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1. Executive Committee, 2017/18

Prof M Fowler  VC’s Deputy; Master of Darwin
Dr M Gross  Bursar, Emmanuel College
Dr J Bunbury  Senior Tutor, St Edmund’s College
Mr Tim Ellis  Counsellor, UCS
Prof L R Gelsthorpe  Council Representative, Pembroke College
Ms G Dufour  Head of Service
Dr J McLarty  Senior Tutor, Wolfson College
Dr C Lea-Cox  General Practitioner, Trumpington St Medical Practice
Dr A Devine  General Practitioner, Bridge Street Medical Centre
Mr A Powell  Bursar, Fitzwilliam College
Ms J Raine  Bursar, Newnham College (until October 2017)
Mr R Smith  UCS Financial Administrator (in attendance until October)
Ms M Frazer-Carroll  CUSU Disability Officer
Mx F Oulds  CUSU Welfare Officer
Miss K. Springthorpe  Acting Secretary (in attendance)

2. Staff in the University Counselling Service

Head of Service
Géraldine Dufour  Registered member BACP Senior Accredited

Senior Counsellors
Hanya Czepkowski  Registered member BACP Accredited
Sally Swain  Registered member BACP Accredited
Polly Brown  Registered member BACP Accredited

Counsellors & CBT Therapists
Jackie Alden (part-time)  Registered member BACP Accredited
Margaret Bailey  Registered member BACP Senior Accredited
Fliss Cadbury (part-time)  UKCP Reg Psychotherapist
Tim Ellis (part-time)  UKCP Reg Psychotherapeutic Counsellor
Gudrun Haraldsdottir (part-time)  Registered member BACP Accredited
Fran Patrick (part-time)  Registered member BACP Accredited
Deborah Powter  Registered member BACP Accredited
Diana Ong (part-time)  HCPC registered Clinical and Counselling Psychologist
BPS Chartered Psychologist
Vanessa Skinner (part-time)  BABCP Accred. CBT Psychotherapist
Anna Zaboronski (part-time)  Registered member BACP Accredited
Panayota Manias (part-time)  C.Psychol British Psychological Society, HCPC registered Counselling Psychologist
Katie Holland (part-time)  BABCP Accred. CBT Psychotherapist

Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor
Amy O’Leary  Qualified independent sexual violence advocate
Mental Health Advisor
Emily Farrar (part-time)  RMN Nurse registered with the NMC (until March 18)
Ashleigh St Louis  RMN Nurse registered with the NMC

Mindfulness practitioner
Elizabeth English (part-time)  Member of the British Focusing Association
The Focusing Institute Centre for Non-violent Communication (CNVC)
Simon McKibben (locum)  Member of the British Focusing Association
The Focusing Institute Centre for Non-violent Communication (CNVC)

Locums
Michele Fitzsimmons
Emma Lockhart
Farasat Sadia

Associate Counsellors (training placements: half- to one day per week)
First year:
Kate Parmenter (until Oct 17)
Claire Addison
Joanna Lyness
Jessica Walden
Karen Sweeney

Psychiatric consultations
Dr Damaris Koch  Consultant Psychiatrist

Support Staff
Robert Smith (part-time)  Financial Administrator (until October)
Sue Geeson  Office Manager
Fiona Hey (part-time)  Administrator / Receptionist
Hazel Sanderson (part-time)  Administrator / Receptionist
Becky Wright (part-time)  Administrator / Receptionist
Counselling can change people’s lives, this student encouraged us to use this feedback:

“Thank you for offering such a service – it is incredibly valuable. Especially because as a student you cannot afford private counselling. While at uni, you do not only encounter academic problems but in these pressurised environments, you also encounter personal problems. Your help equipped me better for the future also beyond uni.” (Reproduced with permission)
3. Executive Summary

3.1 Service Evaluation

We conduct a follow-up survey of all users of the Service following the end of their counselling. This year our participation rate was 14%. The comments are mostly very encouraging, and reveal high levels of satisfaction with students’ experience of the Service, with the main results shown below:

1. Overall, 96% said that counselling had helped them deal with their difficulties (compared to 95% last year), with 83% saying counselling helped ‘some’ or ‘a great deal’ (last year: 83%).
2. To what extent would you say that counselling has helped you to stay at university?
   70% indicated that this was an issue for them (compared to 71% last year), and 29% said counselling was ‘an important factor’ or ‘the most significant factor’ (last year: 38%).
3. To what extent would you say that counselling has helped you to do better in your academic work?
   85% indicated that this was an issue for them (compared to 91% last year), and 35% said counselling was ‘an important factor’ or ‘the most significant factor’ (last year: 35%).
4. To what extent would you say that counselling has improved your overall experience of university?
   97% said that counselling had helped with this to some extent (compared to 95% last year); with 53% saying counselling was ‘an important factor’ or ‘the most significant factor’ (last year: 55%).
5. To what extent would you say counselling has helped you develop skills that might be useful in obtaining future employment (e.g. self-understanding, understanding of others, managing difficult feelings better, increased self-confidence, assertiveness)?
   88% said that counselling had helped with this to some extent (compared to 90% last year), with 39% saying counselling was ‘an important factor’ or ‘the most significant factor’ (last year: 39%).

When asked to describe in more details the ways in which counselling helped them, recurring themes mentioned by students include:

**Being listened to:** “Just allowed me to talk about something that I couldn’t discuss with others”

**A valued space:** “Being able to share anxieties and problems in a very safe and welcoming environment”

**Skills and techniques:** “With counselling, I achieved lower levels of anxiety and stress and could focus in my academic studies better”

**Developing understanding:** “Helped me think of different perspectives’

**Feeling supported:** “It provided some relief in a period of hardship”, “The support of my counsellor has benefitted me enormously through a very difficult time”

Most of the complaints received about the counselling service relate to students having to wait for their appointments, or having a limit to the number of sessions available:

“I only wish the sessions could have been more frequent and numerous. This is of course not a reflection on my counsellor but the fact the UCS is so busy”

Information about the nature of counselling and current waiting times for counselling can be found on our website.

All the responses we receive, including any negative comments, are reviewed by one of our senior counsellors and, unless the response is anonymous, also given to the counsellor concerned. In this way these comments help to inform and modify our practice.

Our administrative team is dedicated to the students we support, and goes the extra mile to help them and be welcoming, as is reflected in our survey where all but two students who answered were happy about the way in which they were dealt with by our receptionists.
KEY NUMBERS
For the clinical service as a whole (counselling at the UCS and College-Based Counselling, SAHA & MHAs)

- **2152** students accessed the service.
- **11%** of the student population accessed the UCS, a high proportion of the student body.

Registrations for the service as a whole:
In the past four years, the service has experienced a **74%** increase in the number of students applying to access the service from **1565** in 2013/2014 to **2717** in 2017/2018.

For counselling:
- **1936** students accessed individual counselling (**361** more than last year), for an average of **4** sessions.
- **10%** of the student population accessed individual counselling at the UCS, a high proportion of the student body.
- **50 - 90** new referrals were received per week during term time.
- **5 - 10** counselling workshops and groups were offered per week during term time.
- **130 - 240** individual counselling sessions were offered each week, and there were a further **30 - 60** group attendances per week during term.

For Mental Health Advisors (MHAs):
- **179** students accessed individual sessions with the MHAs.
- **145** mental health assessments and a further **415** ongoing sessions were offered throughout the year.

Mindfulness
- **7** eight-week courses were delivered during the Michaelmas and Lent terms, offering **210** places to students each term.
• A series of 4 differently-themed workshops targeting examination issues were taught during the Easter term, offering 321 places to students.

KEY FACTS:
• We also responded to numerous requests for support and guidance from tutors, nurses and welfare staff in colleges and departments, as well as from GPs and specialist staff in mental health services.
• Students requiring urgent help were fast-tracked for counselling and/or seen very quickly by the MHAs.
• The mindfulness practitioner advised welfare staff and students on suitability for mindfulness.

WHO USES THE SERVICE?

For the service as a whole:
We have information about 1958 students who accessed the service, including groups and workshops last year. University figures are included for information, in brackets. Of those who replied to these questions:
- 48% were undergraduates (UoC 59%) and 46% were post-graduates (UoC 41%).
- 39% were final year students and 41% were first year students (UoC 36%).
- 68% had not used the service before and 27% had returned to see us. This percentage of returning users demonstrates a confidence in the service delivered, and a good previous experience. 5% chose not to answer.

For Equality and Diversity monitoring questions:
We have information about 1886 students. Of those who replied to these questions:
- 64% describe themselves as women (UoC 47%), 30% as male (UoC 53%),
- 2% as non-binary, and 0.4% Other, 1% prefer not to answer, 2% chose not to answer.
- 11% describe themselves as bisexual, 4% as gay man, 2% gay woman/Lesbian,
- 54% heterosexual/straight, 3% Other, 7% prefer not to answer 19% did not to answer.
325 students told us that they had a disability, 9% of students attending the Service stated they had mental health difficulties (UoC 2.8%), 4% a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D (3.3% UoC), 1% a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder (0.5% UoC), 1% a long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy (0.9 UoC), 0.2% a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches (0.3% UoC), 0.2% deaf or a serious hearing impairment (0.1%), 0.1% blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses (UoC 0.1%), 0.7% a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above (1% UoC) 2% two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions, adding up to a total of 18% disabled students (UoC 9%) did not to answer.

72% described themselves as White (UoC 67%), 2% as Black (UoC 2%), 8% as Asian (UoC 10%), 5% as Chinese (UoC 12%), 9% were from other ethnic backgrounds (UoC 6.7%) chose not to answer.

61% came from the UK (UoC 58%), 16% from other EU countries (UoC 17%) and 23% were international students (UoC 24%).

These figures include information on counselling at the UCS as well as College-Based Counselling, SAHA & MHAs and attendance at groups and workshops.

WHO COMES TO MINDFULNESS CLASSES?

We have information about 398 students who accessed the 'Mindfulness Skills for Students' classes. University figures are included for information, in brackets. Of those who replied to these questions:

- 41% were undergraduates (UoC 59%), 56% were post-graduates (UoC 41%) 3% Other.

Of those who replied to these questions:
- 61% described themselves as women (UoC 46%), 39% as male (UoC 54%), 0.08% prefer not to say.
- 68% described themselves as White (UoC 68%), 3% as Black (UoC 1%), 10% as Asian (UoC 9%), 9% as Chinese (UoC 11%), 9% were from other ethnic backgrounds (UoC 6%) 1% prefer not to say.
- 46% came from the UK (UoC 55%), 25% from other EU countries (UoC 16%) and 29% were international students (UoC 29%).
WHO SIGNPOSTS STUDENTS TOWARDS COUNSELLING AT THE UCS?

Although all students self-refer to counselling, we ask students if anyone suggested that they attend the counselling service. In 2017/18, 24% were advised to come by a medical practitioner and 14% via their personal tutor, director of studies, or other academic, and 22% by their family, partner and friends. Students have the option to select more than one referral type when answering. Last year, more referrals were prompted by families, partners and friends. The number of referrals that had not been suggested by anyone decreased by 20%.

NB: Students are not able to refer themselves to the Mental Health Advisors. Referrals may be made by College tutors and nurses, University staff, GPs or mental health services.

Alerts – last year we received just over 118 (previous year 90) alerts from staff concerned about students and we arranged for quicker appointments for those students whose situation was urgent.
3.2 Key achievements for the UCS team in 2017/2018

Members of staff at the UCS contribute not only to the good work of the service, but also to that of the collegiate university as a whole, as well as developments in the field of counselling, mental health and mindfulness.

Presentations
Counselling team members delivered many presentations across the university: presenting at departmental and college inductions and meetings, as well as international students’ inductions.

Géraldine Dufour chaired the BACP University and College counselling national conference on “Working with Suicide”. She was the keynote speaker at the Shanghai Psychological Counselling Association of Higher Learning and also presented at Tongji University, where she was awarded a visiting professorship. She gave multiple presentations at national conferences on improving mental health provision in universities and spoke at Westminster Higher Education Forum seminar on Enhancing Student Mental Wellbeing, as well as the Westminster Briefing on Combating Violence Against Women & Harassment on Campus. She also presented a session on ‘Dealing with student mental health crises’ at the AMOSSHE, Student Services Organisation, London conference.

Representing the University Counselling Service and the University:
Géraldine Dufour became chair of the BACP Universities and Colleges division in the summer of 2017. As well as representing the service on different committees and working groups she contributed to other university initiatives by sitting on the Gender Equality Group (GEG) and acting as the Senior Gender Equality Champion for the University Administration and Services (UAS). Géraldine was also involved in wellbeing initiatives at the wider collegiate University level, advising and contributing to the development of the mental health strategy and contributing to the development of interventions and policies to address sexual harassment and assault.

Environmental impact
The Service has created links with Colleges and Departments in recent years through its involvement with the NUS Green Impact Scheme. The Green Impact Team within the Counselling Service has gone from strength to strength, winning an Excellence Award for the second year in a row for its pen recycling initiative. Over fifty University departments and Colleges have now become involved with our project and are collecting spent writing implements, which are sent to the recycling company, Terracycle. This year the team has expanded the pen recycling initiative, hoping to involve the wider community. Our aim is to have 100% participation across the University.
4. Staffing during the year

There were a small number of staffing changes last academic year. We were delighted to appoint Panayota Manias and Katie Holland to replace staff who had left and to fill a new post.

4.1 Placements for Associate Counsellors

Each year we offer placements to a number of Associate Counsellors, who are in the late stages of their professional training. Their work is carefully supervised and undertaken within the guidelines recommended for professional counselling placements. Clients allocated to Associates are carefully selected and they can request not to be seen by an Associate if they prefer.

First year: Claire Addison, Jessica Walden, Joanna Lyness, Karen Sweeney, Kate Parmenter
All Associates worked between a half and a full day per week.

We recognise that this programme benefits both the Service and its clients by bringing in fresh ideas and energy, and gives the trainees experience of working in a highly professional service. Quite a number of trainees have returned to work for the service after gaining accreditation.

4.2 UCS referral process

This chart outlines the referral process at the UCS and the collaboration between the different teams.
STUDENT COUNSELLING SERVICE 2017-18

University Counselling Service Referral Process

Student completes Pre-Counselling form on the website

Pre-Counselling forms downloaded and added to the appropriate waiting list on a daily basis using Titanium database

University Counselling Service
Student has requested

College Based Counselling
Student has requested counselling at their college (specific colleges who are signed up to CBC scheme)

Both
Student is willing to accept the 1st appointment available at either University Counselling Service or college

Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor
Student has specifically requested an appointment with Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor

Mental Health Advisors offers student assessment and either ongoing appointments or referral to counselling or CBT

UFS Psychiatrist

Refer student to Mental Health Advisor or GP if significant risk identified

Intake team comprising of 2 seniors counsellors meets for 1.5-2hrs daily during term time to triage + allocate appointments

CBT/Counselling/Dual (i.e. suitable for either)

Prioritise: Priority, High, Medium

Offer group if appropriate

Manage alerts from college staff concerned about students who have contacted the University Counselling Service

Signpost: NHS, Disability Resource Centre

Offer appointments via Admin Team

Tutors, college nurses, chaplains, Disability Resource Centre refer student to Mental Health Advisor
(No student self-referrals to Mental Health Advisor accepted)
5. Counselling Work

5.1 Individual counselling at the University Counselling Service

Although the Service offers a wide range of ways to support students, individual counselling remains the core of its work. Issues that students present to counselling are fairly static. Last year, the main problems that were brought to counselling were related to anxiety/panic, depression, relationships, self-esteem and identity, loss/bereavement and abuse.

Last year the service moved over to a paperless intake system, the new system has proved to be very efficient, saving the service time and simplifying the process for both students and staff. While much of the work is fairly brief, the Service continues to offer some ongoing support to students. Care is taken to work efficiently and keep waiting times for counselling as low as possible, and judgements are made in the case of each client about how long to continue counselling. A total of 7800 individual counselling sessions were offered last year (6505 last year).

All referrals to counselling are triaged, with those requiring urgent appointments prioritised. All pre-counselling forms were read within 1 working day of receipt and students are prioritised according to need and sign-posted to self-help resources and workshops if appropriate. We also direct some students to be seen urgently by the mental health advisors if we are concerned about their wellbeing.

5.2 Counselling Groups and Workshops

This year, we have continued to offer a range of groups and workshops that address issues prevalent amongst the student body at the university. Issues covered by these workshops included: ‘time management’, ‘an introduction to self-compassion’, ‘understanding and managing anxiety’, ‘procrastination’ and ‘panic attacks’, and ‘exam preparation’ in Easter Term. Our short courses and group programme included: ‘assertiveness’, ‘managing low mood’, ‘perfectionism versus healthy striving’, and ‘self-esteem’. We also introduced a 4-week group on ‘self-compassion’ to help students who had attended the introductory workshop to develop these skills further.

Our bereavement groups for students who have experienced the loss of a parent/carercarer, or other close relationship, provide a unique opportunity for students to work alongside others who can identify with this experience, helping to reduce their sense of isolation.

The therapy groups for undergraduate and postgraduate students, which provide support over a longer period of time than is possible through individual counselling, have continued to be popular. Workshops specifically for undergraduate students returning from intermission were offered: twice in Michaelmas Term, when the majority of students return, and once in Lent Term. The three workshops included ‘managing anxiety’, ‘time management’ and ‘self-compassion’. Students were able to choose to attend all three workshops but could also come to only one or two if they preferred. In the past we found that attendance diminished over the three weeks when the workshops were offered, as students managed their return to study.

We have again worked in collaboration with the Graduate Union, offering workshops at the venue to support post-graduate students. These included: ‘Managing the relationship with your supervisor’ and ‘ Become your own coach’. Such is the relevance and popularity of the former that we often receive requests from student groups to run a workshop in their department. In addition, in Michaelmas Term we ran the ‘Surviving Cambridge’ workshop, specifically for students on one-year courses.
5.3 College-based counselling

From 29 returned student evaluations (18% return rate):

- 100% of students said that counselling had helped them deal with their difficulties, with 82% saying counselling helped ‘some’ or ‘a great deal’.
- 79% found the referral process for CBC ‘Easy’.
- 79% said that the presence of a CBC Counsellor was ‘an important factor’ or the ‘most significant factor’ in accessing counselling.
- 75% cited proximity to college as a factor in accessing counselling (when given the option to select more than one factor).
- 58% cited both the speed of appointment and ease of referral as a factor in accessing counselling (when given the option to select more than one factor).
- 100% said that counselling had improved their overall experience of university with 42.85% saying counselling was ‘an important factor’ or ‘the most significant factor’.
- 100% said that counselling had helped them to develop skills that might benefit them in obtaining future employment, with 42% saying that this was ‘an important factor’ or the most significant factor’.

The scheme is additional to the centrally provided Service, and is intended for those colleges which want to have their own dedicated counsellor working within the college but supervised and managed by the UCS, under the Service’s monitored professional standards. The College-Based Counselling Scheme continued into its second year of the pilot. The existing four colleges, Girton, Lucy Cavendish, Peterhouse and Wolfson, were joined by Downing and Magdalene.

A new centralised referral system has meant greater efficiency in the allocation of appointments and the collection of comprehensive data across the service.

The scheme has been overseen by a newly appointed Senior Counsellor (who has been deployed into two of the Colleges) and assisted by four counsellors from UCS to make up a team of dedicated CBC counsellors. Each of the counsellors has been able to make strong collaborative links with college welfare staff and this has contributed to the fact that 18% of the referrals for CBC counselling came via a Tutor (at UCS this figure is 5%).

CBC counsellors are utilising the ‘consultation hour’ provided to attend tutor’s meetings, to advise in both general and specific terms, to offer psycho-educative talks and engage in their college student wellbeing events/programmes.

The scheme continues to expand as Downing, Lucy Cavendish and Wolfson have increased their provision from one to two days per week and there are two further colleges interested in joining the scheme in 2018-19.

Feedback from students (shared with permission):

“I cannot say how much I value the college counselling. I was going through an experience that caused me intense anxiety, made me lose weight and sleep. I am happy to be able to say even the four sessions have helped enormously: I gained back the weight and sleep well; I feel more motivated for my classes and balanced in my relationships.”

“It offered me a shift of perspective that allowed me to be more comfortable in my decisions and attitudes.”

“The counsellor pointed out resources I could use to manage my anxiety. Since using a meditation help I have found that I am better able to identify the start of anxious feelings which has helped me address the issue without feeling overwhelmed.”

“Counselling gave me space to articulate what I was struggling with and the counsellor gave some helpful practical strategies for dealing with some of those struggles.”
“I just found it useful to let off some of my worries.”

“The ease of accessibility of on-site counselling was helpful!”

“It was useful to discuss the things I was worried about with someone rather than keep it bottled up. It was also useful to get the counsellors input and see things from a different perspective.”

5.4 Mental Health and Psychiatric Support

Mental Health Advisor (MHA) work
Last year was busy again for the MHAs, with a high number of students (179) to whom they were able to offer appointments (208 in 16/17 & 138 in 15/16), and the number of sessions that they were able to offer - 560 (765 in 16/17). Due to delays in recruiting, the service only had one MHA in post between March and July 2018, which affected the number of students seen and the number of sessions offered.

MHAs carry a caseload of students that are seen for ongoing appointments. Students spread evenly between the different sessions categories: 31% were seen for 1 - 3 sessions, 39% for 4-8 sessions, and 31% were seen for over 9 sessions.

The MHAs offered consultations to welfare and academic staff working across the collegiate university and were in frequent contact with staff in the colleges, offering support and guidance over the phone and by email. The move to using online notes, has meant that the recording of sessions is more effective and we have a more accurate record of the support provided via emails.

Students were also seen for individual mental health assessments and fitness to study assessments.

Demand for this form of support remained high and the MHAs were in frequent contact with pastoral staff in Colleges and the University. They worked particularly closely with tutorial staff and college nurses.

The non-attendance rate was also very good for the mental health advisors’ sessions, just 3% (8% last year) of the total appointments offered, which is excellent when working with people who have mental health issues.

Psychiatric Support
Dr Damaris Koch, an adult psychiatrist and consultant psychotherapist, started to work for the service. She was available to the service for half a day per week during term-time, to offer consultations to students whose mental health was a concern.

The Service once again expresses its appreciation to the Distributors of Cranes’ Benefaction and to the Colleges, for supporting the mental health and psychiatric support work of the Service.
6. University Sexual Harassment and Assault Advisor

Since starting in post in December 2017 the Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor (SAHA) has continually invested time networking with other members of the University and with various Colleges to ensure awareness of the role is raised and that relationships are built. The SAHA service has been very well taken up with 65 referrals between January and July 2018.

The SAHA also started a programme of training which they have delivered across 9 colleges, which includes training for both tutorial, welfare staff and additionally for porters across many more Colleges. Alongside this, the SAHA has redeveloped the guidance for staff on dealing with disclosures, and for students, on what to do if you have experienced sexual violence. The SAHA works closely with colleagues such as counsellors, MHAs or college nurses. This has led to some positive partnership working between the SAHA and colleagues in several cases of students who have experienced sexual violence. The SAHA also works closely with the Office of Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA), this ensures that she is able to give the most accurate information to students on the options available to them, and ensures that partnership working takes place when a case is ongoing.

The SAHA has been building and maintaining connections with external agencies such as the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre, the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor team and Cambridgeshire Constabulary. The SAHA has also attended meetings and conferences on dealing with sexual misconduct across the University and Higher Education sector more generally, building a network with other university support services across the UK.

Alongside this, the SAHA has been setting up the website and creating resources for students as well as redeveloping the guidance for staff on dealing with disclosures, and for students, on what to do if you have experienced sexual violence.

The majority of cases (77%) have been of serious sexual misconduct. 73% of cases had not been reported to the University or College upon referral to the SAHA service, however the SAHA supported 8% of these students to go forward and report either through University or through the College procedures. 84% of referrals identified as female, 12% as male, and 4% as non-binary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to Perpetrator</th>
<th>No. of clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance¹</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner/ex-partner</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer²</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional in a position of responsibility³</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Acquaintance: Known to the client
2. Peer: In their year/subject, someone they study alongside.
3. Professional in a position of responsibility: This could be a staff member of the University/College or any other person in a position of responsibility.

The SAHA has supported students with a range of issues, including supporting them to engage with reporting processes both within the University and externally to the police. The feedback also highlighted that the SAHA has been an important factor in improving student’s experience of University.
Service evaluation

We conduct a follow-up survey of all users of the SAHA Service following the end of their use of the service. We have information about 5 students who accessed the service and their feedback is very positive. “SAHA was brilliant for me and I would definitely recommend it to anyone in a similar situation to me”

When asked to describe the ways in which the SAHA service helped them, recurring themes mentioned by students include:

**Being listened to:**

**A valued space:** ‘Helped me to explore a really difficult topic that I hadn’t been able to talk to anyone else about, with sensitivity and compassion.’

**Skills and techniques:** ‘She gave me the perspective that I needed to overcome sexual trauma that I thought would haunt me for the rest of my life. She has changed my life and is a credit to the university. I cannot laud her enough.’

**Developing understanding:** ‘understand some of the thoughts that I wasn’t completely aware where going on.’

**Feeling supported:** ‘Procedural advice as well as emotional support.’

The only complaints received about the SAHA service relate to students having to wait for their appointments: “Sometimes difficult to make an appointment because the service got so booked up” Information about the nature of the SAHA service and waiting times can be found on our website.

7. Preventive & Outreach Work

We work closely with colleagues across the University, individual Colleges, local GP practices and the Student Union. We recognise that welfare staff in Colleges, as well as specialist student support staff are in the front line of supporting students. Consequently we work closely with these groups to ensure that co-ordinated support is available. In addition, counsellors attend individual colleges for college liaison work.

Counsellors and the head of service delivered and contributed to many training and wellbeing events across the collegiate university: new tutors training, start of the year briefings about the service, and talks to students and colleagues working in the Colleges.

Counsellors working in collaboration with the Colleges delivered well-received outreach sessions in colleges to both students and staff.

Sessions were also delivered centrally through PPD: ‘Boundaries and Boomerangs’ and ‘Supporting Postgraduate Students with Mental Health Difficulties’, which were co-facilitated with Kirsty Wayland from the Disability Resource Centre.

To offer co-ordinated support to students with mental health issues, we work closely with colleagues at the DRC and attend a joint case conference group twice a term.

As usual we reviewed our group programme to make sure that all the groups we run for students are well-attended, relevant, and available to as many students as possible. The first Self-Compassion Group was piloted in Easter term of 2018 successfully. The ‘note working group’ met, discussing best practice for note taking and producing some guidelines for the service. In March, Tim delivered a presentation to staff of Churchill College: an introduction to Compassion Focussed Therapy and how its principles can be helpful in providing welfare to students. It was called Why Gazelles Don’t Have Bad Hair Days. The Time Management workshop went as far as Addenbrokes last year to reach PhD students working at the MRC Epidemiology Unit.

Counsellors delivered some well-received reflective practice sessions for staff such as the Disability Resource Advisors, the College Nurses and other welfare staff, and the facilitators of the Bystander Initiative.
We were delighted when Gudrun Haraldsdottir was recognised for her exceptional support provision and shortlisted by students for the CUSU Student-led Teaching Award.
8. Mindfulness

In Michaelmas and Lent, seven eight-week ‘Mindfulness Skills for Students’ (MSS) courses were once again run concurrently across the University, with 30 places on each open to undergraduates and post-graduates.

Based on the previous success of the "hopping" system, we continued to offer the opportunity for students to informally swap to a different session if they could not make their registered course; and the system was well-used.

Colleges have continued to request that mindfulness courses take place at their college, or to offer premises for the delivery of courses. Courses were kindly hosted by Corpus Christi, Selwyn and Christ’s, St Catharine’s, King’s and Wolfson Colleges.

A follow-up survey of all users of the mindfulness courses is conducted following the end of their experience, as we introduced a new online survey to capture more information and statistics on our students. We have information about 398 students who accessed the courses. Overall 96% rated the mindfulness course as having importance to them with 82% rating it higher than a 5 when assigning it to a number out of 10. 43% of students had no previous experience of mindfulness practice before this course with 6% saying they had a fair amount or a lot of experience.

Mindfulness for Exams and deadlines: Easter Term 2018

We continued to offer a series of one-off workshops to students during the Easter Term. Each workshop can be taken as a one-off session, or as a series in any sequence, as follows:

- Keeping Calm: Mindfulness to help with exam nerves.
- Improving attention: Mindfulness for maintaining a healthy focus when you work.
- Productive Decisions: Making mindful choices that support your goals and wellbeing.
- Improving sleep: Mindfulness approaches to improving sleep and rest.

Interactive Moodle Platform

Moodle was launched in October 2017 to provide resources for students during the course, including audio meditations from the weeks’ classes, as well as other supportive materials. It also allows students who stop attending the course to continue mindfulness learning in their own environment by using the course-book supported by Moodle resources. Moodle also allows the Mindfulness Practitioner to contact the students with the weekly pre and post-class emails as well as cohort wide communications.

Mindfulness Support and student safety

Elizabeth continued to give one-to-one Mindfulness Support to students who request special attention with their meditation; affirming our commitment to teaching meditation safely, within the large student population wishing to learn it.

Feedback from students (shared with permission):

“I would like to thank you for all your help during these past 8 weeks. This journey has completely changed my attitude and perspective towards life. When I started the Mindfulness course I was burnout and even low-mood. Now, even if life still presents strong waves, I know it is possible to sail through them and this can make the difference.”

“The meditation practice has really helped me through the tough transition being away from home, as well as gave me the tools to deal with some personal health issues that arose this term; I've also met friends through the classes as well!"

“Learning more about mindfulness has certainly given me many new ideas and perspectives in terms of life and career.”
The Mindful Student Study

The main results of the study were published on 18 December 2017 in the Lancet Public Health (http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(17)30231-1/fulltext). The publication was covered by UK and international news outlets (e.g. https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/dec/18/mindfulness-boosts-student-mental-health-during-exams-cambridge-university-study-finds), and widely shared in social media across the world.

Researchers have been invited to present results at the following conferences:

- 4th International Conference on Youth Mental Health, Ireland, September 2017
- 1st Mindfulness in Education Congress, Spain, November 2017
- The Oxford Mindfulness Centre invited Julieta Galante to present them as part of a public lecture at the University of Oxford in April.
- Géraldine Dufour and Julieta Galante were invited to present the MSS results at the BACP Annual Research Conference in May.

One-year-follow up results for those who took part in the study have been analysed, as well as immunological parameters measured in the 45 participants who gave blood samples. Six participants with different grades were interviewed to assess their perceptions of the impact of mindfulness training on their academic performance. Results are awaiting publication.

A systematic review and meta-analysis of all trials assessing mindfulness training effects on university students is underway and will include MSS results. This work will give a thorough overview of the existing high-quality evidence on this topic.

An economic evaluation is being collated in collaboration with health economist Dr Adam Wagner. It will assess the cost-effectiveness of the mindfulness courses from the UCS perspective.

Collaboration with University of Helsinki: Professor Peter Jones has instigated talks which it is hoped will result in a collaboration with the University Of Helsinki Faculty Of Medicine. They have expressed an interest in setting up and assessing mindfulness provision for their students following our MSS intervention protocol.
9. Accountability

9.1 Clinical Responsibility

The service works within the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy’s ‘Ethical Framework’. This covers issues such as codes of ethics and confidentiality, and the levels of clinical supervision necessary for the counselling work undertaken.

All permanent counselling staff are qualified and professionally accredited counsellors or therapists, working to the highest professional standards, registered with their professional bodies, and undertaking professional development and engaging in regular supervision of their practice.

Both Mental Health Advisors are RMN Nurses registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

9.2 Executive Committee

The service is accountable to an Executive Committee, chaired by Professor Mary Fowler, Master of Darwin and the Vice Chancellor’s representative. This committee contains representatives of the University Council, Senior Tutors’ Committee, Bursars’ Committee, Students Unions and two GPs, as well as a counsellor from the Student Counselling Service, Tim Ellis, and the Head of Service. In turn, the Executive reports through the University Health and Wellbeing Committee to the General Board. The full membership of the Committee is shown at the start of this report.

9.3 How the work is financed

Because responsibility for student welfare is vested in the Colleges, funding arrangements exist whereby they finance the direct costs of counselling, with the balance paid by the University Chest for service administration and facilities. The sum quoted also includes amounts from Crane’s Benefaction for a Mental Health Advisor and psychiatrist consultations.

Under these arrangements each College paid a per capita sum of £25.25 to the Service for each registered student in residence. This amount was proposed by the University Counselling Service Executive Committee and approved by the Bursars’ Committee.

Those Colleges whose student bodies have been higher users of the Service over a five-year period paid an additional ‘user-related charge’ in accordance with a formula agreed by the University Counselling Service Executive Committee and the Bursars’ Committee and at a level proposed by the former and approved by the latter.

Crane’s Benefaction

The Benefaction of John Crane has supported the Counselling Service for many years in its work with students who have mental health problems. We are grateful to the Distributors of the Benefaction for their continued funding of psychiatric consultations within the Service conducted by Dr Damaris Koch, and also for continuing to fund a Mental Health Advisor position in the Service.

The Madeleine Davis Fund

The Madeleine Davis Fund is a bequest enabling the Service to see students, already engaged with the service, who have intermitted their course, and who would otherwise have been ineligible to use the Service when they are not in residence. Such students are thereby enabled to have access to counselling at the very time that problems cause them to degrade or intermit. We are very appreciative of this continuing support.
9.4 Development for 2018/2019

The Service continued with the preparations for the forthcoming move to the new student service centre (SSC) planned for March 2019.

Géraldine Dufour
Head of Service
February 2019

With thanks to the members of staff who contributed to this report.