**Item 10**
**For Discussion and Noting**

**GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE**

**Learning & Teaching Committee of 22 November 2023**

**College Mental Health & Wellbeing Service Update**

**Report by Head of Student Support Services**

## 1. Introduction

In March 2023 we reported to the committee the outcomes of the Thriving Learners Research which provided a unique insight into the mental health and wellbeing of students in Scotland, with the focus on college students.

It was then reported in September 2023, as part of the Report on Quality Enhancements Priorities, how we would begin to strengthen students health & wellbeing support.

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on service provision and an overview of numbers of students accessing counselling and wellbeing supports available at GKC over the last 4 years and an outline of new approaches to supporting learners with wellbeing and resilience skills introduced for session 2023-24.

## 2. College Counselling and Wellbeing Services

Counselling Provision
The College counselling service has two qualified counsellors and a small team of trainee placement counsellors who support students with mild to moderate mental health conditions. Not all referrals result in a counselling intervention but all those who are referred and engage with counsellors are assessed and referred to most appropriate support. Those not suitable for college counselling are referred to other support eg External support, other college services.

Wellbeing Provision
The college employs one Wellbeing Officer. The types of issues referred to wellbeing officer include anxiety, suicidal thoughts, mental health problems such as BPD (Borderline Personality Disorder), issues with eating and sleeping, overthinking, previous trauma, arguments with parents and more. The Wellbeing Service also provides support to students through offering group sessions on a variety of topics including anxiety, financial wellbeing, resilience and has introduced a range of workshops this session to enhance service provision.

College referrals to internal mental health and wellbeing services have increased each year since their introduction as seen in the table below.

| | **Session 2020/21** Total referrals | **Session 2021/22** Total referrals | **Session 2022/23** Total referrals | **Session 2023/24 (Up to October)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Counselling | 210 | 155 | 246 | 81 |
| Wellbeing | No service | 89 | 119 | 51 |
| TOTAL | 210 | 244 | 365 | 132 |

**SFC Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Transition Fund**

SFC have issued a one year Transition Fund for supporting students with mental health for session 2023/24, the guidance states:

As student mental health is an important area for the Scottish Government, a one-year Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Transition Fund has been created to support institutions' transition from the previous funding, which focused on supporting additional counsellor provision, to a sustainable approach to support student mental health. We recognise some institutions may want to use the fund to continue supporting their counselling provision while others may want to explore funding new or existing initiatives.

**Mental Health, Wellbeing & Resilience Support in Session 2023/24**

As part of the 2023-24 College Quality Enhancement Priorities, the College will continue to fund existing Wellbeing Officer and Counsellor roles to maintain services as a level consistent with previous years. Our Wellbeing and Counselling services will continue to develop external partnerships to help support students.

The Wellbeing Officer will continue to be available for students for one to one support as appropriate and will be supported in this by Guidance Advisers. Students requiring Counselling for mild to moderate mental health interventions will be referred to and supported by college counsellors. Following initial assessment students requiring more in-depth counselling support will be referred to NHS services to best meet their needs.

Whilst our Wellbeing and Counselling services will continue to provide response-based services dealing with individual needs, a particular focus for session 2023-24 will be to build the resilience of all students and provide techniques and tools to support them deal with health and wellbeing issues. This preventative approach will in the long term provide greater impact and benefits to students.

A variety of activity to improve wellbeing and is already being delivered and will continue throughout the academic year. The term started with awareness raising activity for staff and students as follows:

Presentation to Staff– 10th August 2023

- Signposting College and external Support/Wellbeing Services
- Information on student workshops
- How to refer students for support

Freshers Events W/C 14th August 2023

- Information leaflets/referral cards distributed to all new learners
- Information stall at Freshers events
- Wellbeing focus to welcome and Freshers activity

Student Information Sessions - Induction Period 21 August to 1 September 2023

- Opportunity for all full-time students to attend MSTeams and hybrid building resilience sessions.
- Promotion of wider Student Support Services offer and how to get support.
- Continued proactive presence of Wellbeing Support Officer across all campuses.

This has been enhanced with a plan of ongoing activity including:

Monthly Wellbeing and Resilience Sessions on a variety of topics

- Resilience (16-18 year olds) - Wednesday, 30th August
- Wellbeing and Resilience – Friday, September 15th
- Basic Mental Health Awareness – Wednesday, October 11th
- Financial Wellbeing – Wednesday, 15th November
- Anxiety Management – Wednesday, December 13th

Attendance at workshops has been sporadic and we are currently running a pilot project to deliver introduction to wellbeing sessions direct to class groups, selected non advanced courses are being targeted for this intervention.

Planning of workshops from January onwards will begin in November.

Improved Student Engagement and partnership with Student Association

- Regular Engagement with the College Students' Association and Class Representatives.
- Awareness raising campaigns and promotion through social media/teams posts.
- Stalls and on-campus engagement activity
- Partnership approach to Student Association Mental Health Agreement

In addition to the above events and activities, the MYKelvin Wellbeing page has a wellbeing space which is reviewed and updated to ensure links and information are up to date, this resource provides a toolkit for students to improve their own wellbeing.

The Wellbeing officer is also working closely with the new Active campus coordinator and have started a joint lunchtime student and staff walking group, and there are plans for a joint wellbeing and exercise workshop in January.

## 3. Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

## 4. Impact on Students

A high proportion of students experience mental health issues which impact on their ability to study and successfully complete their course, this report outlines the colleges action to support students as appropriate.

## 5. Risk and Assurance

If current mental health and wellbeing services and staffing are not maintained, this could have a negative effect on students, this would in turn increase risks of students withdrawing and leaving their course early.

## 6. Equality

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report

## 7. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications arising directly from this report

## 8. Environmental and Sustainability

There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising directly from this report

## 9. Recommendations

Members are recommended to note the contents of this report

## 10. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Monica McKerlie, Head of Student Support Services

Glasgow Kelvin College
MMcK
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