS, and McGill University have identified an outstanding mental health service provider developed specifically for university students called keep.meSAFE. The proposed keep.meSAFE mental health service provider would provide all McGill University students with access to additional mental health services at no extra cost beyond the proposed referendum fee of \$2.75/student/semester.

This program, offered through Morneau Shapell, will be another tool available to students for mental healthcare.

## Background and Rationale

Countless academic studies have shown that students are more likely to experience mental health distress than the general population. Access to mental health services within McGill University and within the City of



Montreal can be restrictive for SSMU Members for various reasons including financial, physical, or administrative barriers.

keep.meSAFE is a mental health counselling service provided by Morneau Shepell (the world's largest counselling provider) that will give McGill University students access to hundreds of licenced counsellors located within the City of Montreal for in-person counselling with minimal wait times, and 24/7/365 immediate unlimited access to licenced counsellors through telephone and secure clinical mobile chat with support within the MySSP app service utilized by keep.meSAFE. keep.meSAFE is able to provide a diverse network of counsellors where students' unique circumstances can be matched with a counsellor who understands these experiences (such as international, graduate, veterans, newly landed immigrants, LGBTQ2+, Indigenous, cultural minority, marginalized individuals, athletics, disabilities, and more experiences). keep.meSAFE guarantees 24/7/365 support via secure clinical mobile chat and telephone in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Korean.

Ongoing scheduled support is available in more than 60 languages via telephone, video-chat, and in-person appointment (typically scheduled within 72 hours), with additional languages available upon request, subject to availability. keep.meSAFE will provide professional, confidential counselling services compliant with provincial and federal privacy laws, with the regulatory bodies governing the provisions of services, and within the professional codes of ethics and standards.

Under this service students will have access to support for:

- Academic issues
- Adjustment to post-secondary school setting
- Anxiety
- Bullying
- Career development
- Couples counselling
- Crisis
- Cultural adaptation
- Dependent care
- Depression
- Discrimination
- Drugs, alcohol, gambling and smoking
- Financial matters
- Gender identity
- Graduate student experience
- Grief and bereavement
- Harassment



- Home and family stress
- Loneliness
- Medical health and resource referral
- Nutrition
- School stress
- Sexual assault or violence
- Sexual issues
- Suicidal ideation
- Trauma
- and more;

keep.meSAFE is a service available to McGill students 24/7/365 by the use of either the MySSP App (available for download free from the App Store or from Google Play) or by calling 1-844-451-9700. Internationally, McGill students can access keep.meSAFE 24/7/365 by use of either the MySSP App secure clinical chat or by calling 1-416-380-6579.

keep.meSAFE has also appointed an account manager to help facilitate awareness and support within the student population and ongoing support to the student societies and McGill University;

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**Alignment with Mission**

The SSMU is committed to offering necessary and urgent support to its members who require mental health resources. The recently adopted [SSMU Mental Health Policy](#) also outlines these needs and our commitment for expanding access to mental healthcare.

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**Consultations Completed**

Consultation was conducted with various mental health actors on campus, including, but not limited to, the Mental Health Commissioners, organizations participating in the SSMU Mental Health Roundtable, SSMU mental health services and student groups. This initiative was also co-created with the PGSS, and MCSS. Support and commitment has also been obtained from the office of the Deputy Provost Life and Learning.

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**Risk Factors and Resource Implications**

The proposed fee will pay for the on-going services of keep.meSAFE. Without this fee, this service will not be offered impacting the ability of members to access mental health care.

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## Sustainability Considerations

There are no sustainability considerations as this is a service.

## Impact of Decision and Next Steps

The services offered by keep.meSAFE will be available immediately and consultations and appointments will be accessible to all McGill students.

## Motion or Resolution for Approval

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the SSMU Legislative Council approves the following question for the Winter 2020 Referendum period:

*Do you agree to establish the non-opt-outable SSMU keep.meSAFE fee at \$2.75 per student per semester, payable by all SSMU members, starting Fall 2020 until Winter 2024 (inclusive) to access the keep.meSAFE 24/7/365 mental health services (including access to in-person counselling, secure clinical mobile chat, telephone, and video chat), with an understanding that a majority “no” vote would result in the termination of the keep.meSAFE mental health counselling services for all students at McGill University?*

Be it resolved that the SSMU Legislative Council adopts the actionable aspects of this question and that any grammatical or legal changes necessary do not need the re-approval of the Legislative Council.

## Results of the Vote

In favour	( )
Opposed	(0)
Abstain	(0)