



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

University Counselling Service

Student Counselling Service
Annual Report 2014 - 2015

Contents

Executive Committee, 2014/15	ii
Staff in the Student Counselling Service	ii
Executive Summary of 2014/15	1
Staffing during the year.....	
Placements for Associate Counsellors.....	2
Counselling Work.....	2
Individual counselling	2
Counselling Groups and Workshops.....	2
Mental Health and Psychiatric Support.....	3
Preventative & Outreach Work	3
Accountability.....	5
Clinical Responsibility	5
Service Evaluation.....	5
Executive Committee.....	6
How our work is financed	6
Health & Safety.....	7

Executive Committee, 2014/15

Prof M Fowler	VC's Deputy; Master of Darwin
Mr PJ Brindle	Bursar, Darwin College, until 12/14
Dr J Bunbury	Senior Tutor, St Edmunds College
Ms A Churcher	Counsellor, UCS
Prof L R Gelsthorpe	Council Representative, Pembroke College
Ms G Dufour	Head of Service
Mr M Gross	Bursar, Emmanuel College
Dr J McLarty	Senior Tutor, Wolfson College
Dr C Lea-Cox	General Practitioner, Trumpington St Medical Practice
Dr P Linehan	General Practitioner, Newnham Walk Surgery
Mr A Powell	Bursar, Fitzwilliam College
Ms J Raine	Bursar, Newnham College
Mr R Smith	UCS Financial Administrator (in attendance)
Ms E van Gjin	Graduate Union
Mr J Wright	CUSU Welfare Officer
Dr K Wallington	Secretary (in attendance)

Staff in the Student Counselling Service

Head of Service

Géraldine Dufour Registered member BACP Senior Accredited

Senior Counsellors

Hanya Czepkowski Registered member BACP Accredited
Lisa Halpern Registered member BACP Senior Accredited

Counsellors & CBT Therapists

Polly Brown BACP Reg Practitioner
Anna Churcher (part-time) UKCP Reg Psychotherapist
Tim Ellis UKCP Reg Psychotherapeutic Counsellor
Richard Geddis BACP Reg Practitioner
Tess Gorst (part-time) BABCP Accred. Cog. Beh. Psychotherapist
Gudrun Harraldottsir (part-time) BACP Reg Practitioner
Jenny Schiller (part-time) BABCP Accred. Cog. Beh. Psychotherapist
Vanessa Skinner (part-time) BABCP Accred. Cog. Beh. Psychotherapist
Barbara Steen BABCP Accred. Cog. Beh. Psychotherap
Sally Swain (part-time) BACP Reg Practitioner

Mental Health Advisor

Juliet Bristow Reg Social Worker (HCPC)
Jenny Schiller (part-time) BABCP Accred. Cog. Beh. Psychotherapist, from 02/15
Beverly Wilson (part-time) Reg Mental Health Nurse (NMC), until 01/15

Mindfulness practitioner

Elizabeth English Member of the British Focusing Association, The Focusing Institute, Centre for Non-Violent Communication, From 11/14

Locum

Amy Beddows

BACP Reg Practitioner

Associate Counsellors (training placements: half- to one day per week)

First year: Krupali Adathiruthi, Tricia Magee, Mahwish Qamar.

Second year: Hattie Graham-Campbell, Emma Lockhart

Psychiatric consultations

Dr Alison Jenaway (part-time)

Consultant Psychiatrist in Psychotherapy

Support Staff

Robert Smith (part-time)

Financial Administrator

Sue Geeson

Office Manager

Fiona Hey (part-time)

Administrator / Receptionist until 01/15

Hazel Sanderson (part-time)

Administrator / Receptionist

Bernie Steptoe (part-time)

Administrator / Receptionist from 03/15

Jo Whittington (part-time)

Administrator / Receptionist until 10/14

Becky Wright

Administrator / Receptionist from 03/15

Executive Summary 2014/2015

The University Counselling Service:

- Continued high number of students accessing counselling: 1570
- High proportion of students accessing individual counselling: 8.6% of the total population
- Students requiring urgent help are fast-tracked for counselling
- High number of new referrals daily during term time: 50/70 a week
- Range of workshops and counselling groups during term: 5 - 10 a week
- Increased staffing for Mental Health Advisors resulted in an increase in the number of students and staff supported

Key facts for 2013/14:

- The Service offered counselling to 1570 students, who were seen an average of 5 times
- Around 180 - 230 individual counselling sessions were offered each week, and there were a further 30 - 60 group attendances per week during term
- We also responded to numerous requests for support and guidance from tutors, nurses and welfare staff in colleges or departments, as well as from GPs and specialist staff in the mental health field.

Increase in provision

Last year the service increased yearly counselling provision hours by 566, following a small restructuring and the consolidation of counselling hours following staff departures. This is equivalent to more than two thirds of a full-time post.

Reduced waiting times

At the start of Michaelmas 2014, the UCS introduced a new case-management system, which together with the increase in counselling hours allowed for a reduction in waiting times for counselling. In Michaelmas and Lent 2015 the wait for counselling was reduced, with many students being seen within one working week, though towards the end of term a small number of students had to wait for up to two weeks. However, all pre-counselling forms are read within 1 working day of receipt and students are prioritised accordingly.

Before the Easter vacation 2015, there were 54 clients waiting for on-going counselling (down from 126 the previous year).

Staff achievements in 2014/2015

Team:

We were pleased that the Service achieved a Cambridge University Green Impact Silver Award for the second year running for its work in saving energy and recycling.

Vanessa Skinner:

Vanessa co-wrote *CBT Fundamentals: Theory And Cases* (Open University Press, 2014) with an ex-colleague.

Head of Service:

Publications:

Géraldine Dufour chapter "Assessment: Laying the Foundation for Brief Therapeutic Work in HE" was published in *Short-term Counselling in Higher Education: Context, Theory and Practice* (Routledge, 2015). She was also a regular contributor to the BACP Universities & Colleges counselling journal.

Representing the University Counselling Service and the University:

Géraldine Dufour was the Chair of HUCS (Heads of University Counselling Service) for the second year running, and sat on the executive committee BACP Universities and Colleges as their strategy advisor. She spoke at the national conference for the UK Council for International Student Affairs, chaired a special conference for Managing Demand for HUCS (Heads of University Counselling Service), and was an advisor for the Alliance for Student-Led Wellbeing.

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 becoming a Senior Gender Equality Champion.

Géraldine was also involved on wellbeing initiatives at the wider collegiate University level, advising and contributing to the development of interventions and policies to address sexual harassment and assault, and to the development of an alcohol strategy.

Staffing:

There were a number of staffing changes throughout the year. Two new counsellors, one new CBT therapist, and one mindfulness practitioner started in Michaelmas 2014. They were followed by two new receptionist/administrators during the Lent term.

The Service was assisted throughout the academic year by Amy Beddows, who worked as a locum Counsellor and very ably filled gaps in our staffing. She became a permanent member of staff in Michaelmas 2015.

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: Krupali Adathiruthi, Sabina Rostampour, Tricia Magee, Mahwish Qamar.

Second year: Hattie Graham-Campbell, Emma Lockhart.

All Associates worked between half and a full day per week.

It is believed that this programme benefits both the Service and its clients, by bringing in fresh ideas and energy, and the trainees, who experience working in a highly professional service.

Counselling Work

Individual counselling

Although the Service offers a wide range of ways to support students, individual counselling remains the core of its work.

There was little change in the incidence of problems about which students sought help. While many of the numbers are similar to the previous year, there was a particular rise in those presenting with issues related to relationships, anxiety/panic, and academic related concerns.

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 6,928 individual counselling sessions were offered last year.

All referrals to counselling are triaged, with those requiring urgent appointments prioritised.

Counselling Groups and Workshops

The Service has a national reputation for group work. During this year many workshops and group sessions were once again run for students, offering a total of 1,177 group sessions.

Following a review of the group programme, the Service offered some new undergraduate and postgraduate groups, as well as workshops for students: CBT for Self-Help, Self-Compassion, Food & Mood, and Understanding & Managing Procrastination.

Mental Health and Psychiatric Support

Mental Health Advisor (MHA) work

With two advisors the work of the MHAs started to evolve with more frequent contact with staff in colleges, which led to an increase in referrals, requests for mental health assessments and consultations with welfare and academic staff.

Most students were seen for 1 - 3 sessions; however both MHAs carry a caseload of students that are seen for ongoing appointments.

Most students considered to be in crisis were offered appointments on the day of referral.

Psychiatric Support

Dr. Alison Jenaway, an adult psychiatrist and consultant psychotherapist, continued to be 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.

Preventive & Outreach Work

We recognise that college tutors, nurses, chaplains and welfare staff in Colleges, as well specialist staff in the University and the advisors at the Student Advice Centre are in the front line of supporting students. Consequently we work closely with these groups to ensure that co-ordinated support is available.

We work closely with the colleges, and counsellors attend individual colleges for college liaison work.

Mindfulness

Following consultations in the Health and Wellbeing Committee, the University Counselling Service Executive and the Senior Tutor, Welfare and Finance Committees, a mindfulness practitioner was appointed in November 2014 and a new project pilot started in January 2015.

Courses were run in a number of colleges, initially assisted by the college nurses before a centralised booking system was introduced by PPD's Academic Practice team.

Developing the pilot project involved:

- A Website hosted on the Student Gateway (thanks to support from the Educational and Student Policy staff)
- A regular project bulletin
- Posters in colleges (in collaboration with the College Nurses)
- Taster sessions: two fully-booked taster sessions at UCS for 35 students
- Students were able to purchase a reduced price 'Frantic World' course book at Heffers

Support systems were put in place consisting of:

- pre-course information helps students to decide for themselves whether it is right for them to learn mindfulness at this time, given other life events; support sessions available on two lunchtimes each week, able to be booked over Google Calendar/Forms via the website after reading the pre-course material (initially a 15 minute phone Skype conversation, with one-to-one time available for individual students if needed); *and*
- recommendations to college nurses, senior tutors and UCS staff regarding the suitability of mindfulness for vulnerable students (i.e., when it is inadvisable to learn meditation).

Courses

Lent 2015:

Eight-week Mindfulness courses were offered to students in seven different Colleges. Thirty places were available on each course (210 places). Places were taken up within a few days of the courses being advertised.

Easter 2015:

Three eight-week Mindfulness courses were offered to students across the University (90 places), as well as six two-week 'Mindfulness for Exams' courses (120 places).

Most Colleges have expressed an interest in the project. We are grateful to them for their help and support, and for providing accommodation for the groups. As the study progresses it is hoped that more will be approached to host courses.

A Cambridge University Mindfulness Curriculum:

Mindfulness Practitioner, Elizabeth English, has created a unique 8-week Mindfulness course suitable for Cambridge students. Based on MBSR (Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction), the course is best described as Mindfulness-based Wellbeing for Students. Elizabeth has developed a course with a sound theoretical rationale approved by the Mindfulness community, and ready for the research project to measure.

Mindfulness Society:

Students who completed the course are keen to continue practising Mindfulness. A number of those have formed a lively Mindfulness Society, currently putting together its first programme for Michaelmas 2015 and beyond. Events will include weekly mindfulness sessions on the theme of 'Going Deeper', and the occasional invited inspirational speaker, as well as other events. Until the research is completed, the Mindfulness Society will be open only to students who have completed the eight-week Mindfulness course.

Mindfulness Research

The Research Associate Post was advertised in January 2015. Dr Julieta Galante was appointed and began work in March 2015.

The evaluation of the mindfulness course for students consists of a randomised controlled trial with two parallel arms. Students will be recruited at the beginning of Michaelmas 2015 and Lent 2016 terms and randomised to doing the mindfulness course during that term or waiting one year to do it (wait-list control group with one-year follow-up).

Accountability

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 UCS 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.

Service Evaluation

We conduct a follow-up survey of all users of the Service following the end of their counselling. This year our return rate was 11.29%. 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. To what extent would you say that counselling has helped you to stay at university?*
77% indicated that this was an issue for them, and of these 37% said counselling was 'an important factor' or 'the most significant factor'.
- 2. To what extent would you say that counselling has helped you do better in your academic work?*
89% indicated that this was an issue for them, and of these 38% said counselling was 'an important factor' or 'the most significant factor'.
- 3. To what extent would you say that counselling has improved your overall experience of university?*
92% said that counselling had helped with this to some extent; with 46% saying counselling was 'an important factor' or 'the most significant factor'.
- 4. 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)?*
86% said that counselling had helped with this to some extent, with 36% saying counselling was 'an important factor' or 'the most significant factor'.

Overall, 93% said that counselling had helped them deal with their difficulties, with 81% saying counselling helped 'quite a lot' or 'a great deal'.

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

Changes to the service in the last year:

Administration

The UCS Staff Handbook which includes all Service policies and procedures was updated, as well as all Service records and documentation.

UCS Leaflets

All UCS self-help leaflets for students were updated. Counsellors and CBT therapists took responsibility for rewriting specific leaflets. These were sent to the Reprographics and Printing department, which reset all leaflets refreshing the layout and presentation. This new layout followed the guideline for best practice from the British Dyslexia Association's dyslexia style guide.

IT Migration

The service completed its migration as it moved from the University Computing Service to MISD, adopting their managed desktop. All computers had to be changed from macs to PCs, which involved the transfer of all documents and emails to the new machines.

The service also started using a new electronic diary and database system: *Titanium Schedule*. The previous database (*Inform*) had been a highly personalised system created by the previous Head of Service.

Website

Members of the student counselling team completed the reorganisation of the UCS website. They separated staff and student provision so that information is easier to find, and confusion around the waiting lists for both services is avoided.

All self-help information was updated and reorganised under different headings (such as depression or anxiety) so that the relevant material can be found under each heading. Each page includes recommended websites, books, short videos and the relevant UCS leaflets.

Please refer to this page as an example: <http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/selfhelp/newselhe/depres>

Building:

We completed the reorganisation of the consultation rooms so that the Mental Health Advisors could move out of the basement. Both offices are now both located on the ground floor.

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 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.

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 psychiatry.

Under these arrangements each college paid a *per capita* sum of £21.79 to the Service for each registered student in residence. This amount was proposed by the University Counselling Service Executive Committee and approved by the College 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 College 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. Alison Jenaway, 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.

Health & Safety

The Service's Health & Safety Committee met regularly throughout the year, and the topic featured on team meetings. A variety of minor risks were identified and addressed. We are pleased that there were no significant accidents during the year, but remain vigilant for emerging risks.

Géraldine Dufour
Head of Service
January 2016

