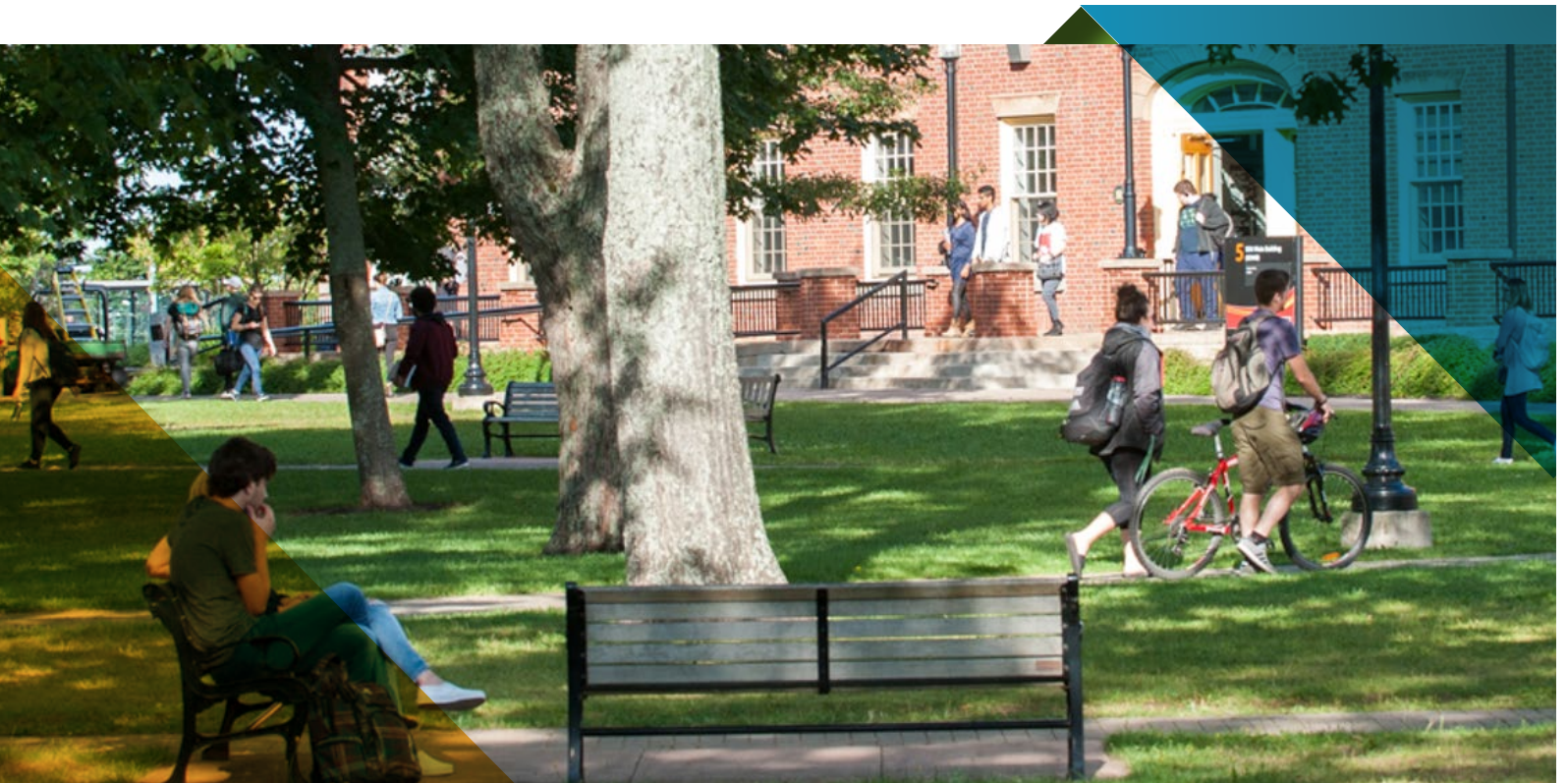




UNIVERSITY  
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ISLAND

# UPEI HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

FEBRUARY 2019





The UPEI Health and Wellness Centre, in collaboration with the Department of Psychology, conducted a survey of faculty, staff, and students on the UPEI campus in February 2019. A total of 576 individuals completed the survey, “Take Ten for Health!”, over a one-month period. Respondents answered questions related to mental and physical health as well as demographic data. In addition, a satisfaction survey was conducted with students who visited the health centre during the weeks of February 11 and 18.

## BACKGROUND

Accreditation Canada has developed standards for stand-alone clinics. One of the standards involves developing services to meet the health needs of its clients/families. Building Healthier Organizations (BHO) in 2011 noted that in order to respond to the needs of a community, an organization must understand the health needs of a community. One of the ways to do that is by conducting a community needs assessment.

While there has been a small footprint of a health centre on campus for more than 25 years, there has never been a review of the satisfaction with services offered at the centre, nor has there been a community needs assessment. In the fall of 2018, permanent staff were hired as well as a director to develop a full-service and full-time, year-round UPEI Health and Wellness Centre. As part of that development, the health centre team is working to understand what is working well, what is not working well, and what are the gaps in services or populations who are not being served.



## STUDENT SURVEY

The staff of the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre meet monthly and as required to review and plan services, and develop protocols and processes. The team developed a satisfaction survey for students initially, as the health centre provided services only to students. The survey was administered to students in February of 2019 (n=138; response rate of 95%). The results revealed that the majority of students who completed the survey were highly satisfied with the wait time for an appointment, and found the waiting and exam rooms to be quite clean, welcoming, and comfortable. The percentage of responses indicating “inclusiveness” were the lowest scores, rating 47% (exam room) as compared to cleanliness of exam room (93%), welcoming (66%) and comfortable (70%). In terms of overall satisfaction with the health centre, 71% were very satisfied, 5% somewhat satisfied, 14% were satisfied, and 0.5% were dissatisfied. Students reported being most interested in learning more about sexual health, insomnia/difficulty sleeping, as well as anxiety/depression. The most popular time for visits to the health centre were 1600–1800 hours, followed by 1200–1400 hours. The best location for health promotion sessions was the health centre, and the preferred method for education on health matters was small groups, followed by one-to-one appointments.

## COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT:

## TAKE TEN FOR HEALTH! SURVEY

As noted earlier, a larger survey was conducted across campus in February 2019. All faculty, staff, and students were invited to participate. The survey name was “Take Ten for Health!” A small committee consisting of representatives from the psychology department (Dr. Jason Doiron), Student Affairs (director Treena Smith), the psychology doctorate program (Raquel Hoersting), the undergraduate student body (Emma Drake), and the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre (director Marilyn Barrett) developed the final survey, with the assistance of fourth-year nursing student Alyssa Beaton and psychology honours student Ben Woodside.

The “Take Ten for Health!” survey was completed by 82 faculty, 253 staff, and 241 students (n=576). The average age reported by those completing the survey was 36.28 years; 73.6% of respondents identified as female, 23.3% as male, and 3.1% preferred not to answer. Only 0.3% of respondents reported having less than high school education completed, with 41.5% reporting they had completed a graduate degree. The majority of respondents (86.6%) reported they worked full time, and the majority of



respondents reported a family income greater than \$50,000 (80.4%) while 10.8% preferred not to answer.

Respondents were asked about negative impacts of some common chronic diseases. The most prominent across all groups was related to joint or back pain, followed by being overweight. If specific services were located on campus, respondents reported they would most likely use nutritionist/dietitian, blood pressure checks, physiotherapy, dental and cancer screening. Preferred times for appointments were 0800-1000 hours (50.7%), followed by 1600-1800 hours (38.9%).

Respondents were most likely to obtain health information from their health care provider (80.9%), the Internet (Google etc., 55.9%), and family/friends (30.9%). They preferred to receive health information via email (58.5%), lunch and learns (38.4%), followed by one-on-one sessions (26.7%) and small group sessions (26.2%).

Barriers that were identified as most likely preventing respondents from seeking care included:

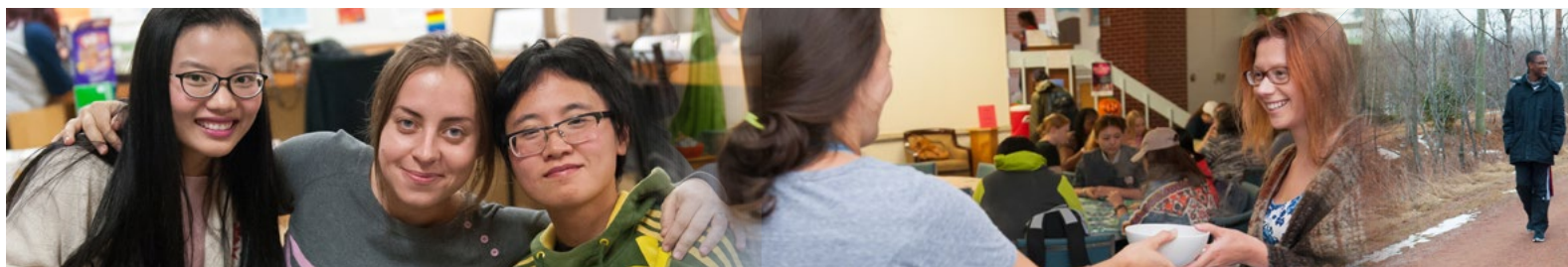
- » Too long to wait for services in the community (46.7%)
- » Financial cost (33.3%)
- » Unsure about where to access services (33.0%)
- » Difficulty taking time off work (29.5%)
- » Fear about what they might find out (15.1%)
- » Lack of transportation (9.2%)
- » Lack of child care (4.5%)
- » Concern about not having professional from same cultural background (1.4%)
- » Concern about a language barrier (0.9%)

Respondents were asked about their wait time to see a family physician or nurse practitioner off campus.

- » 27.9% reported waiting 4 days to 1 week;
- » 22.6% reported waiting 1–3 days and 21.8% reported waiting 1–2 weeks.

Respondents were asked about their immunization status. 64.2% of respondents reported they were up to date with their immunizations. UPEI Health and Wellness Centre staff have identified immunizations as a topic about which they are receiving more questions from visitors. Use of tobacco products was an area of interest for the health centre. Only 4.3% of respondents reported using tobacco products.

Regarding wait times to see their own family physician or nurse practitioner, respondents reported that they varied from same day to more than 4 months. The majority (>70%) were from 1–3 days to 1–2 weeks to obtain an appointment. 73.1% of respondents traveled 20 minutes or less from their home for their appointments, with 74.7% traveling 20 minutes or less from UPEI to see their family physician or nurse practitioner. Wait times to see specialists were long with the majority (49.1%) waiting 3–4 months or longer.



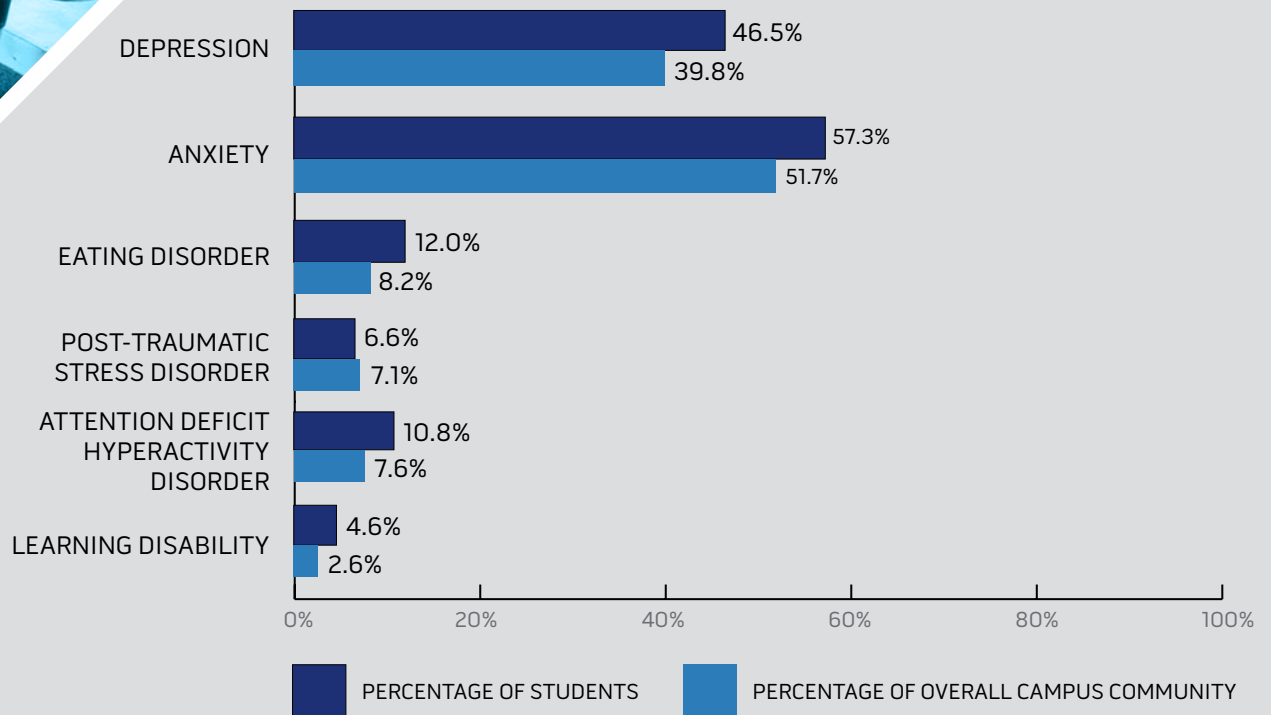


# MENTAL HEALTH

A section of the survey specifically collected information relating to the mental health of respondents. The main impetus for collecting this data was to inform the mental health strategy for the campus. This data has been stored with the psychology program to guide the development of campus mental health interventions within the doctor of psychology (PsyD) program.

The survey assessed a number of mental health variables, including the extent to which various mental health concerns interfere with the day-to-day functioning of members of the campus community. This data is summarized in the figure below.

Percentage of students and overall sample reporting day-to-day functioning negatively impacted by mental health concerns





The prevalence of mental health concerns that interfere with functioning is noteworthy and substantial, pointing to the importance of having access to resources to address these concerns. Often the first step in getting help is consultation with a family physician, nurse practitioner, or other primary health care provider who often refers to a provider that specializes in mental health care. The following survey findings regarding access are especially noteworthy:

- » Approximately 1 in 5, or 20%, of campus community members do not have a family physician/nurse practitioner—higher than the provincial rate.
- » Approximately 61% of campus community members who have been referred to a mental health specialist in the last 12 months have had to wait 2 weeks or longer to see a mental health specialist off campus. Over 54% of respondents had to wait more than 3 weeks.

Although the survey clearly illustrated that the prevalence of mental health concerns that impact functioning is substantial, there is compelling evidence that members of the campus community continue to experience stigma which may prevent them from communicating about their mental health status:

- » 27.7% would not tell family and friends that they had a mental illness.
- » 35.3% would not be comfortable sitting in a mental health waiting area with other UPEI community members.

Finally, the survey indicated that important work needs to be done to help community members develop their own sense of confidence in seeking out assistance, as suggested by the data:

- » 24.9% are not confident about where to seek information about mental health.
- » 30.1% are not confident about accessing resources to assist with mental health.





# NEXT STEPS

The UPEI Health and Wellness Centre will use this information to inform operational as well as strategic plans.



## REFERENCES:

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The BHO Group: Building Healthy Organizations (2009). Tafford on Demand Publishing.





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