AMHHEC webinar
Mental health in higher education, the JCU response. What role should universities play?

Prof Stephen Naylor
Chair Academic Board

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The Student first!

Consider the Tertiary education experience :

- University is about opening the mind to new ways of seeing the world
- Introduction to new theories and paradigms
- Transformation of self
- Development and professional capability
- Shift from instructional to self managed learning

We must realise why this can be challenging.

Help is required for all students to navigate University.

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Wellness focused Policy and Support structure

- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/learning-and-teaching/learning-teaching-and-assessment-policy-01jan2021
- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/student-services/bullying-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-policy-and-procedure
- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/student-services/student-results-policy/academic-safety-net-guideline-tp1
- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/student-services/intervention-strategy-for-students-who-have-not-made-satisfactory-academic-progress-policy
- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/learning-and-teaching/first-year-experience-and-retention-policy
- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/learning-and-teaching/student-retention-policy
- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/equity/students-with-disabilities
- https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/procedures/student-services-procedures/special-consideration-procedure

COVID interventions to support Wellness for JCU students

- GPA modification
- Special Consideration
- Collaboration with students in areas of L&T provision and Assessment
- Hybrid service model (Telehealth)
- Food Pantry
- Emergency support

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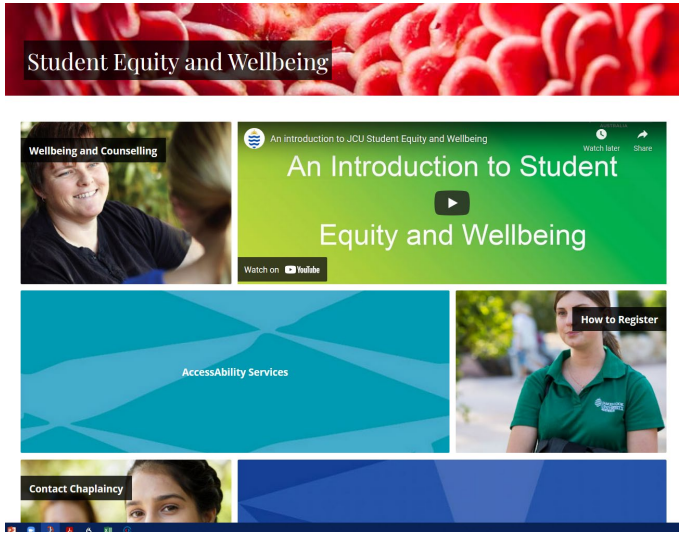

LTSE Student Support (Students Equity and Wellness)

- Mentor Programs
- Accessibility
- Counselling
- Respect Now Always
- Chaplaincy
- The Desk (Beyond Blue …)
- Info Sheets (Accom, Harassment, Grief, Relationships, Homesickness, Loneliness …)

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JCU Mental Health Strategy - Steering Committee

Drivers

- JCU needs a documented holistic strategy to promote a mentally healthy campus
- Orygen Australian University Mental Health Framework (2020)
- The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health (2020)
- The Steering Committee was established by the Vice Chancellor. Members include : Students, Academics, COS, Professional and Technical staff.

Parameters

- Co-design and development with students and staff
- Diversity and inclusion at the heart of the document
- Whole of institution approach to include students and staff
- Captures the learning environment and curriculum
- Leverages partnerships – internal to JCU and with community services
- Takes a strengths based and stepped care approach – from health promotion to crisis intervention
- Be realistic and achievable (with due consideration for resourcing, and capability).

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Draft structure or framework for Strategy

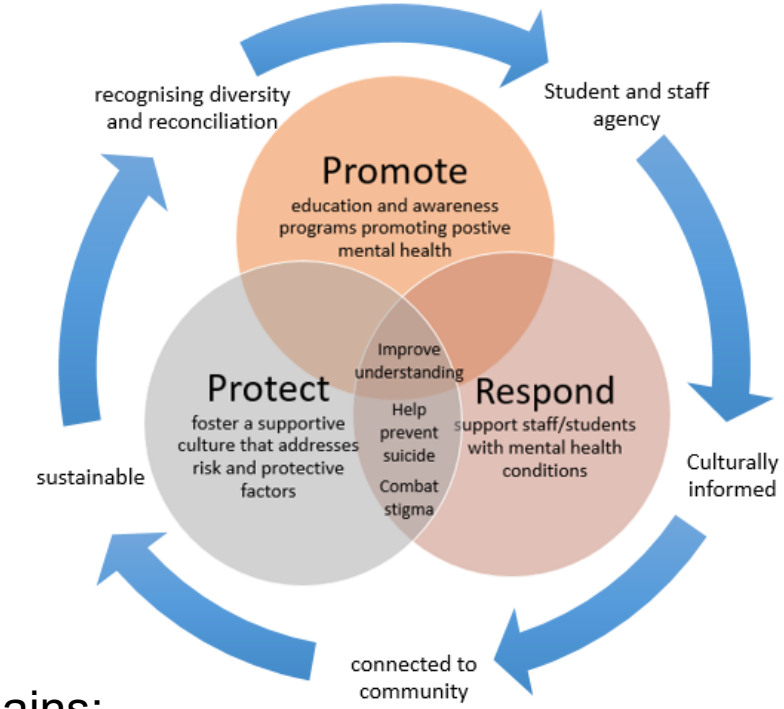
Strategy uses an integrated approach responding to:

Context (existing JCU documents):

- Student Focus
- Culturally Informed
- Connected to Community
- Diversity and Reconciliation
- Sustainability

Enablers:

- Leadership, strategy and policy
- Student voice and participation
- Whole of institution cohesive approach
- Community engagement
- Students and staff agency to manage own mental health and wellbeing



Domains:

Learn	Work
• Curriculum and pedagogy • Learning communities and environment • Self-belief and confidence – link to employability and graduate outcomes for student • Clarity of role of academic staff • Assessment – meaningful and purposefully developed and planned • Fitness to study and fitness to practice and other policies to support health and wellbeing	• Staff mental health ○ Promote mentally healthy workplaces ○ Build mental health and wellbeing conversations into PDP ○ Champion open conversations ○ Deploy effective wellbeing interventions ○ Train line managers and research supervisors to promote mental health ○ Support - easy to access • Staff supporting students ○ Training for staff to be aware of mental health difficulties and respond appropriately to students ○ Boundaries of support ○ Training to support compassionate communities
Live	**Support**
• Health promotion – encourage healthy behaviours (sleep, eating, non-smoking campus, etc.) • Healthy culture – inclusion and diversity, oppose bullying, harassment and marginalisation (inclusive of JCU Respect work) • Healthy environments • Visible leadership	• Holistic support – mental health, disability, discrimination, faith, housing, learning, employment, etc. • Designed through co-production with students and staff • Safe and effective interventions • Sustainably resourced, staffed and managed • Accessible and appropriate to culture and context • Prepared to manage mental health crisis and support critical incident management

To deliver this, Action Plan in four domains:

- LEARN: Promoting a nurturing and positive stigma-free learning environment
- WORK: Promoting Wellness at the workplace
- LIVE: Health promotion: Early intervention, evidence-based responses and positive engagement
- SUPPORT: Promoting partnerships, collaboration, and community engagement

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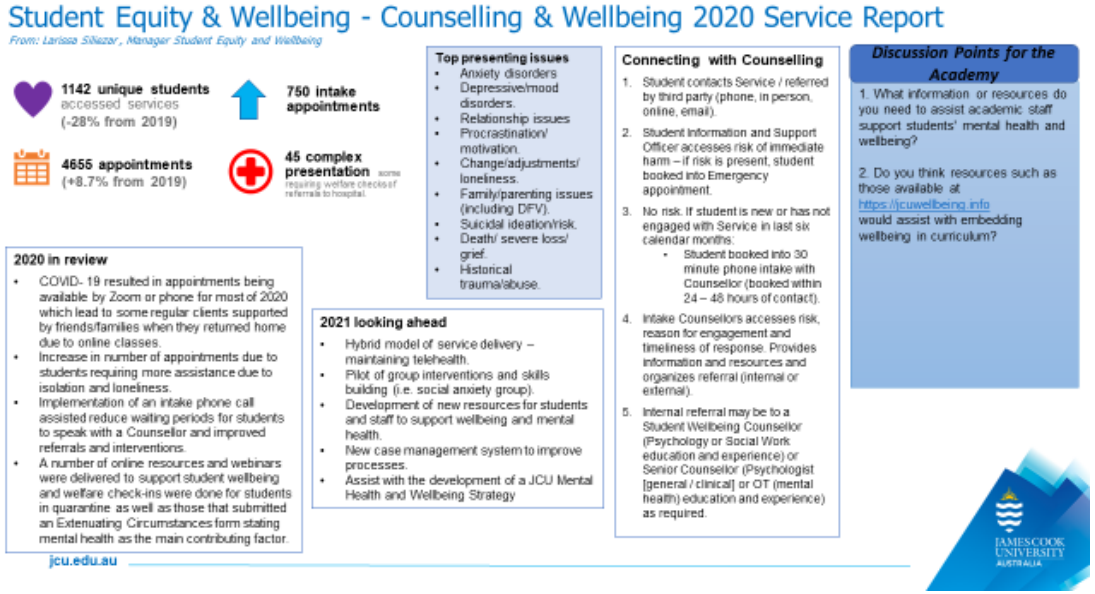
Communication with the University

- Academic Board (Hot Topic)
- Education Committee Reports/Dashboard
- Council (VC Presentations 2018 and 2019)



Student Equity & Wellbeing - Counselling & Wellbeing 2020 Service Report

From: Larissa Sillazar, Manager Student Equity and Wellbeing

1142 unique students accessed services (-28% from 2019)

750 intake appointments

4655 appointments (+8.7% from 2019)

45 complex presentation some regarding welfare checks or referrals to hospital

Top presenting issues
- Anxiety disorders
- Depressive/mood disorders.
- Relationship issues
- Procrastination/ motivation.
- Change/adjustments/ loneliness.
- Family/parenting issues (including DFV).
- Suicidal ideation/risk.
- Death/ severe loss/ grief.
- Historical trauma/abuse.

Connecting with Counselling
1. Student contacts Service / referred by third party (phone, in person, online, email).
2. Student Information and Support Officer accesses risk of immediate harm – if risk is present, student booked into Emergency appointment.
3. No risk. If student is new or has not engaged with Service in last six calendar months:
   - Student booked into 30 minute phone intake with Counsellor (booked within 24 – 48 hours of contact).
4. Intake Counsellors accesses risk, reason for engagement and timeliness of response. Provides information and resources and organizes referral (internal or external).
5. Internal referral may be to a Student Wellbeing Counsellor (Psychology or Social Work education and experience) or Senior Counsellor (Psychologist [general / clinical] or OT (mental health) education and experience) as required.

Discussion Points for the Academy

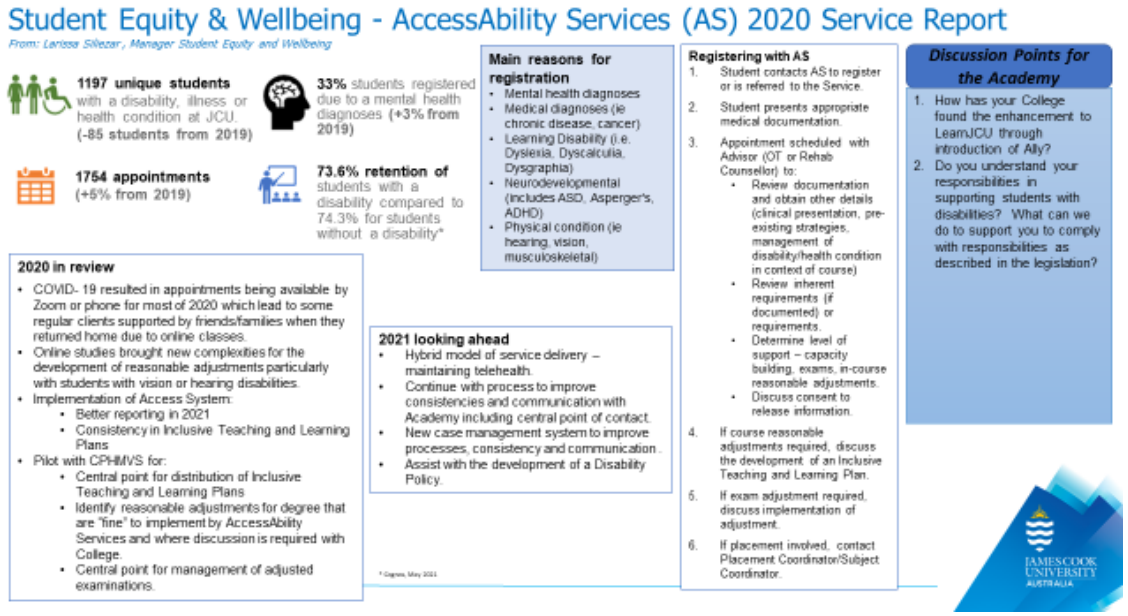
1. What information or resources do you need to assist academic staff support students' mental health and wellbeing?

2. Do you think resources such as those available at https://jcuwellbeing.info would assist with embedding wellbeing in curriculum?

2020 in review
- COVID- 19 resulted in appointments being available by Zoom or phone for most of 2020 which lead to some regular clients supported by friends/families when they returned home due to online classes.
- Increase in number of appointments due to students requiring more assistance due to isolation and loneliness.
- Implementation of an intake phone call assisted reduce waiting periods for students to speak with a Counsellor and improved referrals and interventions.
- A number of online resources and webinars were delivered to support student wellbeing and welfare check-ins were done for students in quarantine as well as those that submitted an Extenuating Circumstances form stating mental health as the main contributing factor.

2021 looking ahead
- Hybrid model of service delivery – maintaining telehealth.
- Pilot of group interventions and skills building (i.e. social anxiety group).
- Development of new resources for students and staff to support wellbeing and mental health.
- New case management system to improve processes.
- Assist with the development of a JCU Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

jcu.edu.au



Student Equity & Wellbeing - AccessAbility Services (AS) 2020 Service Report

From: Larissa Sillazar, Manager Student Equity and Wellbeing

1197 unique students with a disability, illness or health condition at JCU. (-85 students from 2019)

33% students registered due to a mental health diagnoses (+3% from 2019)

1754 appointments (+6% from 2019)

73.6% retention of students with a disability compared to 74.3% for students without a disability*

Main reasons for registration
- Mental health diagnoses
- Medical diagnoses (ie chronic disease, cancer)
- Learning Disability (i.e. Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia)
- Neurodevelopmental (includes ASD, Asperger's, ADHD)
- Physical condition (ie hearing, vision, musculoskeletal)

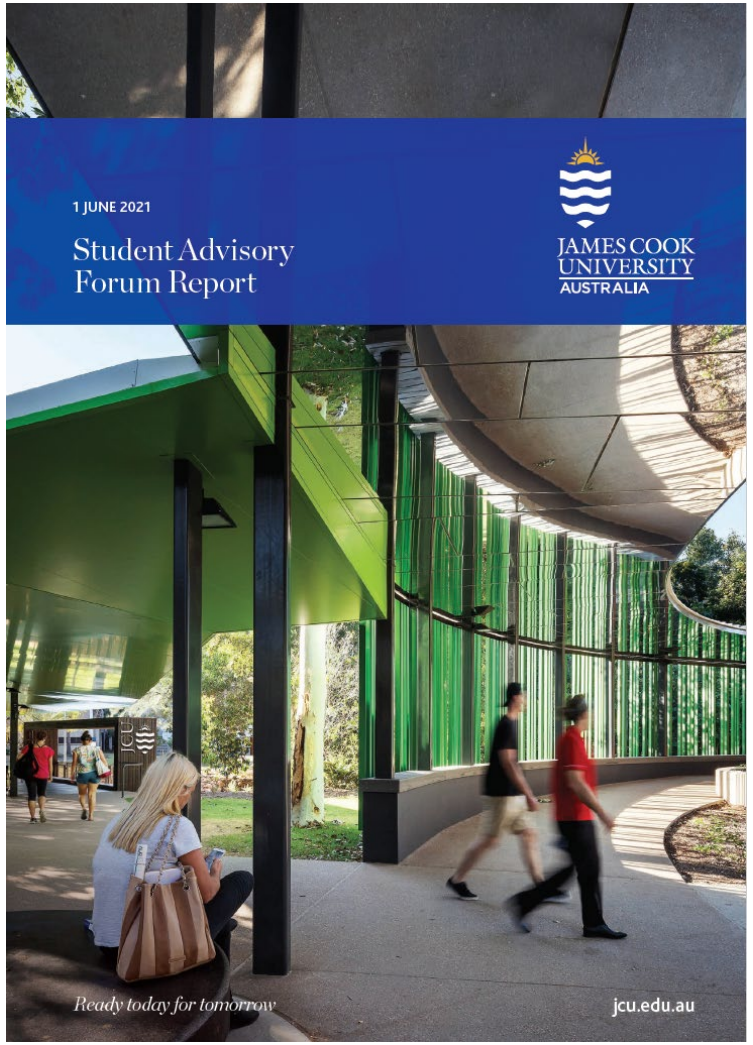
Registering with AS
1. Student contacts AS to register or is referred to the Service.
2. Student presents appropriate medical documentation.
3. Appointment scheduled with Advisor (OT or Rehab Counsellor) to:
   - Review documentation and obtain other details (clinical presentation, pre-existing strategies, management of disability/health condition in context of course)
   - Review inherent requirements (if documented) or requirements.
   - Determine level of support – capacity building, exams, in-course reasonable adjustments.
   - Discuss consent to release information.
4. If course reasonable adjustments required, discuss the development of an Inclusive Teaching and Learning Plan.
5. If exam adjustment required, discuss implementation of adjustment.
6. If placement involved, contact Placement Coordinator/Subject Coordinator.

Discussion Points for the Academy

1. How has your College found the enhancement to LearnJCU through introduction of Ally?
2. Do you understand your responsibilities in supporting students with disabilities? What can we do to support you to comply with responsibilities as described in the legislation?

2020 in review
- COVID- 19 resulted in appointments being available by Zoom or phone for most of 2020 which lead to some regular clients supported by friends/families when they returned home due to online classes.
- Online studies brought new complexities for the development of reasonable adjustments particularly with students with vision or hearing disabilities.
- Implementation of Access System:
  - Better reporting in 2021
  - Consistency in Inclusive Teaching and Learning Plans
- Pilot with CPHMVS for:
  - Central point for distribution of Inclusive Teaching and Learning Plans
  - Identify reasonable adjustments for degree that are "fine" to implement by AccessAbility Services and where discussion is required with College.
  - Central point for management of adjusted examinations.

2021 looking ahead
- Hybrid model of service delivery – maintaining telehealth.
- Continue with process to improve consistencies and communication with Academy including central point of contact.
- New case management system to improve processes, consistency and communication.
- Assist with the development of a Disability Policy.

Other ways of monitoring Student Wellness

- Students feedback (BOS reports)
- Appeals and Misconduct data
- Student Forums
- Student membership on governance committees
- Listening more and pre-supposing less