



# Mental Health Committee Report

Submitted for: October 8th, 2020

The SSMU's mental health team this year is composed of Mental Health Commissioner Julia Caddy, Advocacy Coordinator Mo Rajji Courtney and Outreach Coordinator Ella Goodman-Vincent.

## 1. Outreach Coordinator/Committee

- a. The MH Outreach Coordinator has been working on programming for Mental Health Action Week and Mental Illness Awareness Week, organizing the Mental Health Roundtable meeting and Slack group, and raising the committee's profile through a new communications strategy.
- b. This week of October 5-9 is Mental Illness Awareness Week, for which multiple collaborative events have been scheduled and promoted using the SSMU Mental Health social media channels.
- c. To follow student social media trends, the committee has launched an instagram account to share messaging and promote campus initiatives and resources.

## 2. Advocacy Coordinator/Committee

- a. The MH Advocacy Coordinator has been working to compile records of best practices with regards to COVID-19 and student mental health, as well as monitor and evaluate progress on the recently updated MH Policy and Plan, and seeks to advocate for and develop intersectional support mechanisms.
- b. Surveys will be released in the near future to evaluate students' mental health needs in this era of remote learning, as well as to monitor satisfaction with McGill's Student Services and the Wellness Hub.

## 3. Mental Health Roundtable

- a. The first MH Roundtable meeting happened on September 24th, and this group will continue to meet every three weeks on Thursday evenings. These meetings are led by the MH Commissioner with support from the two Coordinators, and bring together all student mental health groups on campus to discuss collaborations, campus-wide updates, and cross-promotion.

## 4. Student Mental Health Website

- a. In accordance to the Mental Health 3-Year Plan, and after a summer of student consultation, the MH Commissioner is working to implement WellnessWorld, an online wellness portal that would bridge academic and wellness dimensions of student life, centralize resources, and clarify pathways of accessing support—especially equity-seeking populations and those with unique needs and wants. This will be a



significant step towards the Mental Health Policy's commitment to Resource Promotion and Increased Accessibility.

- b. Launch funding is being pursued through both the Sustainability Projects Fund and an increase for the Mental Health Fee, which is to be presented at referendum in either Fall 2020 or Winter 2021. The aim is to have this portal launched in January 2021 for all students to access through a hyperlink on myCourses.
5. Orientation Week
    - a. In light of the remote learning semester, the keep.meSAFE service was pushed during Orientation events for new students. This included communications from CL&E and Student Services, a training session for all Residence Advisors, and a scavenger hunt activity during Orientation Week itself, which had students exploring the MySSP app and reporting their answers in order to receive a Freshii discount.
  6. Institutional Advocacy
    - a. The MH Commissioner has been in attendance at meetings throughout the Spring, Summer, and early Fall to receive updates on Student Services and advocate for student mental health needs in a collaborative manner. This has included the Student Engagement Collective, monthly Hub Leadership meetings, and institutional check-ins with the keep.meSAFE service provider, in addition to regular check-ins with the Peer Support Manager and McGill's keep.meSAFE liaison.
    - b. In the coming weeks, both the Healthy Living Annex Advisory Committee and the Student Wellness Hub Advisory Board are set to meet, and the Commissioner will be in active attendance at these ongoing meetings. Institutional advocacy moving forward will be largely in alignment with the Mental Health Commission of Canada's Standard for Post-Secondary Student Mental Health & Wellbeing, in order to push the implementation of best practices and vetted recommendations.