
POSTER ABSTRACT**Student mental health: towards sustainable community of caring approach based on the public mental health perspective.**

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Attending university can be stressful and involve significant lifestyle changes: adjusting to the demands of a new learning environment, interacting with a diverse range of new people

and environments, and (coping with) being away from trusted support networks. Although sixty per cent of students navigate higher education without emotional problems, forty per cent experience mental health issues, and approximately one in five struggles with mental disorders.

Against this background, the Flemish Community (Belgium) has rolled out a sustainable student mental health strategy which takes a public mental health perspective as its starting point. Such an approach shifts the focus from high-risk students and mental disorders to the emotional health of the entire student population, and, accordingly, interventions that can improve the resilience of all students.

The new policy has several strengths. Monitoring is undertaken through the WHO World Mental Health International College Student initiative. A wide range of low-threshold e-health interventions free of charge to students is available on the MoodSpace internet platform. Going beyond these, the Flemish policy helps universities to adopt a more proactive, preventive approach. Students are actively involved in the development and evaluation of interventions and policy implementation.

Structure:

- Introduction: 15' (Ronny Bruffaerts)

The introduction focuses on the key elements of the new mental health strategy policy

- Key element 1: Mental Health Monitor: 20' (Ronny Bruffaerts - Maarten Vansteenkiste)

This contribution provides an overview of the Monitor which includes a set of process variables that are sensitive to monitoring student mental health, study motivation and detecting policy effects. The 2022 results and specific action points translated to the macro, meso and micro levels will be presented.

Q&A 10'

- Key element 2: MoodSpace: 20' (Valérie Van Hees)

This contribution provides an overview of MoodSpace. This contribution will bring an overview of the results of students' engagement with the e-interventions.

- Q&A 10'

- Key element 3: Community of Caring: 15': (Valérie Van Hees, Ronny Bruffaerts)

This contribution provides a presentation of the gatekeeping training 'We-care'. The training, designed for students and staff respectively, has been developed at Flemish level with the aim to detect emotional problems early and refer students to the help they need. Preliminary results are presented.

- Q&A 10'

- Closing: Take home messages 15' (Valérie Van Hees)

This contribution summarises the next steps and initiates a group discussion on the take home messages.

How to engage with the audience:

- Rooms will be organised in roundtables or a fish bowl setup
- Interactive tools will be used during presentations (eg., dynamic dashboard mental health monitor, video testimonials, demonstrations MoodSpace and We-care).
- Polling via mentimeter:
- Each speaker shares different angles of the new policy. After each contribution, a moderator will ask the audience questions through mentimeter about their thoughts about each key element.

How to summarise the take home messages:

- The session will end with a last question asked by the moderator to the audience through the mentimeter app, on the take away that participants will bring home.