

Students in Higher Education and their Mental Health

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Themes

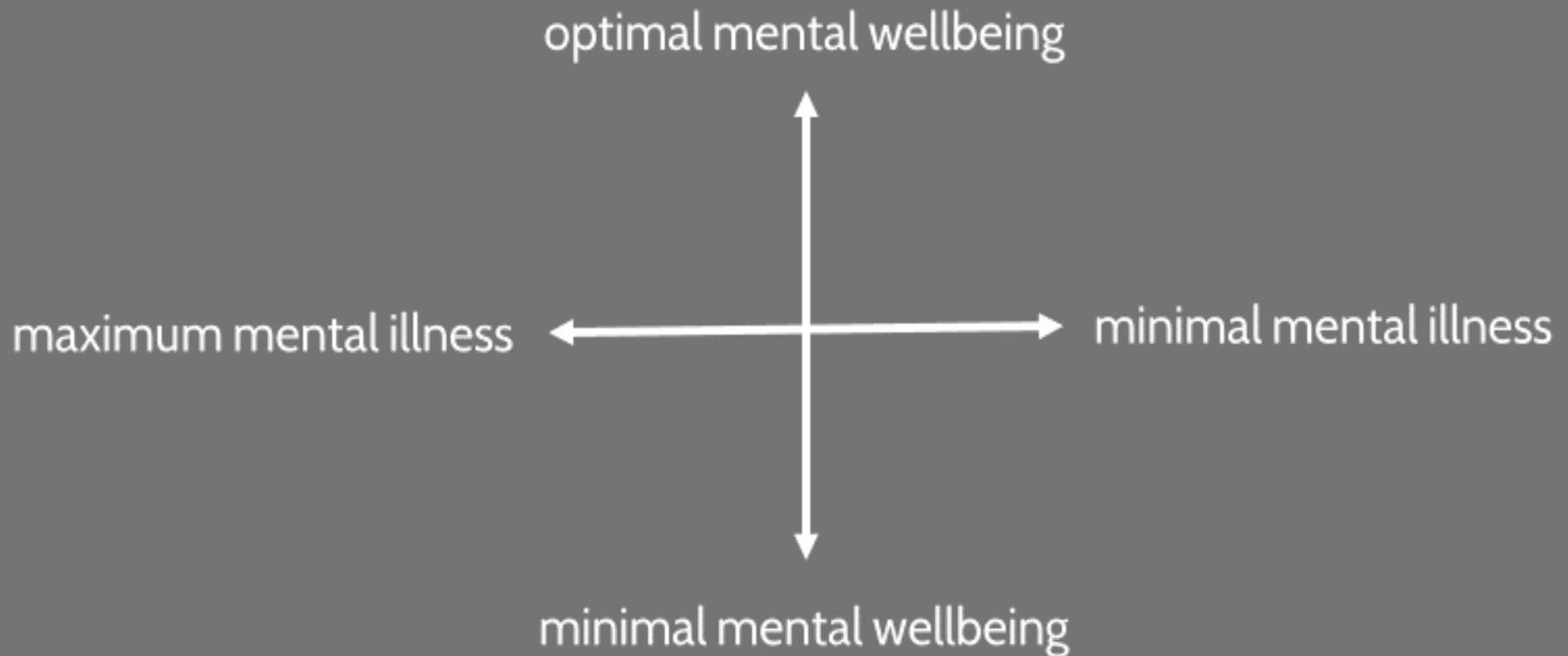
- Mental Health in the overall student population
- Suicide statistics
- Relevant Policy
- Students Nurses with mental health needs
- Supportive strategies

What is Mental Health?

- Mental health encompasses emotional resilience to enable us to enjoy life and survive pain, disappointment and sadness, and an underlying belief in our own, and others', dignity and worth. It also allows us to engage productively in and contribute to society or our community.

MENTAL HEALTH IS A SPECTRUM

People can have a mental illness, but be mentally well if they have successful coping strategies & support. Equally, people without a mental illness can have very poor wellbeing if they face challenging circumstances and do not have coping strategies in place.



The Higher Education student population

- In England, over 300,000 people aged 18 to 30 enter HE a year.
- Over 80% of FT students are under the age of 25 and over ½ are aged 20 or under
- Part-time students (25% of the total student community) tend to be older; over 60% are aged 30 or over.

Higher Education Statistics Agency (2016)

Types of mental health problems among students

Which of these best describes your mental health problem(s)? %
(Select all that apply)



YouGov (2016) survey - Students Sample Size: 1061

Which is correct a, b or c ?

Q. 1

- a) $\frac{1}{4}$ of students report Mental Health problem
- b) $\frac{1}{2}$ of students report Mental Health problems
- c) $\frac{1}{3}$ of students report Mental Health problems

(YouGov survey of Britain's students, 2016)

Answer: b

- a) $\frac{1}{4}$ students report Mental Health problem
- b) $\frac{1}{2}$ students report Mental Health problems
- c) $\frac{1}{3}$ students report Mental Health problems

(YouGov survey of Britain's students, 2016
(Students Sample Size: 1061))

Which is correct a or b ?

Q. 2

- a) Female students are more likely to say they have MH problems than males (34% vs 19%)
- b) Male students are more likely to say they have MH problems than females (34% vs 19%)

(YouGov survey of Britain's students, 2016)

Answer: a

- a) **Female students are more likely to say they have MH problems than males (34% vs 19%)**
- b) Male students are more likely to say they have MH problems than females (34% vs 19%)

(YouGov survey of Britain's students, 2016)
(Students Sample Size: 1061)

Q.3

LGBT students have a high likelihood of Mental Health problems compared to their heterosexual counterparts (45% vs 22%).

True or False

(YouGov survey of Britain's students, 2016)

Answer

LGBT students have a high likelihood of Mental Health problems compared to their heterosexual counterparts (45% vs 22%).

True

(YouGov survey of Britain's students, 2016)

(Students Sample Size: 1061)

Q.4

- Female students are more likely to meet the threshold criteria for depressive and anxiety disorders and male students are at greater risk of suicide.

True or False

(Hunt et al., 2010)

Answer

- **Female students are more likely to meet the threshold criteria for depressive and anxiety disorders and male students are at greater risk of suicide.**
- Across all broad age groups, the rate for males is around 3 times higher than females.

(Office of National Statistic, 2016)

(Hunt et al., 2010)

True

Student suicides increased from 100 in 2013 to 130 in 2014.

(ONS, 2016)

47% increase in students requesting mental health support services in Scotland based on data from 12 institutions between the academic years 2011/12 and 2014/15

(NUS Scotland, 2016)

Policies

 HM Government

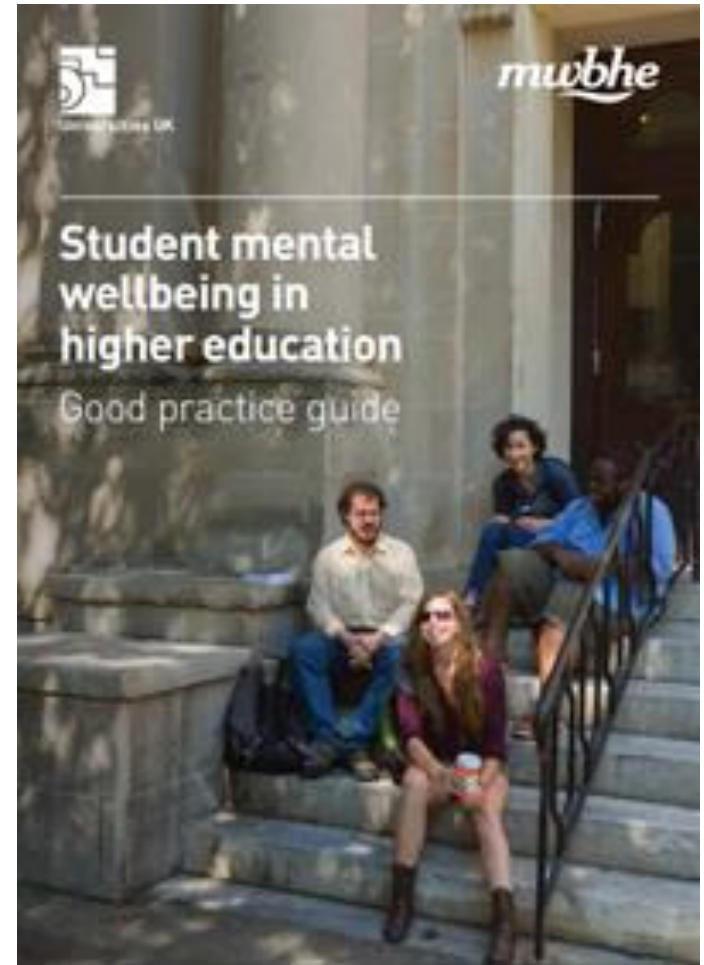
No health without
mental health

A cross-government mental health outcomes
strategy for people of all ages

 HM Government

Preventing suicide in
England: One year on
First annual report on the
cross-government
outcomes strategy to save
lives

January 2014 (revmab)



The Equality Act 2010

What do you understand by the term reasonable adjustments?

Discuss with your neighbour

Definition of Reasonable Adjustments

The duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' in the learning environment is where a disabled student would otherwise be put at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled students.

NMC (2017) Educational Standards

Factors that affect students wellbeing

- Student Debt / Loans
- Homesickness
- Loneliness
- Relationship breakups
- Peer Pressure
- Academic pressure
- Self-imposed or family pressure to get a good degree.
- Future career stress / higher risk of unemployment due to MH problems

- Poor diet and lack of exercise
- Lack of sleep
- Body image concerns
- Sexual identity
- Bullying
- Bereavement
- Divorce
- Virtual Environment / Social Media
- Alcohol and drug use

What support would you give the student below ?

I am feeling anxious and have stopped sleeping for the past week worrying about my assessments.

I am drinking beer every night to relax, and I am finding it harder and harder to get up in the morning and I have been late for placements and lectures.

My mentor told me off and I am thinking of quitting nursing.

Challenges for Practice and University

- Little is known about what specific support is needed
- Judgemental reactions
- Being open to the conversation
- Be proactive not reactive
- Dilemma: Is a reasonable adjustment an adjustment that's reasonable?

Student Nurses & their Mental Health

- Mental Health Nursing is a career option
 - Student nurses are not immune
 - Students with a mental health difficulty more likely to experience anxiety
- Indicators of increasing stress or relapse:
 - Freq. lateness or absenteeism
 - Fluctuating academic performance
 - Elaborate excuses
 - Excessive apologies
 - Difficulty in adhering to deadlines

General Student Support

- Starting at university: Student survival kit
- Wellbeing Services
- Occupational Health
- Nightline
- Practice Placement Support Unit

Specific Support

- Culture of acceptance
- Building relationships
- Strategies to enhance self-esteem and improve emotional intelligence
- Know the warning signs
- Know when, how and who to refer to for help

Thank You
Any questions?

Good role modeling:

*The best thing to do is to look after
yourself and each other*

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