

Mental health on campus: student awareness of mental health services

Volunteer report – July 2025



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and why they would need to, surely
people can just snap out of it.”



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Introduction

This report explores students' understanding and awareness of mental health services

Approach

Six students at Royal Holloway, University of London, answered a series of questions on mental health services. The students were a mix of genders, ethnicities and religions. Consent was reached, and a full explanation of the questionnaire's purpose was provided before participants completed the questionnaire. Distribution was online via email.

Our findings

Theme 1: lack of awareness amongst university students

Many of the sample didn't know where or how to access mental health services.

"I'm unsure where I would even start to look or how I would go about it."

Therefore, these individuals would only talk to family or friends if issues emerged.

Additionally, some knew where or how to access services, but were unclear on the details of what mental health services offer.

Stigma was found in one individual towards those using mental health services:

"I'm not even sure if any services exist and why they would need to, surely people can just snap out of it."

Theme 2: awareness amongst those who have accessed, or supported someone who has, previously

Those who had first- or second-hand experience with mental health services were more aware and understood where the services are and what they offer.

"I know the services that the university offers...because I have used them before and have regular conversations about mental health with others."

Those who were more aware of what was on offer were also more aware of the effectiveness of services.

"They could get very busy at certain times in the year, e.g. when loneliness would have its biggest impact, such as Valentine's Day or Christmas. This business could affect the

specialised and personalised support available for each individual.”

Theme 3: consistency of findings across demographics

The above two themes were consistent in a diverse range of individuals. For example, individuals ranged from Black African to White British, women to men, heterosexual to bisexual, involving those with and without learning disabilities and religious beliefs.

However, this research involved individuals at the same location of Runnymede.

Conclusion

There is a lack of awareness of mental health services amongst university students who have not experienced the services themselves; awareness raising amongst the wider student population could therefore be beneficial. This could be through compulsory lectures or posters around the university campus about the services offered at the university and beyond. This may reduce stigma and ensure individuals know immediately where to look if they were to incur problems with mental health or wellbeing, in themselves or others.

Introduction to Healthwatch Surrey

Healthwatch Surrey champions the voice of local people to shape, improve and get the best from NHS, health and social care services. We are independent and have statutory powers to make sure decision makers listen to the experiences of local people.

We passionately believe that listening and responding to local people's experiences is vital to create health and social care services that meet the needs of people in Surrey. We seek out people's experiences of health and care services, particularly from people whose voices are seldom heard, who might be at risk of health inequalities and whose needs are not met by current services. We share our findings publicly and with service providers and commissioners to influence and challenge current provision and future plans.

We also provide reliable and trustworthy information and signposting about local health and social care services to help people get the support they need.

Contact us

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We are proud to be commended in the National Healthwatch Impact Awards, recognising our work helping to improve local NHS and social care. You can view [our video](#) highlighting how feedback has enabled us to make positive changes to health and social care services.



We are committed to the quality of our information. Every three years we perform an audit so that we can be certain of this.

Luminus

The Healthwatch Surrey service is run by Luminus Insight CIC, known as Luminus.

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