



Mental Health Policy

Date Adopted: 2020/01/30

Expires: 2023/05/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Background

This document explicates the Students' Society of McGill University's approach to student mental health and wellness. It contextualizes the approach with a comprehensive description of the current mental health climate on McGill's campus and across comparable Canadian post-secondary institutions. This compiled research informs the three overarching, multifaceted commitments of resiliency, accountability, and solidarity that the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) shall work towards in the next three academic years. This policy is meant to be understood in conjunction with the SSMU Mental Health 2020-2023 Three Year Plan.

This policy is meant to lay out a long-term vision for SSMU's continued dedication to the improvement of mental health resource access, promotion, and institutional accountability. The SSMU recognizes not only the importance of working with the Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS) and the Macdonald Campus Students' Society (MCSS), but also the crucial input of student groups in order to better represent the unique mental health needs of all McGill students. This policy is a living document and will serve as the foundation for future mental health projects. This policy's mandate will last for the next three years; goals and timelines should be updated every semester by the mental health commissioner and their team to ensure accountability between years, and the achievement of the long-term goals highlighted in the Three Year Plan.

This policy seeks to build upon the foundations started by countless mental health advocates on campus and advocate for tangible changes to the accessibility and diversity of resources; the implementation of new promotional and educational campaigns; and the integration of the 2020 Mental Health Commission of Canada's Post-Secondary Standards.

This policy intends to highlight the ways in which small, student-driven changes can help diminish, or balance, the negative effects of the high intensity environment. Our vision is to gather together student groups, community members, stakeholders, faculty, and McGill administration, to create a stronger network of professional and student-driven services that will respect and represent the diversity of needs of McGill's student population.



2. Resource Promotion and Increased Accessibility

The SSMU will work with passionate student groups, both on and off campus, to provide a diverse array of services that meet the unique needs of every student. The SSMU MH Committees will provide an environment for student groups and campus allies to create functional, streamlined service promotion and educational campaigns in order to minimize overlap and maximize the number of students reached. Most importantly, the SSMU shall prioritize service accessibility by increasing collaboration with students who are underrepresented and whose needs may not currently be met by McGill services.

3. Accountability and Follow-Through

Due to the constant turn-over of student leadership, strong collaboration between each year's Mental Health Commissioner (MH Commissioner), SSMU Vice-President Student Life, and the Rossy Wellness Hub is critical to ensuring the follow-through of long-term goals. This policy shall represent a new commitment to accountability by including concrete steps and detailed timelines that will facilitate the achievement of goals that may require multiple years to complete. Further, when students enter their new positions in May, they will be given detailed exit reports, updates on year's goals, and all necessary information to jump head-first into the role. As a result, there will be a MH Commissioner who ensures the Hub's accountability throughout the entire year, including over the summer and in September (during which institutional accountability and communication is known to decrease).

4. Advocacy and Solidarity

Building on Section 2, the SSMU must recognize that mental health services at McGill do not equally cater to the lived experiences of marginalized student groups. Further, the burden of mental distress disproportionately affects the same individuals that services frequently underrepresented. As such, the SSMU MH Commissioner and their team must be allies for student groups and advocate for personalized mental and physical health care that reaches the students who may need it most.