Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health on Campus
National Data

• Healthy Minds Study 2018
  o 23% of all students are taking psychiatric medication and
  o 39% percent of all students are experiencing a specific
    mental health issue.
  o The most pressing concerns for students are anxiety and
    depression. (Followed by stress and sleep difficulty)

• American College Health Association National College Health Assessment (NCHA) 2018
  o Felt Overwhelmed (Nationwide 85.5%; WashU 87%)
  o Felt so Depressed it was difficult to function (Nationwide
    41%; WashU 38%)
  o Seriously considered Suicide (Nationwide 11%; WashU
    9.9%)
WashU Data

• Habif Health and Wellness Center
  o In the academic years 2014-2019, there has been a steady increase of students seeking mental health services (1152 in AY2014; 2345 in AY2019).
    • This past year Graduate and Professional Students account for 39.8%, increasing from 35% in past years.
  o Hospitalization for mental health reasons has also increased (from less than 15 incidents in 2004 to almost 40 in 2015-16; and nearly 30 in 2017-18.)
National Data: Center for Collegiate Mental Health 2018

• Indicate a continually elevating number of students presenting at counseling centers nationally have:
  o sought mental health prior to attending college
  o taken medication for mental health concerns
  o purposely injured themselves in some fashion, considered
  o seriously considered suicide, and made some form of a suicide attempt.

Wash U Students Reflect this Trend
WashU Data

• 2017 Pulse Survey
  o Steady increase in students reporting Feeling Overwhelmed (27% in 2013; 38% in 2017; Similar at Peer Institutions)
  o Underrepresented Minority Students (URM) and Pell Grant eligible students report at an even higher rate than other WashU students that they have very often Felt Overwhelmed (URM 51%, Not URM: 35.5%; Pell Eligible 47%, Not Pell 37.3%)
Student Union Mental Health Fund (SUMHF)

- Established by Student Government in 2018
- Designed to support mental health access to students from low income backgrounds:
  - Co-payments
  - Transportation to off-campus providers
  - Testing associated with care of diagnosis
  - Medication or related material purchases
- SUMHF supported
  - 2018-19: 42 students, $20,000
  - Fall 2019: 59 students, $18,000
WashU Counseling Center Wait Times and Staffing*

• **Staffing**
  – 11.6 FTE Counseling Staff (Four additions in the past four years)

• **Ratio** (Providers to Service Eligible Students)
  – Current WashU: 1:1060

• **Suggested Ratios**
  - Accreditation Ratios 1:1000-1:1500
  - External Review 2017 Suggested Ratio: 1:850
    - WashU Utilization Rate: 19-20%
    - National 5-12% More Typical
  - COFHE Comparison Target: 1:650
Wait Times and Staffing

![Bar chart showing Students per FTE Counselor for COFHE Schools]
Short Term Challenges and Recommended Response

- **Managing Expectations**
  - Framing to Parents and Students
  - Articulating and Adhering to Scope of Service

- **Reducing the Waiting List Wait**
  - Enhance Access to Off-Campus Care
  - Further Expansion of Group and Patient Flow

- **Move from 1-1 Counseling as the only Model**
  - Engage in a Stepped Up-Care model along with a Campus-wide menu of service options in addition to 1-1 counseling.
Longer Term Challenges and Recommended Response

- **Improve Campus Mental Health Literacy**
  - Not all students need to see a counselor. Sometimes a student needs an empathic listening ear, not always counseling.
  - Make identifying, understanding and responding to mental health issues a priority for **everyone** on-campus who interacts with students.
  - Kognito: Strongly recommend for faculty and staff; additional training when possible (100-120 faculty, mostly Brown School, have completed the training).
Kognito

- https://studentaffairs.wustl.edu/resources/staff-resources/kognito-at-risk-faculty-staff/
Longer Term Challenges and Recommended Response

- **Prevention Climate Campaign:**
  - Current student mental health focus is downstream (time, attention and resources responding to students in crisis) not upstream (addressing issues that impact student mental health; emphasizing health education and health promotion and the development of coping and resiliency skills)
Longer Term Challenges and Recommended Response

• Partnerships
  o Collaborative engagement between Danforth Campus, Med School and WashU Physicians

• Assessment
  o Engage in more rigorous assessment to determine what delivery methods, educational and promotion strategies are actually working
In Sum: Setting Priorities

• Make deliberate decisions about the resources from the counseling center that will prioritize healthy students through campus-wide work and the balance between crisis response/risk assessment and on-going treatment needs.
In Sum: Holistic Student Wellness

• Think of student health and wellness more holistically—with a focus on an integrated and strategic approach to student well-being.

• Emphasize health education and health promotion; and the development of coping and resiliency skills.

• Educate students, faculty, and staff on relevant information including resilience, empathy, mindfulness, and practices consistent with the empirical literature.
In Sum: Identifying and Responding to Particular Mental Health Challenges

- Identify the range of factors that contribute to student mental health issues (e.g., academic issues; financial challenges; minority status, campus environment, etc.).

- Identify the particular and unique areas of challenge for various members of the student community, particularly students that research suggests are at higher risk and/or less likely to seek services and target interventions appropriately to each identified student population.
In Sum: Treatment and Assessment

- Utilize a combination of mental health delivery strategies (e.g., 1-1 counseling; embedded counseling; online counseling; group therapy; peer support; other delivery methods).
- Engage in regular assessment to determine what delivery methods, educational and promotion strategies, and interventions, are actually working.
In Sum: Whose Responsibility is This?

- Make identifying, understanding and responding to mental health issues a priority for everyone on-campus who interacts with students.
Question/Discussion