



McGill

MCGILL UNIVERSITY SENATE

Question

TO:

Senate

DATE SUBMITTED:

March 14, 2008

FROM:

Mr. Daniel King

SENATE MEETING DATE:

March 26, 2008

SUBJECT: Mental health services

PREAMBLE:

McGill's Mental Health service is one of the strongest of any university in North America. We are one of two universities in Canada to provide students with this vital service. But, there is much more that can be done. The 2005 Mental Health task force found that: "The Mental Health service has seen dramatic increase in the number of students treated over the past ten years, rising from 1000 students in 2000 to 1920 students in 2005.¹"

Students with mental health problems at McGill may have nowhere else to turn: "An effective Mental Health service is essential to the operation of a university like McGill, which has a large number of students who are far away from their home social support and their families' health support networks. Coupled with the relative inaccessibility of mental health care in Quebec (waiting lists at CLSCs are often six to seven months), university mental health care is the only option for most McGill students, especially for the 50% of McGill students who are out-of-province or international students.²"

The McGill and Montreal communities are home to a vast array of resources and expertise related to mental health problems. Clinical psychologists, social workers, nurses, researchers and student groups have collaborated to discuss and solve mental health problems. Ad hoc meetings between the head of Mental Health and interested groups have yielded results. For example, meetings between the Deans and the head of Mental Health made both aware of the unique needs of each faculty's students. Yet, there is no institutional framework to ensure regular meetings.

QUESTION:

- How does the quality of Mental Health services affect students' academic performance?
- Given McGill's focus on interdisciplinary collaboration, and the task force's recommendation, can the university facilitate regular meetings between Mental Health and interested parties?
- What else can be done to foster interdisciplinarity with respect to mental health?

¹Review of the Mental Health Service of McGill University – Sept. 2005

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