CSU Health Network – Supporting the Mental Health and Well-Being of Historically Marginalized Students and Students Holding Multiple Identities

Updated September 23, 2020

Most of the services, programs and initiatives below are funded by student fees.

Clinical Services, Prevention and Outreach

- The Counseling Services Clinical Service Delivery Model launched in Fall 2019 has decreased wait times, and in turn, freed up staffing time to increase efforts to support students with marginalized identities, such as expanded group options and increased contact between Counseling Services staff and Student Diversity and Program Services’ offices.

- Counseling Services has realigned the Coordinator of Diversity and Outreach Services position to broaden reach to students with marginalized identities across campus.

- Workplans for Counselors holding marginalized identities have been redesigned, so if desired by those counselors, they can focus on taking referrals for students holding marginalized identities and provide consultation to other counselors for working with students holding marginalized identities.

- Counseling Services provides weekly Multicultural Drop-In Hours in Counseling Services, specifically for students holding marginalized identities. These drop-in hours provide flexible opportunities for urgent support, mentorship and timely access to more traditional therapeutic services. In order to facilitate more access to counselors who identify as people of color and part of the LGBTQ+ community, counselors who staff these hours hold various marginalized identities.

- Counseling Services facilitates therapy support groups specifically for students with marginalized identities: Women of Color Support Group, Coming Out and Being Out Support Group, Transgender and Gender Fluid Support Group and International Student Support Group.

- Counseling Services, and specifically the Coordinator of Diversity and Outreach Services, has created and facilitated social and emotional support meetings for Dreamers United students.

- In partnership with campus offices, Counseling Services facilitates and/or consults on several wellness peer support groups and wellness workshops that support historically underserved communities. These wellness outreach efforts are intended to support student mental health and well-being in a preventative manner. Student’s will interact with counselors with marginalized identities in a non-clinical format as they also build connections with peers who share similar identities in a supportive and community-driven environment. Peer support groups and workshops include partnerships with the Native American Cultural Center (NACC Wellness Hour), Black/African American Cultural Center (Racial Battle Fatigue Series, Chloe’s Corner), Asian Pacific American Cultural Center (Story Circle), Adult Learner and Veteran Services (Parenting Support Group and Thriving Thursdays) and Pride Resource Center (Rainbros, QTPoC Voices and Embodied Queerness: Artfully Healing in Community).

- The Trans Health Committee brings together Counseling Services and Medical Services staff to focus on creating inclusive and high-quality health and mental health care services for students who identify as transgender, non-binary, gender non-conforming or intersex.

- If the urgent need for psychiatric care is identified by CSU Health Network counselors or medical providers for students with marginalized identities, psychiatric clinicians offer urgent consultations to assure timely access to a higher level of mental health care.

- Health Education and Prevention Services oversees the CSU Health Network’s biannual process to systematically collect and analyze CSU student health data. A summary of findings for the general student body and students with marginalized identities is created to inform efforts and has been used to advocate for student mental health and support resources across the Division of Student Affairs.
• Health Education and Prevention Services works to engage in intentional, inclusive initiative and outreach development, implementation and evaluation, based on prevention best practices and student health data. Examples related to mental health and well-being initiatives include:
  o There is higher risk student targeted use of the Interactive Screening Program, that involves email deployment of a brief screening, personalized feedback and an opportunity to connect virtually with a Counselor, a bridge to additional support. This includes use with marginalized student groups know to be at higher risk.
  o YOU@CSU student success online portal review process currently includes:
    ▪ An audit to help ensure content, visuals and search mechanism best serve marginalized students and multiple identities. Additionally, auditors are creating unique and original pieces of content focused on the impacts of identity on mental health and targeted communications to students with marginalized identities.
    ▪ Tier one evaluation, funded by the VP of Research Office, focuses on assessing portal components’ use by demographics to inform modifications.
  o The Well-Being in Academic Environments Tool Kit was developed to help faculty and staff infuse wellbeing practices into teaching and their work with students. Diversity and inclusion best practices and resources are integrated into the tool kit.
  o Spiritual Health offers referral consultation to resources for students with varying beliefs, faiths and identities.

See Health Education and Prevention Services Initiatives and the CSU Health Network Mental Health Support Resources for Students summaries for a full listing of initiatives. Advisory committees, consisting of diverse campus and community representation, are used to guide work, provide feedback, cultivate collaboration and assist with sharing information. Feedback is used to modify efforts.

• Located on the first floor of the CSU Health and Medical Center, the StillPoint Reflection Space provides a spiritually nourishing, inclusive environment for CSU faculty, staff and students from all backgrounds and cultures. This is a space to prioritize self-care, pray, reflect, meditate and relax. Biofeedback technology is available to learn important self-regulation and stress management skills. (Closed during COVID-19 pandemic.)

Communications

• The CSU Health Network Communications team is supporting CSU Inclusive Communications efforts, including staff training and committee participation, and applying guidelines to CSU Health Network service line communications and health messaging.

• Counseling Services has created a Multicultural Counseling Services web page designed to reduce barriers for students who have been historically underrepresented to access and navigate Counseling Services.

Staff Hiring, Training and Support

• The CSU Health Network have implemented strategies to increase the recruitment of diverse staff. Counseling Services have made intentional and successful efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of diverse counselors and psychologists.

• CSU Health Network staff participate in regular diversity-focused trainings covering various topics. The Health Education and Prevention Services team have regular engagement in diversity and inclusion training, including health equity and disparities and other topics.

• Counseling Services staff have engaged in monthly diversity trainings for numerous years. A bi-weekly consultation group is provided for staff who identify as Black Indigenous people of color (BIPOC) and who hold more broadly marginalized identities.

• The CSU Health Network Diversity Committee is working to enhance the depth and breadth of cultural competency and humility among CSU Health Network staff.
Plans

- In collaboration with the Colorado Health Foundation and the Steve Fund Supporting the Mental Health of Students of Color, the CSU Health Network are exploring application of this training and program review opportunity. This could help create a process to systematically determine strengths and areas for improvement, to include a more focused approach on health disparities.

- CSU Health Network leadership plans to revisit using the Multicultural Organization Assessment, in consult with the VP of Diversity Office, to conduct an internal review of operations and determine next steps.

- Counseling Services leadership intends to encourage counselor training programs, that send trainees to the CSU Health Network, to recruit more diverse cohorts and train through a more culturally competent lens.

- Counseling Services is exploring the creation of a multicultural counseling team and would like to assess how and where students want Counseling Services offered.

- Health Education and Prevention Services is working on a more coordinated effort to engage students with marginalized identities to participate in health campaign creation focus groups.

- Health Education and Prevention Services staff will assist in establishing the first-year student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) module implementation process.

- Inspired by Student Demands Group requests, the Health Education and Prevention Services is exploring the idea of a student well-being incentivized program ran through the YOU@CSU student success portal. As students learn important information about their health, they would be encouraged to set health and well-being goals. Participation would be incentivized to encourage engagement and goal attainment. Various departments and diverse student groups would be brought to the table to inform and help promote.