

# Student Mental Health Policy Annual Report 2026

## *Student Mental Health Framework Implementation*



## Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Algonquin Territory Statement.....	4
By the Numbers: A Year in Review.....	5
2025-2026 Spotlights.....	6
National Surveys: Understanding Student Wellbeing and Behaviours.....	6
Strengthening Our Model of Care Through Funded Initiatives .....	7
Enhancing Student Wellness Through a Unique Partnership.....	7
Highlights from the Four Areas of Focus .....	8
Area of Focus #1: Student Engagement .....	9
Area of Focus #2: Building Skills and Strengthening Resilience .....	11
Area of Focus #3: Coordinated Student Supports and Services .....	14
Area of Focus #4: Campus Culture of Wellness .....	16
What's Next for the Student Mental Health Framework .....	18
Appendix 1: Areas of Focus and Recommendations Status .....	19
Area of Focus #1: Student Engagement .....	19
Area of Focus #2: Building Skills and Strengthening Resilience .....	20
Area of Focus #3: Coordinated Student Supports and Services .....	21
Area of Focus #4: Campus Culture of Wellness .....	22

## Executive Summary

During the 2025–2026 academic year, Student Health and Wellness advanced the implementation of Carleton University’s **Student Mental Health Framework (2022–2026)** amid continued geopolitical instability, economic pressures and increasing complexity in student mental health needs. Guided by the Framework’s four areas of focus—**student engagement; building skills and strengthening resilience; coordinated student supports and services; and fostering a campus culture of wellness**—the portfolio prioritized prevention, early intervention and integrated care across the student lifecycle. Efforts this year emphasized culturally responsive, trauma-informed and equity-centred approaches, including the integration of substance use health, Indigenous perspectives and community-based partnerships, while supporting faculty and staff in their shared responsibility for student wellbeing. Through data-informed planning, cross-divisional collaboration and responsible stewardship of resources, Student Health and Wellness remained focused on strengthening resilience, promoting belonging and ensuring sustainable, accessible mental health supports that contribute to student success and institutional priorities.

Over the past year, the university community provided a wide variety of initiatives and support services to promote positive mental health. Student-led and peer-supported initiatives expanded significantly, including wellness programming in residences, peer mentorship for first-year, science, international, Indigenous and equity-deserving students, and basic needs and safety supports delivered through the CUSA Unified Support Centre. Coordinated student services reduced barriers to care through inclusive group counselling, proactive outreach, simplified and gender-affirming intake processes and strengthened partnerships that brought health promotion into trusted student spaces; digital tools such as the Wellness Services Navigator further improved access to timely support. A campus-wide culture of wellness was reinforced through staff and faculty professional development in neuroinclusivity, accessibility, anti-racism and student mental health, alongside infrastructure and communications improvements that enhanced accessibility for students with disabilities. The university also invested in building student resilience through harm reduction education, creative and land-based wellness programming, culturally grounded supports, experiential learning opportunities, sensory-friendly initiatives and skills-based workshops addressing stress, substance use, imposter syndrome and transitions. Together, these efforts demonstrate meaningful progress toward a more inclusive, responsive and preventative system of student mental health and wellbeing support.



In 2025-26, definitive action has been taken on all 30 recommendations. For a comprehensive overview of the progress toward our objectives and recommendations, please refer to Appendix 1.

## Algonquin Territory Acknowledgement

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg nation. We recognize that the Student Mental Health Framework 2022-2026 must reflect the values of the Algonquin people. Accordingly, we must strive to further strengthen relationships between Carleton and the Algonquin communities, and endeavour to accelerate the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives, ways of teaching and healing, and knowledge in our campus practices.



We would like to say a special thank you to our dedicated staff, faculty and students whose collaboration, creativity and commitment continue to strengthen health and wellness initiatives across our university. Their willingness to work together, share expertise and center wellbeing in teaching, research and campus life has made a meaningful difference in our community. As we look ahead, may we continue to build a campus where health, belonging and resilience are woven into everything we do, ensuring a thriving future for all.

## By the Numbers: A Year in Review


### Student Services:

<b>83,504</b> visits to Health and Counselling Services: <b>20,551</b> Counselling and <b>62,953</b> Health Clinic	<b>110</b> students supported by the Student at Risk Evaluation Team (SARET) and <b>71</b> Care Conferences held.	<b>1,227</b> Care Referrals submitted, students supported through <b>7,550+</b> interactions
<b>37</b> groups offered through Health and Counselling Services (HCS) and PMC, supporting <b>2,063</b> students	<b>21,100</b> hours of care provided by Attendant Services	<b>64%</b> of students with PMC report mental health and ADHD as primary disability
<b>131</b> substance use health consultations provided by HCS and the Umbrella Project	<b>2,457</b> sessions by From Intention to Action, supporting <b>269</b> students	<b>1,602</b> new students registered with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC): <b>5,461</b> total students served

### Community Support:

<b>1,104+</b> interactions at the Wellness Desk, with an additional <b>2,366+</b> student interactions at <b>150+</b> Therapy Dog sessions held outside of the Wellness Desk	<b>2,381+</b> students attended the Spirituality Centre's Pause Tables
<b>102</b> community members trained to administer Naloxone	<b>3,844</b> food hampers distributed to students by Carleton Undergraduate Association's (CUSA) Unified Support Centre
<b>30+</b> All People All Pathways support sessions offered in partnership with the Community Addictions Peer Support Association (CAPSA)	<b>2,553+</b> students engaged in <b>71</b> Health Promotions events, workshops and tabling
<b>3,700+</b> uses of the Wellness Services Navigator	<b>257</b> first-year students participated in First-Year Connections
	<b>324</b> students completed an academic resiliency course called Rethinking Resilience

### Therapy Dogs:

<b>4</b> new Therapy Dogs trained, total of <b>19</b> certified teams
<b>366+</b> visits held
<b>4,640+</b> students visited Therapy Dogs


## 2025-2026 Spotlights

### National Surveys: Understanding Student Wellbeing and Behaviours

Carleton undertook two national surveys over the past year that provide insight into student wellbeing, health behaviours and campus experiences. Together, the data from these surveys will strengthen the understanding of student needs and support evidence-informed priority-setting, planning and evaluation within the new Student Mental Health Framework and the Harm Reduction Strategy.

#### *Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS)*

The CCWS was administered in winter 2026 as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen understanding of student mental health and wellbeing. The survey collects information on mental and physical health, help-seeking behaviours and key aspects of the campus experience that influence wellbeing .

Participation in the CCWS provides a standardized snapshot of student wellbeing and enables comparison to national benchmarks and peer institutions. Within the Student Mental Health Framework, these results complement administrative data and other forms of student feedback, supporting a more comprehensive understanding of student needs across the institution.

Analysis is currently underway and subject to review. Results will inform institutional reflection, priority-setting and evaluation efforts. This work will further support the alignment of programs and services with demonstrated student needs and contribute to continuous improvement across coordinated mental health and wellbeing initiatives.



#### *Canadian Post-Secondary Alcohol and Drug Survey (CPADS)*

CPADS provides insight into patterns of substance use and their relationship to student mental health, wellbeing and academic experience. The survey was conducted at Carleton from Oct. 2, 2024, to April 15, 2025.

Findings indicate that students reporting substance use demonstrated higher awareness of campus-based campaigns and resources than those who did not, suggesting that prevention and harm reduction messaging is reaching its intended audience. Among students reporting more frequent cannabis use, awareness of Carleton-specific resources was associated with fewer reported harms compared to peers who were not aware of available supports.

This association was less pronounced for alcohol use, highlighting an opportunity to further strengthen alcohol-related messaging and more effectively link awareness with harm reduction strategies and reduced

experiences of harms. Notably, awareness of Canada's Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines was associated with increased use of harm reduction strategies and lower reported harms.

***Together, these survey insights reinforce the importance of a comprehensive, harm-reduction approach that integrates substance use education, early intervention and mental health supports across campus as part of a coordinated student wellbeing strategy, informing the development of the next iteration of the Student Mental Health Framework.***

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## Strengthening Our Model of Care Through Funded Initiatives

Health and Counselling Services, in partnership with Carleton's Harm Reduction team, was selected by the Government of Ontario for the 2025–2026 Mental Health and Addictions Call for Proposals Grant to advance an integrated model of care focused on eating disorders and substance use. This two-year investment of \$648,976 builds on a successful pilot delivered with the Waterstone Foundation.

The pilot demonstrated strong impact, with 96 per cent of students reporting the support as beneficial, 89 per cent feeling more understood and 81 per cent feeling less alone. It also identified ongoing gaps related to social eating and confidence in long-term health outcomes.

The funded initiative addresses student needs by embedding dual-role eating disorder and substance use counsellors who provide specialized care while strengthening system capacity through staff training, graduate supervision and peer navigator mentorship.

Service delivery will expand through 10-week meal-support programming and low-intensity group interventions, increasing access to early and structured supports. Funding will also support development of an interactive online module, *Supporting a Friend or Student with Substance Use*, co-developed with Rideauwood and the Community Addictions Peer Support Association. Modelled on the *Rethinking Resilience* approach, the module will strengthen substance use literacy, support early identification and provide clear pathways to campus and community services.

The project will also pilot a digital self-help and self-assessment toolkit, building on leading practices from partners including Body Brave and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and aligning with Ministry of Health priorities for digital self-management. These digital resources are designed to support self-directed care, extend reach to a broader student population and support scalability across Ontario.

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## Enhancing Student Wellness Through a Unique Partnership

From September 2025 to April 2026, the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Student Health and Wellness (OAVPSHW) and the Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA) launched a partnership to enhance student wellness through coordinated, campus-based supports. This initiative brought together CUSA Wellness Centre staff and Carleton's Health Promotion team, who worked collaboratively from the CUSA Wellness Centre.

By embedding Health Promotion capacity within a student-run wellness space, the partnership strengthened coordination between professional and peer-led supports, expanded access to programming and improved

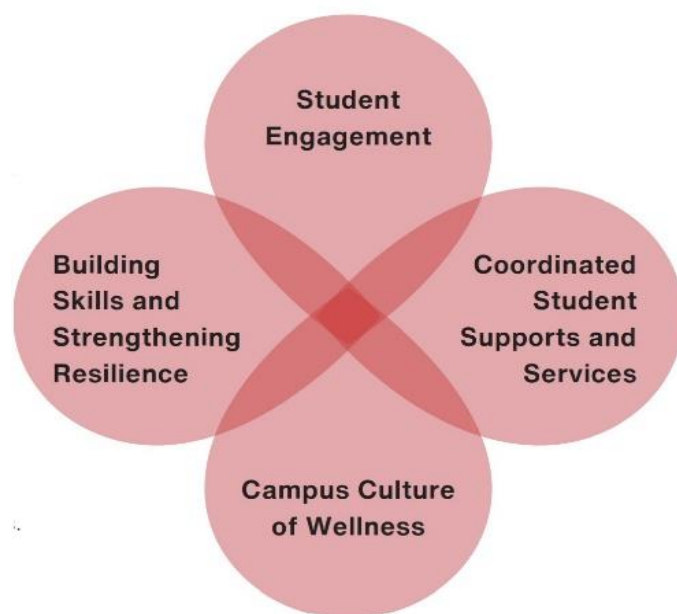
pathways to campus resources. Students engaged in peer support, skill-building opportunities and health promotion activities in a familiar, student-centred environment that addresses multiple dimensions of wellbeing. The collaboration also created leadership and experiential learning opportunities for Health Promotion Student Wellness Ambassadors, strengthening peer capacity and supporting the development of sustainable and proactive health-promoting behaviours across campus.

This model reflects the Student Mental Health Framework's emphasis on coordinated services, prevention and student engagement, demonstrating the value of partnerships between institutional units and student-led services in advancing a more accessible, integrated approach to campus wellbeing.



Wellness programming at the CUSA Wellness

## Highlights from the Four Areas of Focus



The Student Mental Health Framework (SMHF) is designed to inspire, empower and support individuals and groups across campus to take initiative in promoting mental health and wellness. The four SMHF areas of focus are interdependent and together help to support overall student mental health and wellness at Carleton.

The initiatives highlighted in this Annual Report are not exhaustive and represent just a portion of the impactful and valuable work being led by members of our community.

## Area of Focus #1: Student Engagement

Students play a central role in advancing mental health and wellbeing at Carleton through leadership, peer support and community-driven initiatives. The highlights below demonstrate how these efforts are expanding access, strengthening connection and supporting a more inclusive campus environment.

- The Carleton Undergraduate Students' Association's (CUSA) Unified Support Centre (USC) is a volunteer-based service offering food support, basic needs assistance and safety programming. This year, the USC's Food Centre distributed more than 3,844 food hampers and supported over 522 students through its Emergency Essentials Assistance Program. In addition, the USC's Foot Patrol completed 53 safe walks and campus patrols, providing reliable evening safety support.
  - In Residence, Mental Wellness Mentors and Mental Health Champions hosted a range of wellness events for their peers, including a Wellness Pop-Up and a Wellness Fair in partnership with the Health Promotion team. Ahead of exams, Mental Health Champions also distributed 200 mindfulness and self-care kits during an Ice Cream Study Break, supporting student wellbeing during high-stress periods.
  - The Science Student Success Centre (SSSC) delivered programs, events and workshops supporting student wellbeing, including peer mentoring, networking events and study skills workshops. More than 500 students participated across these initiatives, strengthening connection, confidence and overall student experience.
  - RISE (Racialized and International Students Experience) delivered initiatives supporting the wellbeing of racialized and international students through community connection, cultural affirmation and belonging. Key programming included the MOSAIC Campaign and Black History Month, featuring educational, social and creative events with strong student engagement.
- Targeted initiatives such as the Pop-Up Hair Salon and Black Excellence Soirée further reduced barriers while celebrating identity, leadership and achievement, with select initiatives involving partnerships with the ACB Experience and CUSA cultural clubs.
- The First Year Connections Program (FYC) continued to support the transition to university through peer mentorship. This year, 227 first-year students were matched with upper-year mentors who were safeTALK certified. The program also included five specialized streams, including for African, Caribbean and Black students, Faculty of Engineering and Design students and first-generation students.



- The Campus Activity Board (CAB) delivered more than 20 student-led events for over 1,300 participants, creating opportunities for social connection in a safe and inclusive environment. Popular events included EPIC Bingo, Paint Nights and Movie Nights, supporting community building and student engagement throughout the year.
- Student Health and Wellness provided 14 part-time, placement and co-op opportunities, expanding student involvement in wellness initiatives. Student Wellness Ambassadors collaborated with 35 campus and community partners to engage peers, improve health literacy and embed wellness across campus, connecting with more than 2,550 students through 71 events. Increased participation in initiatives such as the PANDA Party Safe Fair, Halloween Party Safe Fair and Valentine's Day event demonstrates growing reach and impact.
- The Carleton Disability Awareness Centre (CDAC) offered Sensory Hours during peak academic stress periods, including December and April exams, providing quieter, low-stimulation environments for students who benefit from reduced sensory input, alongside exam study kits to support wellbeing and academic preparation. Sensory Craft Nights throughout the year created inclusive and accessible spaces for self-regulation, creativity and peer connection.
- The Gender and Sexuality Resource Centre (GSRC) supported 2SLGBTQI+ students through programming, resources and community-building initiatives that foster an inclusive, identity-affirming environment. Key services included the Gender-Affirming Gear Program, Queer Community Care Kits and a Trans ID Clinic delivered with the CUSA Legal Clinic, alongside free gender-affirming haircuts. Skills-based workshops, peer-led spaces and sexual health initiatives further supported learning and harm-reduction-informed wellbeing.



## Area of Focus #2: Building Skills and Strengthening Resilience

Fostering skill development and resilience is central to promoting a positive approach to student mental health. The highlights below demonstrate how programs and supports equip students with practical skills and coping strategies to navigate academic and personal challenges.

- The CUSA Wellness Centre, in collaboration with the Health Promotion team, delivered Resource Spotlights and the Coffee & Connect series to enhance student wellbeing and awareness of campus supports. Resource Spotlights featured biweekly themed initiatives, while Coffee & Connect offered peer-to-peer discussion sessions. In January 2026, Wellness Week provided additional opportunities for students to engage in free activities supporting physical, emotional and social wellbeing.



CUSA Wellness Centre tabling event

- Connections: Neurodiversity Support Group aimed at creating a neuro-affirming space for students, as well as the Graduate Writing Workshop and ADHD Coaching Group.
- Housing and Residence Life continued fostering a community of care where mental health and wellbeing are prioritized through their event programming. Events provided 200+ students the opportunity to practice a variety of wellness skills, such as promoting movement through a yoga event and supporting student creativity with various craft-themed nights, including a Halloween Create Night that incorporated pumpkin painting, bracelet making and colouring.
- Between November 2025 and March 2026, the Wellness Services Navigator App connected more than 3,700 users with mental health and wellness resources both on campus and in the community. This tool improved awareness of available supports and strengthened students' ability to identify needs and seek timely care.
- The Office of Student Affairs offered numerous harm reduction workshops for students over the academic year, including an *Opioid Awareness and Overdose Prevention Seminar* attended by over 100 students, as well as a *Books Before Bets Peer Education Seminar* in collaboration with the Responsible Gambling Council of Ontario. Individual, non-clinical consultations with the Student Conduct and Harm Reduction manager further informed students' decision-making related to substance use and wellbeing.
- The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) delivered groups and programming to support connection and resilience, including the Unmasking
- The Office of Student Affairs also offered weekly All People All Pathways peer support meetings,

facilitated by the Community Addictions Peer Support Association, providing a consistent meeting space for students affected by substance use and addiction to connect and receive support.

- The Accessibility Institute delivered a tabling session on the Coordinated Accessibility Strategy, engaging students in dialogue on the intersection of accessibility and mental health and increasing awareness of campus initiatives.
- In February 2026, the Faculty of Engineering and Design (FED) hosted a FED Student Services Fair connecting more than 200 students with campus supports relating to mental health, wellbeing and academic success. The Women in Engineering and IT Program also delivered a workshop, *ICONIC Resilience: Rising Strong*, equipping students with strategies to address imposter complex and build confidence in navigating their careers.
- The Global Opportunities and International Student Services Office (GO-ISSO) supported international student wellbeing through events including International Orientation Day and Winter Welcome, as well as 12 sessions of *Global Café*, a peer-led drop-in program. These initiatives supported transition, connection and belonging, particularly in the context of ongoing global and geopolitical uncertainty.
- The Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement (CISCE) supported student wellbeing through culturally grounded programming that fosters connection, healing and community. Twenty-five students participated in fall and winter Land Wellness Retreats, while a Traditional Medicine Teachings and Grief Ceremony provided opportunities to learn from an Elder. Weekly Wellness Drop-In sessions further supported community connection and mental health awareness.
- The Office of Graduate Studies promoted campus supports and wellness resources to over 700 graduate students in their New

Graduate Student Orientation Event.

Furthermore, one-on-one support was provided to over 100 graduate students to meet with Grad Studies personnel, allowing for more tailored support and resource sharing.

- In October 2025, the Therapy Dog Program introduced sensory-friendly sessions in response to student feedback, offering a reduced-stimulation environment to improve accessibility for students with sensory sensitivities. To date, these sessions have supported more than 80 student interactions, enhancing inclusion and expanding participation in the program.



- The Book Arts Lab in the MacOdrum Library delivered workshops, tours and creative programming that supported student and staff wellbeing, community building and creative expression. Activities included card-making and calligraphy workshops, programming for student groups and a paper marbling session to relieve stress, delivered in partnership with the New Sun Joy Maclaren Adaptive Technology Centre.

- The Carleton University Art Gallery (CUAG) supported student wellbeing through creative programming and community-building initiatives. Monthly *Art + Friends* events and weekly *Fibre + Friends* sessions provided opportunities for students to engage in art-making, knitting and crocheting, and to connect with peers. A dedicated lounge and resource space with access to craft supplies further supported student relaxation, creativity and informal study, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment.
- The Sprott School of Business engaged students through a range of initiatives, including Study Halls, peer support through the Peer Coaching Ambassador Program and student-led activities such as vision boarding and creative events. Dedicated spaces, including the Meditation Space and Aunt Becky's Kitchen, further supported wellbeing and access to food. In fall 2025, the Resilience Institute Workshop Series supported 30 Sprott Online MBA students in building adaptability and perseverance.

Students outside the Wellness Desk



### Area of Focus #3: Coordinated Student Supports and Services

Coordinated supports and services are essential to ensuring students can access the right care at the right time. The highlights below demonstrate how integrated programs and streamlined pathways are reducing barriers, improving access and strengthening a responsive system of student support.



Simulated counselling session

- Health and Counselling Services (HCS) expanded inclusive group therapy programming and equity-informed care in response to student feedback, offering identity-affirming supports for African, Caribbean and Black students, 2SLGBTQI+ students, students with disabilities and others. Programs including Unmasking Connections, DBT Skills and MindBody Reset reported strong engagement and participant feedback, with students rating facilitator knowledge, welcoming environments and content relevance highly.
- Enhancements to the Single-Session Counselling intake process improved access to ongoing supports by directly connecting students to appropriate group therapy options. These changes increased awareness of available services, streamlined pathways to care and supported earlier engagement in therapeutic supports.
- Building on the success of the Single-Session Counselling model, Quick-Access Counselling was introduced in Residence to improve access to timely support. This model reduced demand for same-day or crisis appointments by enabling students to access care earlier, contributing to more proactive and responsive service delivery.
- HCS, in partnership with the Hopewell Eating Disorder Support Centre, expanded access to peer support for students navigating disordered eating through the Peer Support Recovery

Group. This collaboration connects students to community-based supports and peer networks, strengthening continuity of care and supporting longer-term recovery beyond campus. Hopewell facilitates various Peer Support Groups year-round, along with skill-building social events designed to combat isolation and cultivate belonging and validation.

- On campus psychiatric services enhanced access to mental health care for students facing barriers to support in the community, by offering assessment-informed care planning, timely consultation and brief follow-up. In 2025–2026, psychiatrists delivered 989 appointments (a 75 per cent increase compared to the previous year), working in close coordination with Counselling Services and other supports to ensure continuity of care. By operating within the campus network, psychiatric services provide more responsive and accessible care than typically available through community-based models, particularly for students with complex or acute needs. This integrated approach strengthens coordination across services and improves overall system responsiveness.
- From Intention to Action (FITA) enhanced counselling capacity by introducing 5- and 10-session care streams, improving access and reducing wait times. The program also welcomed 10 master’s-level interns, expanding service delivery while supporting experiential learning and workforce development.
- The Care and Support Team assists students in navigating complex housing, financial and academic systems, with a focus on those experiencing systemic barriers. In 2025–2026, the team supported students through more than 7,550 interactions, responding to 1,227 care referrals and additionally conducting 847 outreach activities. The team also provided targeted outreach to 650 engineering students who had deferred their exams. These efforts improved access to supports, strengthened student agency and enabled more coordinated responses to complex student needs.
- The Health Promotion Team partnered with the Carleton University Students’ Association (CUSA) to deliver programming within the CUSA Wellness Centre, strengthening connections with student leadership and expanding access to services in a trusted space. More than 1,100 students engaged with the space, reflecting strong participation and supporting a more responsive student-informed approach to health and wellbeing.
- The Wellness Desk in the MacOdrum Library provides a dedicated space for students to access resources, connect with a Wellness Navigator and receive support during peak academic periods. Visits increased by 19 per cent compared to 2024–2025. The Resource Spotlight Series engaged more than 250 students through collaborations with campus and community partners, while the program’s partnership with Therapy Dogs supported approximately 2,300 student interactions across 150 sessions.
- Care conferences supported students experiencing complex mental health challenges and situations by bringing together a coordinated circle of care involving multiple campus partners. A total of 71 care conferences were held this year, representing a significant increase (130 per cent over the previous year) and reflecting growing demand for coordinated, case-based support. This model strengthens communication, shared understanding and timely decision-making across services.
- Aligned with the university’s harm reduction approach, HCS expanded physician consultations to both students and staff related to substance use, supported by addiction medicine expertise and strengthened connections to hospital-based programs. In 2025–2026, 166 clinical consultations were delivered through HCS and 15 non-clinical consultations through the Umbrella Project, improving early intervention, patient-centred and stigma-free care, and strengthening continuity of care across campus and community services.

## Area of Focus #4: Campus Culture of Wellness

Fostering a campus culture of wellness requires creating environments and shared practices that support mental, physical and social wellbeing. The highlights below demonstrate how institutional initiatives and campus-wide efforts are strengthening conditions for wellbeing and reinforcing shared responsibility across the university.

- The Accessibility Institute offered a workshop called *Introduction to Neuroinclusivity in Student Services*, aimed at training staff on how to create more neuroinclusive services for students.



- The Office of Graduate Studies provided meaningful professional development opportunities for staff and faculty to learn how to better support student wellness. Grad Studies personnel were involved in panel discussions on topics including supporting students and navigating boundaries, helping to create a culture of wellness and support in our community.

- Health and Counselling Services collaborated with the Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities to strengthen staff capacity in addressing racism and microaggressions, further embedding EDI principles into clinical practice.
- The Paul Menton Centre (PMC) provided leadership in the Dedicated Access Fund Committee which supported new private student spaces in Library Accessibility Services and accessibility improvements in Athletics in preparation for hosting the World Wheelchair Basketball Championships in September 2026. PMC also partnered with the Accessibility Institute and Facilities Management and Planning to implement accessible classroom numbering, including raised lettering and Braille.
- The PMC also worked with staff in the Undergraduate Recruitment Office and Admissions Services to improve communications with prospective students with disabilities, thereby creating a more efficient pathway to registration with the PMC upon acceptance of their offer of admission.
- Healthy Workplace supported staff and faculty through programming focused on wellbeing, skill development and community building. In collaboration with campus and community partners, 40 sessions were offered on topics including guided meditation, stress management, financial wellbeing and trauma-informed yoga. More than 1,000 staff and faculty participated in workshops, with 260 engaging in ongoing lunchtime activities, strengthening connection and supporting a culture of wellness.

- In October 2025, the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Student Health and Wellness delivered a panel, *Supporting Student Wellness: Navigating Boundaries in Your Role*, to support staff and faculty in establishing healthy boundaries and sustainable approaches to supporting students. More than 60 participants attended, gaining practical guidance on maintaining boundaries and clarifying roles while fostering student wellbeing and responding to complex situations.
- The Student Support Certificate (SSC) provided professional development opportunities to strengthen faculty and staff capacity to support student wellbeing. Core and special topic workshops, including new workshops in *De-Escalation Training* and *Supporting International Student Success*, engaged more than 260 participants across the fall and winter terms. In May 2026, a one-week Summer Camp for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences will offer an accelerated pathway to complete the certificate.
- Faculty contributed to a culture of wellbeing through research-informed programming and dialogue. Events such as *Beyond the Headlines: Social Media, Youth and the Science of Well-Being* brought together scholars including Dr. Jim Davies, Dr. Kim Hellemans and Dr. Andrea Howard to share evidence-based perspectives on youth mental health. *The Science of Solitude* book launch and student panel fostered interdisciplinary dialogue on wellbeing and social connection. The Department of Psychology, in partnership with MeWeRTH, further advanced this work through the Psychology Mental Health Day in the fall term. These initiatives are just a few of many that helped to foster discussion on wellbeing and social connection, supporting awareness and reducing stigma.
- The Care and Support Team strengthened institutional capacity through training and consultation for staff, faculty and student leaders. Offerings included three “Meet the

Team” sessions (65 participants), nine workshops reaching 532 participants and an asynchronous module completed by more than 400 student leaders. Additional engagement with campus partners further supported awareness of student mental health, available resources and coordinated response approaches across the university community.



- The Wellness Website will be updated in Summer 2026 to include the Paul Menton Centre, From Intention to Action and Attendant Services. The enhanced, centralized platform will make it easier for students to find information, navigate available supports and connect with services through clear, accessible pathways.
- A Staff and Faculty Toolkit to Support Student Mental Health has been developed to strengthen capacity to recognize and respond to students experiencing mental health challenges. The content reflects current best practices and provides practical guidance and resources. The toolkit will be launched in Summer 2026.

## What's Next for the Student Mental Health Framework

As the current Student Mental Health Framework (2022–2026) reaches the end of its lifecycle, the university is transitioning to the next phase of this work, informed by completion of implementation progress and evolving student needs. With all 30 recommendations now complete or ongoing as part of continuous implementation, the university is well positioned to build on this strong foundation in response to ongoing social, economic and global factors influencing student wellbeing.

While development of a renewed framework is underway, implementation of key initiatives and services will continue, ensuring sustained support for students and ongoing progress in priority areas such as prevention, early intervention and coordinated care. In the coming months, a broad consultation process will inform the next iteration of the framework, engaging students, faculty, staff and external community partners. The renewed framework is expected to be shared early in 2027.



## Appendix 1: Areas of Focus and Recommendations Status

This Appendix contains the Objectives and Recommendations directly outlined in the Student Mental Health Framework (SMHF) 2022-2026. A status column has been added with the following indicators:

- **Planning:** activities (e.g., planning, coordination) have been initiated in the current reporting cycle.
- **Underway:** activities are currently underway and being implemented.
- **Continuous:** activities are complete, but implementation is an ongoing process with no definitive end date.
- **Complete:** Activities have been completed with no further implementation required.
- **Upcoming:** activities are planned in the near-to-mid term.

The table below can be summarized as follows:

- 13 recommendations are considered complete;
- 17 recommendations are in a continuous state;
- 0 recommendations are underway;
- 0 recommendations are considered in the planning phase; and
- 0 recommendation is in the upcoming phase.

It is worth noting implementation is an ongoing process with no definitive end. This is reflective of mental health and wellness not being an end state, but instead a continuous state of adaptation. With our fourth and final reporting year completed for the SMHF 2022-2026, definitive actions have been taken on all 30 recommendations. We look forward to continuing to expand on the actions taken to provide holistic support for our community.

### Area of Focus #1: Student Engagement

Recommendations	Status
Increase student involvement in the implementation of all areas of focus in this Framework through developing and strengthening partnerships with students, staff, and faculty.	Continuous
Further develop partnerships with student-led groups and support their innovative ideas and initiatives that promote a holistic approach to mental health and wellness.	Continuous

Continue to support and engage the Student Mental Health Student Engagement Committee in developing and implementing student-led initiatives.	Continuous
Leverage the results of existing student surveys and explore the implementation of additional surveys to better capture and improve the overall health and wellness of our students.	Continuous
Develop and implement assessment and evaluation tools for existing programs and services to ensure they are meeting students' needs.	Complete
Assess opportunities to engage graduate-level student expertise in researching and evaluating mental health and wellness initiatives on campus.	Continuous

## Area of Focus #2: Building Skills and Strengthening Resilience

Recommendations	Status
Update the wellness website to provide access to comprehensive information on mental health and wellness to students, staff, faculty, and parents, including building resilience and coping skills, substance use health, and streamlining resource navigation.	Complete
Provide regular training using an intersectional approach to enable students, staff, and faculty to assist students in a way that is respectful of culture and identities, and which reflects the diversity of Carleton community members.	Continuous
Enhance online modules, workshops, and programming using an intersectional approach that introduces students to the concepts of overall wellness and thriving within the university environment, with a particular focus on key areas like nutrition, physical health, finances, living on your own, loneliness, and isolation.	Continuous
Develop programming and initiatives to provide students with opportunities and resources that will help them to recognize personal strengths, develop coping skills, and build resilience.	Continuous
Enhance training, events, and knowledge sharing of mental health and wellness services to contribute to overall student wellness, with a particular focus on encouraging health-seeking behaviours.	Continuous

Develop and implement training, education, and resources to reduce harm in different online environments, such as social media.	Complete
Support the development and implementation of a substance use health and harm reduction strategy that is focused on support, resources, education, and partnerships.	Complete

### Area of Focus #3: Coordinated Student Supports and Services

Recommendations	Status
Update related documents that outline student services and programs and align with a streamlined “Stepped Approach” depending on need for the range of mental health and wellness services available at Carleton.	Complete
Update and regularly provide referral training for faculty, staff, and students in key roles, including providing template responses when referring students to additional supports that takes into consideration the individual and cultural needs of our diverse student body.	Complete
Integrate faith-based and spirituality resources and approaches as an integral component for supporting mental health and wellness.	Complete
Assess and respond to student demand and need for additional counselling services using an equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility lens.	Complete
Review the delivery structure of student mental health and wellness services at Carleton to respond to student mental health and wellness challenges in a coordinated way, while simultaneously addressing cultural barriers to service use.	Complete
Continue to promote the Care Report to the entire campus community and encourage its use to flag indicators of concern so that our community can respond in the most appropriate way.	Continuous
Maintain and foster new collaborative partnerships with community partners that allow for better student access to community-based mental health services, including working with hospitals on coordinated discharge processes, and liaising with off-campus services for after-hours care.	Continuous

## Area of Focus #4: Campus Culture of Wellness

Recommendations	Status
Enhance the availability of training that is culturally aware and sensitive for faculty, staff, and student leaders to support students in crisis.	Complete
Develop a university postvention strategy to reduce suicide risk and promote healing after a death by suicide.	Complete
Ensure collaboration with the employee mental health strategy and Healthy Workplace Strategic Plan, so as to have faculty and staff well supported as they support students.	Continuous
Sign and implement the Okanagan Charter, committing to its calls to action to embed health into all aspects of campus culture and to lead health promotion action and collaboration.	Complete
Ensure continued collaboration with Carleton's many documents, frameworks, and strategies, including, but not limited to, the Coordinated Accessibility Strategy, the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan, Honouring Each Other, and Kinàmàgawin.	Continuous
In line with Kinàmàgawin Call to Action # 8, develop a Circle of Care Protocol for Indigenous students in crisis, in consultation with the Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement, Health and Counselling Services, and the Office of Student Affairs.	Complete
Investigate ways to incorporate green spaces and environmental wellness into mental health and wellness programming in consultation with key stakeholders.	Continuous
Create opportunities for staff and faculty to work together and learn from each other when integrating mental health and wellness practices, seeking to integrate research and evidence-based practices inside and outside of the classroom.	Continuous
Develop and distribute a mental health toolkit for faculty that includes curriculum infusion, how to recognize when a student may need support, and how to support their own mental health.	Continuous
In consultation with faculty, investigate and implement best practices for supporting student mental health and wellness into the curriculum and classroom, including course design and delivery.	Continuous



## Office of the Associate Vice-President (Student Health and Wellness)

3600 Carleton Technology and Training Centre (CTTC)  
Carleton University  
1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6

Email: [wellness@carleton.ca](mailto:wellness@carleton.ca)

[wellness.carleton.ca](http://wellness.carleton.ca)

